

University Grants Committee

**Report of the Review Group
on the Hong Kong Institute
of Education's Application
for University Title**

September 2015

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For the documents marked with “#”, due to the sensitive nature of these documents, they are not for public consumption. Readers may enquire with the Hong Kong Institute of Education for access to such information.

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Abbreviations and Glossary of Terms

Abbreviations

EDB	Education Bureau
FYFD	First-year-first-degree undergraduate intake places
HEI	Higher education institution
HKCAAVQ	Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications
HKIED	The Hong Kong Institute of Education
KPI	Key performance indicator
LegCo	The Legislative Council
MTR	Mass Transit Railway
McKinsey	McKinsey and Company, Management Consultants
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAA	Programme Area Accreditation – Stage three of the four-stage quality assurance process of the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications
PISA	Programme for International School Assessment of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
QA	Quality assurance
QAC	Quality Assurance Council
QS	Quacquarelli Symonds Ltd, compilers/publishers of World University Rankings

RAE	Research Assessment Exercise
RGC	Research Grants Council
RPg	Research postgraduate
SEN	Special educational needs
TLQPR	Teaching and Learning Quality Process Review
UGC	University Grants Committee

Glossary of Terms

Academic Supporting Staff	Category of staff within Hong Kong Institute of Education who undertake teaching, student supervision and administration but for whom research is not a formal part of their duties.
Council (of HKIEd) and Council Officers	The Council is the executive governing body of the Hong Kong Institute of Education and has general control over the administration of the Institute and the conduct of its affairs.
Development Blueprint	‘Development Blueprint: Becoming a University of Education’, published by HKIEd in June 2007.
Education-plus	An approach to academic study developed by HKIEd, based on a common curricular framework which promotes study across disciplinary boundaries.
Mission drift	In a higher education context mission drift occurs when an institution with clear goals and functions assumes other goals and functions in order to inter alia, attract more students, more funding or more prestige, usually in a competitive environment.

Review Group	The Review Group established by the University Grants Committee at its meeting on 12 September 2014 to conduct a special review on HKIEd’s application for university title in July 2014.
Review Group (2009)	The Review Group established by the University Grants Committee in August 2007 to conduct a special review of HKIEd’s ‘Development Blueprint’ published in June 2007. The Review Group submitted its Report to the UGC in February 2009.
Seedcorn funding	Investment made in an activity which is expected to yield a return in due course. In a higher education context, investment might be in a new degree course, for example, or in a research project.
Self-accreditation	The powers vested within a higher education institution to accredit/validate its own programmes. The prerogative of awarding self-accrediting status rests with the Government, and HKIEd was granted self-accrediting status in respect of its teacher education programmes at degree level and above in March 2004.
Student portal	A student portal is an online gateway where students, teaching staff and administrators can log into an institutional website to access and manage important program and individual information.

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PART ONE: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background to the Report

1. The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIED) submitted an application for university title to the Education Bureau (EDB) in July 2014. The application followed earlier milestones on HKIED's path to the university status it desires:

1. 2003: UGC Institutional Review of HKIED
2. 2009: UGC Review of HKIED's 'Development Blueprint'
3. 2012: HKIED Report to EDB on progress in implementing the recommendations in that 2009 Review and EDB's response
4. 2014: Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) award of Programme Area Accreditation (PAA) status to HKIED in three non-education programme areas.

Following previous practice, the EDB invited the UGC in July 2014 to carry out a special review on HKIED to determine whether it possesses the necessary capacity and qualities to be accorded university title.

Terms of reference of the Review Group

2. In summarised form, the terms of reference of the Review Group were to advise the Government:

- (a) on HKIED's progress in implementing the recommendations in the 2009 Review;
- (b) on whether HKIED should be granted self-accrediting status in the programme areas covered by its existing PAA status;
- (c) in light of (a) and (b), on whether HKIED already possesses the qualities and attributes commonly expected of a university and should be granted the university title at this juncture;
- (d) on whether there are any other actions HKIED should take in

future to further its role and improve the quality of education it provides.

and if necessary to bring to the Government's attention issues of concern, if any, in relation to HKIED's application for university title.

Institutional Profile

3. HKIED was formally established in 1994 following the amalgamation of a number of teacher education institutions. It came under the aegis of the University Grants Committee (UGC) in 1996. It has been offering publicly funded bachelor and taught postgraduate degrees since 1998. In 2002, it began offering sub-degree programmes. It is the only institution in Hong Kong with a primary focus on teacher education. Starting in 2010 and with a view to becoming a multi-disciplinary institution, HKIED has offered a small number of non-teacher education programmes, as well as research postgraduate programmes, with additional resources provided by the Government.

Teacher education landscape

4. The observations on changes in the global landscape in teacher education highlighted in the 2009 Report still hold true in 2015. Similar to its Report in 2007, McKinsey's 2010 follow-up research on the transformation of school system performance continued to emphasise that any successful system of school education would rely heavily on good teachers. Similar findings may be found in the education policy documents of Singapore and China. The League Table of global school rankings published by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in May 2015, which placed Hong Kong in second place globally, provided further evidence of the value placed on education by the community in Hong Kong.

Characteristics used worldwide to determine university title

5. As the terms of reference of the Review Group include providing advice to the UGC on, "whether HKIED ... possesses the qualities and attributes commonly expected of a university and should be granted university title at this juncture", the Review Group decided that it should re-examine the issue of, "the qualities and attributes commonly expected of a university". It accordingly undertook desk-based research on the common practice in a number of jurisdictions around the world.

6. Common themes emerging from the research echoed the findings of the 2009 Review Group. A university is expected to display most if not all of the following characteristics: sound quality assurance of programmes, procedures and systems; periodic scrutiny by external academic peers; robust governance both in terms of structures and their operation; academic autonomy; student involvement in governance; academic breadth; peer-acknowledged research and scholarship; and possession of self-certification or degree awarding powers.

Review process: fact-finding and evidence-gathering

7. The Review Group already had at its disposal a significant amount of documentary material and data about the Institute, largely sourced from the external scrutiny of HKIEd, which had taken place at various times and by various bodies since 2003. In order to round out its understanding of HKIEd, the Review Group conducted further fact-finding, including seeking supplementary information from HKIEd and the views of the education, academic and business communities in Hong Kong on HKIEd's application.

Evidence available to the Review Group

8. The evidence available to the Review Group included prior documentation (review groups in 2004 and 2009; Legislative Council Brief on the institutional development of HKIEd in 2009; Quality Assurance Council (QAC) Audit Report in 2011 & Progress Report submitted by HKIEd in 2013; PAA 2014), HKIEd's letter to the EDB of 7 July 2014, the HKIEd response to the questions put to it by the Review Group in December 2014, the letter from the EDB to the UGC of 26 January 2015 and views expressed by local associations and other interested stakeholders, along with the responses of HKIEd Council officers, senior management, staff, students and others during the visit made by the Review Group to the HKIEd Tai Po Campus on 9 - 10 February 2015, as well as observations made by Review Group members during that visit.

Determination of assessment criteria

9. The Review Group developed a set of key criteria covering the following seven aspects of HKIEd: vision, mission and strategic direction; academic breadth and subject complementarity; governance; academic standards and quality assurance; research accomplishments and

capacity; academic and academic supporting staff; and resources and support structures.

Criteria and Review Group findings

10. The Review Group findings are summarised as follows:

REVIEW CRITERIA	REVIEW GROUP OVERALL FINDINGS
<p>VISION, MISSION AND STRATEGIC DIRECTION</p> <p>Criterion 1.1: Institutional vision and mission are appropriate and clearly articulated</p> <p>Criterion 1.2: Staff and students understand and accept the mission</p>	<p>The vision, mission, aims and objectives of HKIED are appropriate and sustainable. 'Education-plus' as a concept is widely understood by staff and students</p>
<p>ACADEMIC BREADTH AND SUBJECT COMPLEMENTARITY</p> <p>Criterion 2.1: The range of disciplines is appropriate to its mission</p> <p>Criterion 2.2: Complementary disciplines meet stakeholder expectations of their having been chosen strategically and of their success in enhancing teacher education in Hong Kong</p>	<p>HKIED meets expectations of academic breadth. The development of complementary disciplines takes into account their potential contributions to the enhancement of educational practice in Hong Kong. Choices of discipline have been consistent with the 2009 Review Group Report.</p>
<p>GOVERNANCE</p> <p>Criterion 3.1: Inclusive academic planning and management processes, which facilitate the implementation of HKIED's mission</p> <p>Criterion 3.2: Robust and effective financial planning and resource allocation</p>	<p>HKIED demonstrates robust governance of its academic activities which incorporate participation by campus constituencies and external stakeholders. Strong financial planning and transparent resource allocation have allowed HKIED to build on opportunities.</p>
<p>ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE</p> <p>Criterion 4.1: Academic standards are appropriate and rigorous</p> <p>Criterion 4.2: Quality Assurance is integral to HKIED's academic activities, including quality enhancement based on QA outcomes</p>	<p>Academic standards set by HKIED and attained by students are appropriate to a higher education institution of good standing. Indicators of student quality are comparable to students on teacher education programmes in other universities in Hong Kong. Employer satisfaction with graduates is strong. Quality Assurance is fit for purpose, with assessment outputs used to enhance practice.</p>
<p>RESEARCH ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CAPACITY</p>	

<p>Criterion 5.1: Research and scholarly activity are fostered and supported among academic staff, postgraduate and undergraduate students</p> <p>Criterion 5.2: Research draws on academic strengths from across HKIEd and contributes to innovation in curriculum design and content</p>	<p>Investment from 2009 has brought significant dividends in terms of research outcomes and the quality of the student experience. Engagement with and success in research among staff shows a clear upward trend. Collaboration across disciplinary boundaries is evident. HKIEd has enhanced the research capacities of students by broadening their participation in courses and projects.</p>
<p>ACADEMIC AND ACADEMIC SUPPORTING STAFF</p> <p>Criterion 6.1: A significant proportion of the Academic and Academic Supporting staff have gained higher degrees/doctorates or equivalent qualifications and actively contribute to the advancement of knowledge in their fields</p> <p>Criterion 6.2: A coherent and comprehensive strategy for staff recruitment, development and retention</p>	<p>Recognition of the quality of its research is spreading to regional and international arenas. Academic staff members indicate a commitment to remain at HKIEd, with positive retention data as illustration. Workload is planned in a systematic way to ensure that staff have time to pursue scholarly endeavours. Student evaluations and external assessment indicate satisfaction with the quality of teaching.</p>
<p>RESOURCES AND SUPPORT STRUCTURES</p> <p>Criterion 7.1: Campus resources (financial, physical, IT, library) are well managed and are appropriate, given HKIEd's aims and objectives for its future development</p> <p>Criterion 7.2: Systems and services provide support for both teaching and research</p>	<p>Adequacy of resources and a flexible support structure for teaching and research are evident in HKIEd. Improvements to existing facilities and new building projects are scheduled. Planning is underway to ensure that HKIEd keeps pace with changes in teaching and research that require ongoing upgrades in library facilities, educational technology and in computing resources and support.</p>

HKIEd's progress since 2009

11. HKIEd has made commendable progress since 2009 in developing into a multi-disciplinary institution. Its traditional strength in teacher education has broadened to reflect the wider development of Education as an important professional field. That strength has been enhanced through the successful development of the complementary disciplines. In addition, the Institute has rapidly developed its research capabilities, using the funding and other support made available to it to build a solid foundation for further growth in its research activity. The Review Group

RECOMMENDS that the UGC note the satisfactory progress made by HKIED since 2009 in developing into a successful multi-disciplinary institution.

Self-accreditation in the 2014 PAA subject areas

12. HKIED has had the authority to self-accredit the courses it offers in Education since 2004. As such courses constitute the major part of the Institute's activities, the Review Group considers that the processes and structures in place to satisfy external scrutiny by the QAC are as mature and well-founded as in the other UGC-funded institutions in Hong Kong. In view of this maturity and of the ample evidence of high quality teaching and research performance, the Review Group

RECOMMENDS to the UGC that HKIED be granted self-accrediting status in the three programme areas covered by its existing PAA status.

Grant of University title

13. The Review Group considers that HKIED already possesses the qualities and attributes commonly expected of a university. It is fully worthy of joining the ranks of the other UGC-funded universities in Hong Kong and sharing their status as institutions with full powers of self-accreditation. The Review Group

RECOMMENDS to the UGC that HKIED should be granted university title at this juncture.

Self-accreditation

14. Evidence suggests that there is no substantive difference between HKIED and the other UGC-funded universities in relation to the quality of internal academic processes underpinning the validation and award of degrees and sub-degree qualifications. Student outcomes in terms of graduate quality are also comparable to the other UGC-funded universities. Bearing that in mind, the Review Group considers that University title with full powers of self-accreditation is appropriate for the Institute. The phasing of the move to the new status of full self-accreditation would need to be a matter for more detailed consideration but the move to self-accreditation in the three PAA programme areas should be initiated as soon as is practicable.

Possible 'mission drift'

15. Now and into the future, formal safeguards to preserve the core mission lie in the strong governance of the Institute. It should be made explicit in the formal enabling instruments that HKIEd's core activity will remain the education of teachers and that the programmes it offers must be directly relevant or complementary to such an end.

Institutional title

16. The Review Group considers that it will be a matter for the HKIEd Council, staff and students to decide on an appropriate title for the Institute, signifying that it has University status. Analogous to the question of the preservation of the core mission in the enabling instruments, the Review Group believes that the future title should refer explicitly to the core mission of education and thus should contain the word "Education".

Areas for further improvements

17. The use of 'University' in its title will bring with it heightened external expectations of the Institute. In this context, the Review Group proposes a number of actions, which it believes may help the Institute to respond to such expectations. These include clearer articulation and further development of the vision and mission, planning for changing external circumstances, enhancing research co-ordination and support, establishing a small International Advisory Forum, and strengthening fund-raising efforts.

Conclusion

18. The right to use university in its title has long been an ambition of HKIEd. Since the first meeting in October 2014, the Review Group has had an extensive opportunity to learn about HKIEd - its current activities, its achievements and its potential. The Review Group has concluded that the award of this right to the title of 'university' is now fully warranted. The Review Group has been impressed by the importance that Hong Kong places on education and the critical role played by HKIEd in ensuring that the teachers, in whose hands that education lies, are of the highest quality. As well as the strong evidence of the primacy that the HKIEd gives to the quality of its teaching and research, the Review Group was consistently impressed with the enthusiasm and commitment of staff at all levels within HKIEd and, it

should be added, of its students. The Review Group wishes the HKIED a long and prosperous future as the eighth UGC-funded campus-based university.

PART TWO: PUTTING THE REVIEW IN CONTEXT

2.1 PREAMBLE AND BACKGROUND

The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd)

2.1.1 The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd) was formally established in 1994¹ following the amalgamation of a number of teacher education institutions. It came under the aegis of the University Grants Committee (UGC) in 1996 and has been offering publicly funded bachelor and taught postgraduate degrees since 1998. In 2002, it began offering sub-degree programmes. It is the only institution in Hong Kong with a primary focus on teacher education. Starting in 2010 and with a view to becoming a multi-disciplinary institution, HKIEd has offered a small number of non-teacher education programmes, as well as research postgraduate programmes with additional resources provided by the Government. Some general background information on the education landscape in Hong Kong, including kindergarten education, school education and higher education is set out in **Annex F**.

UGC Institutional Review of HKIEd in 2003

2.1.2 In 2003, on completion of the Teaching and Learning Quality Process Review (TLQPR), HKIEd submitted a formal request for the UGC to conduct an institutional review to assess whether the Institute was ready for self-accrediting status². A Review Panel comprising local members and overseas experts was formed, which subsequently recommended granting self-accrediting status to HKIEd for the programmes on offer in the Institute at the time, which were exclusively in the field of teacher education. This recommendation was endorsed by the UGC and then approved by the Government in 2004.

¹ In its Fifth Report, the Education Commission recommended the amalgamation of Northcote College of Education, Sir Robert Black College of Education, Grantham College of Education, Hong Kong Technical Teachers' College and the Institute of Language in Education to become an autonomous HKIEd.

² In Hong Kong, currently, the eight UGC-funded institutions enjoy either full or, in the case of HKIEd, limited self-accrediting status and may accredit their own programmes at degree or above levels, provided that the institution has an enduring commitment to quality, a sound quality assurance mechanism and processes to ensure quality of its programmes and graduates. HKIEd was granted full status on its teacher education programmes in 2004 but has been required to seek external accreditation for non-teacher education programmes introduced from 2010 onwards. This dual position - of having self-accrediting status for teacher education (which makes up the bulk of its programmes and student numbers) but not for other programmes - sets it apart from the other UGC-funded institutions, which have full self-accrediting status for all of their programmes. In order to launch and operate the non-teacher education courses, HKIEd is required to seek programme validation and accreditation from the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation on Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ).

Review of HKIEd's Development Blueprint in 2009

2.1.3 In June 2007, HKIEd submitted its 'Development Blueprint: Becoming a University of Education' (referred to as the 'Development Blueprint'), which put forward a number of proposals for its future development, including the transformation of the Institute into a university specialising in Education. At the request of the Government, the UGC formed a Review Group in August 2007 to undertake a comprehensive review of the Institute. The Review Group adopted a broad approach in its examination of HKIEd's Development Blueprint and of the institution's capacity, especially its academic and research strengths. Its approach included laying out the possible pathways which the Institute might follow to become a university.

2.1.4 The Review Group completed the review and submitted its Report to the UGC and subsequently to the Government in early 2009. The Report concluded that, as evident from the experience of leading teacher education institutions across different continents and cultures, developing a multi-disciplinary learning environment and a strong research capacity were two key components for enhancing teacher education. Students trained in such a setting would have a richer learning experience. Graduates would often be found to be more adaptive to the challenges of changing classroom demands and better equipped to tackle real life problems as a teacher. Specifically, the Report contained four recommendations:

- (a) that a University of Education, particularly one of a mono-technic character, should not be established in the UGC sector, and that other strategies be followed to lift the capacity of the HKIEd to best enhance teacher education and promote excellence in the Hong Kong higher education sector;
- (b) that the HKIEd should give priority to the strategic development of teacher education in Hong Kong, the development of additional disciplines complementary to Education and the development of a research and research training environment;
- (c) that the HKIEd should seek to implement the proposals set out in the Report by one of two options –
 - (i) by developing into a multidisciplinary institution with a

focus on education and other complementary disciplines, primarily offering undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes and undertaking research and research training; or

- (ii) by forming a partnership with an existing university in order to provide a multidisciplinary learning and research environment and flexible career pathways for its students while developing other proposals congruent with the mutually agreed development plans of HKIEd and the partner university; and
- (d) that the Government should approach the institutional development of the HKIEd as a matter requiring additional funding, over and above existing levels of funding provided to the UGC and should continue to take a flexible approach in planning the manpower dimension of teacher education.

2.1.5 HKIEd welcomed the recommendations laid down in the Report, choosing the proposal to develop the Institute into a multi-disciplinary institution as its preferred option. To support the Institute, the Government and the UGC, with the approval of the Executive Council and the Legislative Council, provided extra resources to HKIEd for –

- (a) 120 First Year First Degree³ (FYFD) places to launch four new non-education bachelor degree programmes, i.e. **Bachelor of Social Sciences (Global and Environmental Studies)** in 2010/11 (with 40 intake places, and then 30 intake places from 2012/13 onwards), **Bachelor of Arts in Language Studies** in 2010/11 (with 40 intake places), **Bachelor of Arts in Creative Arts and Culture** in 2011/12 (with 40 intake places, and then 30 intake places from 2012/13 onwards) and **Bachelor of Social Sciences in Psychology** in 2012/13 (for the four-year cohort only with 20 intake places). To help HKIEd better prepare for the provision of the courses, the UGC separately granted a one-off \$10 million to HKIEd as start-up funding for the new disciplines. The first cohort of students graduated in 2013⁴.

³ First-year-first-degree (FYFD) places refer to undergraduate intake places. In Hong Kong, the number of UGC-funded places at various levels of study is determined by the Government. For the 2014/15 academic year, the number of FYFD places as approved by the Government is 15 000, of which 770 places are assigned to teacher education.

⁴ See statistics for 2014 graduates at http://www.ied.edu.hk/web/view.php?page=facts_employment_figures

- (b) 30 research postgraduate places (RPgs) to build up HKIEd's research capacity from 2009/10 onwards.

Development since the 2009 Development Blueprint Exercise

2.1.6 In line with the 'Education-plus' vision adopted in 2009, the Institute has worked consistently towards becoming an Education-focused, multidisciplinary and research-strong institution. Building on its traditional strength in teacher education, HKIEd has expanded its academic scope into the Humanities and Social Sciences, as well as Creative Arts and Culture. It has also diversified its range of programme offerings at the bachelor, postgraduate diploma, professional and research postgraduate levels to meet the needs of in-service teachers and the community.

2.1.7 HKIEd submitted a report⁵ to the EDB in January 2012 summarising its progress since 2009 in pursuit of university title, including the development and subsequent operation in practice of the non-Education disciplines introduced since 2010/11 and the achievements made in building up the research capacity of the Institute. EDB subsequently issued a press statement affirming that HKIEd was proceeding on the right direction in its pursuit of university title. However, EDB's statement also reiterated that some key milestones had to be achieved, including the existence of evidence that the Institute already possessed the qualities and attributes commonly expected of a university. For EDB, these qualities included a solid track record in offering programmes in complementary disciplines and an expanding capacity in research. Specifically, this meant that HKIEd's new disciplines and research programmes would need to have been in operation for a sufficiently long period to build "a good and solid track record",⁶ before the Institute might submit the complementary disciplines to the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation on Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) for programme revalidation and programme area accreditation (PAA).

2.1.8 From 2012 to 2014 HKIEd worked with HKCAAVQ to undergo the four-stage accreditation process⁷ for three non-Education

⁵ 'Final Preparation for University Title': report submitted by HKIEd to the Education Bureau, Hong Kong, January 2012

⁶ EDB Press Statement on HKIEd's application for pursuit of university title, 20 January 2012 <http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201201/20/P201201200519.htm>

⁷ The HKCAAVQ uses the Four-Stage Quality Assurance Process to accredit operators and their learning programmes under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (QF). The four stages are Initial

areas, namely Chinese Studies, English Studies and Environmental Studies. The PAA status for these three programme areas was subsequently granted by HKCAAVQ to HKIEd in July 2014 with a validity period of five years from 2014/15 to the 2018/19 academic year.

Submission of Application for University Title

2.1.9 HKIEd submitted an application for university title to the EDB in July 2014, attaching the accreditation report from the HKCAAVQ with the PAA status approved for the three programme areas. Following previous practice, the EDB invited the UGC to carry out a special review on HKIEd to determine whether it possesses the necessary capacity and qualities to be accorded university title. The EDB letter together with HKIEd's application is at **Annex A**.

2.1.10 The EDB invited the UGC to refer to the Legislative Council Brief (**Annex B**) which highlights factors to take into account when considering whether a higher education institution should be granted university title. The Brief highlights the following attributes: quality and standard of academic programmes; level and mix of programmes offered; quality of students and standing of academic staff; research capability; internal governance; quality assurance structures and the extent of self-accrediting powers; resources available to the institution; and public interest. The UGC agreed at its meeting on 12 September 2014 to form a Review Group to conduct a special review of HKIEd's application. The terms of reference and membership of the Review Group are at **Annexes C(1) – C(2)**.

2.2 TEACHER EDUCATION LANDSCAPE IN HONG KONG AND BEYOND

2.2.1 As explained above (Section 2.1.3), the primary focus for the 2009 Review Group was HKIEd's 'Development Blueprint'. The Review Group took a widespread look at how the education and training of teachers had developed in different jurisdictions around the world. It found that there had been significant developments since the 1970s in many jurisdictions to enhance teacher education, such enhancements

Evaluation (IE), Programme Validation (PV), Programme Area Accreditation (PAA) and Periodic Review (PR). Operators that wish to have their learning programmes validated are required to present evidence that they meet the required standards as specified in the Four-Stage Quality Assurance Process. More information about HKCAAVQ's Four-stage Quality Assurance Process can be found at: <http://www.hkcaavq.edu.hk/en/services/accreditation/four-stage-qa-process>

being an explicit recognition of the fundamental importance of good teachers to improving standards of achievement among school children. The Legislative Council Brief, which adopted many of the recommendations of the 2009 Review Group Report, referred specifically⁸ to the importance of such enhancements for school education in Hong Kong.

2.2.2 The observations on changes in the global landscape in teacher education highlighted in the 2009 Report still hold true in 2015. Similar to its Report in 2007, McKinsey's 2010 follow-up research on the transformation of school system performance⁹ continued to emphasise that any successful system of school education would rely heavily on good teachers. Similar findings may be found in the education policy documents of Singapore¹⁰ and China¹¹. The League Table of global school rankings published by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in May 2015, which placed Hong Kong in second place globally, provided further evidence of the value placed on education by the community in Hong Kong¹².

2.2.3 One corollary of the search for continuous improvements in standards in schools is a similar search for improvement in teacher education. In a global academic environment, that search reflects the development of Education as an academic field in its own right, demonstrating well-founded scholarship and research. 'Teacher training' has developed into 'Teacher Education'. In view of HKIED's role in producing a majority of the new teachers employed each year in Hong Kong, it is of great importance to Hong Kong that the teacher education offered by HKIED is of the highest quality at all levels.

Impact of developments in and demand from Mainland China

2.2.4 Following the publication of its Higher Education Review Report in 2010¹³, which stated that internationalisation should become

⁸ Legislative Council Brief - Institutional Development of the Hong Kong Institute of Education (Annex B to this report). It can also be found at http://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/about-edb/press/legco/others/legco%20brief%20on%20hkied%20development%20_eng_.pdf

⁹ M.Mourshed, C.Chijioko, M.Barber: "How the world's most improved school systems keep getting better" McKinsey and Company Education, November 2010, page 40-42

¹⁰ A Teacher Education Model for the 21st century (TE21), a Report by the National Institute of Education, Singapore http://www.nie.edu.sg/files/TE21_Executive%20Summary_14052010%20-%20updated.pdf

¹¹ The "Programme of Exemplary Teacher Training" – <http://www.inruled.org/iERD/Publication/Development%20of%20Teacher%20%20Training%20in%20China.pdf>

¹² <http://internationalednews.com/2015/05/26/the-biggest-ever-league-table/>

¹³ 'Aspirations for the Higher Education System in Hong Kong - Report of the University Grants

one of the central themes of all UGC-funded institutions, the UGC has explicitly stated that, it “sees internationalisation and engagement with Mainland China as the key to Hong Kong’s future”¹⁴. It has been providing additional funding, through initiatives such as its ‘Matching Grant Scheme for International Activities’ and one-off incentive payments, designed to provide more overseas exchange opportunities for local students. More broadly, the intention is that such moves to increase the outbound experience (through Hong Kong students being encouraged to spend part of their course studying outside Hong Kong) and the inbound experience (through students from abroad being encouraged to come to Hong Kong)¹⁵ should form part of the aspiration for Hong Kong to become *the* regional education hub for the Pan-Asia Region. It has been stressed that, “what has been achieved since the early twenty-first century in Hong Kong is not about ‘mainlandization’ or regionalization but genuinely internationalization”.¹⁶ While understanding that Hong Kong's relationship with Mainland China will remain of great importance, higher education institutions, including HKIEd, need to develop global strategies, which encompass that fact but do not constrain them from looking beyond both Hong Kong and Mainland China.

2.2.5 While HKIEd has responded well to the UGC’s initiatives and has provided evidence of the extent to which it has encouraged its students to pursue part of their studies abroad, wider social developments stemming from the relationship between Hong Kong and Mainland China may impact on the Institute in relation to the demand for its graduates. Two demographic trends are working in opposite directions: the growing migration of non-locals (especially Mainland students) to Hong Kong to pursue higher education and the declining local population in Hong Kong (including school age children). These opposing trends create challenges for teacher education institutions because the combined effect is not yet clear from a manpower planning point of view. It is possible that in future more children from Mainland China will be enrolled in Hong Kong schools. It was reported in 2014 that more than 17 000 children crossed the border from Mainland China to Hong Kong every day to attend school¹⁷. That number has increased substantially since 2001 and has put

Committee 2010’ (<http://www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/doc/ugc/publication/report/her2010/her2010-rpt.pdf>)

¹⁴ ‘Internationalisation and Engagement with Mainland China’, from the UGC 2011 Annual Report (<http://www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/ugc/publication/report/figure2011/a001.htm>)

¹⁵ Moves are also underway to encourage school pupils to “exchange” with paired schools in Mainland China - see Para 157 of the 2015 Policy Address (<http://www.policyaddress.gov.hk/2015/eng/pdf/PA2015.pdf>)

¹⁶ “Hong Kong higher education in the 21st century”, Dr M.H.Lee, Hong Kong Teachers Centre Journal, Vol.13, page 15 - 34

¹⁷ “Hong Kong can’t ignore social impact of mainland integration”: Belinda Hui King-fai, (The Hong Kong Council of Social Service) in the South China Morning Post, 4th September 2012

pressures on Hong Kong, not least in the capacity of schools in Hong Kong to deal with the demand. While parents in Mainland China might choose to send their children to school in Hong Kong because of the quality of the education provided, language barriers may present serious difficulties for the children (Cantonese-speaking parents but children being taught in English, for instance, or Putonghua-speaking parents with children being taught in Cantonese and English). In its role as the principal source of graduate teachers in Hong Kong, HKIED has already responded to some of these pressures and is in a good position to collaborate with other agencies to do more¹⁸.

2.2.6 Demand for higher education in Mainland China continues to grow, with overseas higher education institutions going some way to accommodate ever-increasing student numbers. There is a strongly held view among some Chinese parents that studying at an overseas university will place their children at an advantage in terms of future prospects for employment and social mobility. In this context, Hong Kong provides the benefits of ‘studying abroad’ in a place deeply infused with western culture in terms of language environment and social, legal and educational structures, as well as geographical and cultural proximity to China. Hong Kong universities experience strong demand from Mainland China applicants¹⁹ but they are limited in the number of students whom they may admit, by the resources at their disposal, by the need to mix local and non-local students judiciously and by UGC policy. Although there has been a significant decline in the overall number of applications from Mainland China students for entry to the 2015/16 year, the demand for places is still much greater than the supply.

2.2.7 HKIED enrolled 276 non-local students to UGC-funded programmes in 2013/14, compared with 7,589 local students. Of those 276 students, 259 came from Mainland China²⁰. HKIED has adopted as a

(<http://www.scmp.com/comment/insight-opinion/article/1028844/hong-kong-cant-ignore-social-impact-mainland-integration>)

¹⁸ For example, the Student Affairs Office organized support services and integration activities for Mainland, Taiwan and other non-local students, including a Buddy Programme (<http://www.ied.edu.hk/lt/view.php?secid=5486>). An ‘Internationalisation and Campus Integration Award Competition’ is set up to recognise student organisations or groups, organising meaningful projects that promote internationalisation and campus integration. It is also noted that projects are underway to examine the support provided to new non-local students’ academic and social-cultural integration into the HKIED communities in an evidence-based approach (https://oraas0.ied.edu.hk/ric/web/project_details.jsp?pid=2515880&r=&k=social+integration).

¹⁹ Professor Tony F Chan, President of Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, reported in 2014 that HKUST received 6,770 applications in 2013 from Mainland China and admitted 180 students from that number (in “The impact of global trends on Hong Kong higher education”, Professor T.F.Chan , Q.S. Showcase, 14th February 2014)

²⁰ University Grants Committee of Hong Kong statistics (<http://cdcf.ugc.edu.hk/cdcf/searchUniv.do?actionType=searchUniversity&mode=&lang=EN&universi>

‘key milestone’ for 2016 that the number of full-time non-local students should be kept at a level of 15%²¹ of the total number of students in the Institute.

2.2.8 Overall, HKIEd is in a competitive position in what is admittedly a rather limited market in which teacher education is not among the most popular choices of students. HKIEd's fees for non-local students (HK\$110,000 for one year of a BEd course) compare favourably with a similar course in Australia (the equivalent of HK\$220,000 for one year of a BEd course at Monash University, for instance). As an institution, HKIEd has decided to provide at least 80% of its instruction in English, while continuing to recognise that bilingual and trilingual competencies in teachers (English, Cantonese, Putonghua) equip them with the essential skills for effective instruction in schools. The Hong Kong Government relaxed its restrictions on non-local students taking up internships and part-time employment in 2014. The Government also has in place the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals, which allows graduates of recognised Hong Kong higher education institutions to apply for the right to be employed in Hong Kong after graduation.

2.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF A UNIVERSITY

2.3.1 As the terms of reference of the present Review Group include providing advice to the UGC on, "whether HKIEd ... possesses the qualities and attributes commonly expected of a university and should be granted university title at this juncture", the Review Group considered that it would be useful to examine "the qualities and attributes commonly expected of a university". It accordingly undertook desk-based research on common practice in a number of jurisdictions from around the world.

2.3.2 Starting from the findings of the 2009 Review Group²², it was decided to revisit practices in those jurisdictions looked at in 2009 (the various jurisdictions within the United Kingdom; Australia; the United States; China; and Japan). In addition, the OECD 'Programme for International School Assessment' (PISA) 2012 ratings provided examples of jurisdictions where the high quality of mathematics teaching in schools

[ties=HKIEd&fields=Enrol_Origin_2013\)](#)

²¹ http://www.ied.edu.hk/sp2013-16/1_ENG_Key_milestones.html

²² Research Findings: Attributes of a University - Annex F of the Report of the Review Group on Hong Kong Institute of Education's development Blueprint dated 17.2.2009 at http://www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/doc/ugc/publication/report/hkied_review_report/annex_f_e.pdf

offered one proxy for quality of education in general. Thus, practices in Estonia²³, Finland²⁴, Netherlands²⁵, New Zealand²⁶, Poland²⁷, Singapore²⁸, South Korea²⁹ and Taiwan³⁰ were examined, as well as those in Hong Kong.

2.3.3 Common themes emerging from the research echoed the findings of the 2009 Review Group. A university is expected to display most if not all of the following characteristics (the order does not imply precedence):

- Sound quality assurance of programmes, procedures and systems;
- Periodic scrutiny by external academic peers;
- Robust governance, both in terms of structures and their operation;
- Academic autonomy;
- Student involvement in governance;
- Academic breadth;
- Peer-acknowledged research and scholarship; and
- Powers of self-certification or to award degrees.

²³ Universities Act (12 January 1995) - <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/521032014002/consolide>

²⁴ Universities Act 2009 (558/2009) - <http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/2009/en20090558.pdf>

²⁵ See, for example, Recognition of institutions in the Netherlands - NVAO (Dutch quality assurance body) - http://nvaio.com/recognition_of_institutions_in_the_netherlands

²⁶ Education Act 1989 - <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1989/0080/latest/DLM175959.html>

²⁷ Law on Higher Education, 2005, Article 3 -

https://www.nauka.gov.pl/g2/oryginal/2013_12/d687905792f5ff6a3ecf84d7df4f8e57.pdf

²⁸ Please refer to requirements in, e.g. Singapore Enhanced Registration Network for Higher Education - <https://www.cpe.gov.sg/cpe/slot/u100/Publication/publication/ERF%20HANDBOOK%20PDF.pdf>

²⁹ Higher Education Act, Section 2.1 -

http://www.moleg.go.kr/english/korLawEng.jsessionid=N8rtIMXT6nkiiKgZ3DnKMKIeeWiaiiXw7RUXnMmfzHs3mnZTef15GdovVtliQ1AI.moleg_a2_servlet_engine2?pstSeq=52250&pageIndex=57

³⁰ Enshrined in the University Act (amended 3 January 2007) and the subject of further development (see <http://english.moe.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=15708&ctNode=11410&mp=1>)

PART THREE: THE REVIEW PROCESS

3.1 Terms of Reference

3.1.1 The terms of reference of the Review Group are as follows:

1. To advise the Government, in the light of the community's needs and the promotion of excellence in the higher education sector, and having regard to the Government's decision on the institutional development of The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIED) on 23 June 2009 (details are set out in the relevant Legislative Council Brief at **Annex B**), the Programme Area Accreditation (PAA) Report on HKIED issued by the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications in July 2014³¹, as well as any other evidence that may be obtained through a special review on HKIED -

(a) on HKIED's progress in developing into a multi-disciplinary institution with a focus on teacher education and a good spread of other complementary disciplines and implementing the recommendations made in the University Grants Committee (UGC)'s Report of the Review Group on Hong Kong Institute of Education's Development Blueprint published in February 2009;

(b) on whether HKIED should be granted self-accrediting status in the programme areas covered by its existing PAA status, having regard to the quality of the relevant programmes and in terms of both teaching and research performance;

(c) in light of (a) and (b), on whether HKIED already possesses the qualities and attributes commonly expected of a university and should be granted the university title at this juncture;

(d) on whether there are any other actions HKIED should take in future to further its role and improve the quality of education it provides.

³¹ Accreditation Report on the Hong Kong Institute of Education Programme Area Accreditation – Institutional Review and Discipline Review of Chinese Studies, English Studies and Environmental Studies, Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ), July 2014

2. To bring to the Government's attention issues of concern, if any, in relation to HKIEd's application for university title.

3.2 Fact-finding

3.2.1 The Review Group already had at its disposal a significant amount of documentary material and data about the Institute, largely sourced from the external scrutiny of HKIEd, which had taken place at various times and by various bodies since 2003 (*detailed in paras 2.1.2 to 2.1.8 above*). In order to round out its understanding of HKIEd, the Review Group conducted further fact-finding, including seeking supplementary information from HKIEd and the views of the education, academic and business communities in Hong Kong on HKIEd's application. The list of stakeholders is at **Annex D**. The Review Group also sought the views of the Education Bureau on policy matters relating to the Review.

Questions to HKIEd and to Stakeholders

3.2.2 The questions put to HKIEd covered the following eight key areas:

1. Level and mix of current and potential programmes (relevant to its vision/mission)
2. Internal management structure (relevant to its Governance)
3. Academic standards and quality assurance systems (relevant to its quality assurance structure)
4. Resources (relevant to its overall financial management)
5. Qualifications, quality and motivation of academic staff (relevant to its staff establishment)
6. Quality of students
7. Quality of teaching and learning
8. Research capacity

Stakeholders were asked to respond in writing with any views on:

1. The application from HKIEd to be allowed to incorporate 'University' in its title and the possible effect of that on the Institute's core Education mission;

2. In the event of the application being successful, the benefits of HKIEd becoming a 'University' to their particular sector and to the Hong Kong community in general;
3. Irrespective of the decision on university title, the future direction for HKIEd (e.g. continuing to focus on pre-service teacher education at undergraduate and graduate certificate/diploma levels or supplementing that with a heightened emphasis on higher degrees and research in Education and related disciplines).

3.2.3 A detailed analysis was undertaken of the direct responses from HKIEd and the stakeholder responses to the Group's questions.

Visiting HKIEd at the Tai Po campus

3.2.4 A visit to HKIEd was conducted on 9-10 February 2015 in order to have in-depth discussions with the following groups on issues in the eight key areas (the detailed programme for this visit is attached as **Annex E**):

- Council office-bearers;
- The President and his Senior Management Team;
- Academic and teaching* staff;
- Support staff
- Students (undergraduate, postgraduate and sub-degree, both full-time and part-time); and
- Others, including external examiners and external stakeholders.

* Teaching staff are categorised by HKIEd as 'Academic Supporting Staff'

3.3 STRUCTURE OF THE REVIEW

Evidence available to the Review

3.3.1 The evidence available to the Review Group included the following:

- Prior documentation (UGC 2004; UGC RG 2009; LegCo Brief 2009; Quality Assurance Council (QAC³² Audit Report in 2011 & Progress Report submitted by HKIEd in 2013; PAA 2014);

³² Quality Assurance Council (QAC) is a semi-autonomous non-statutory body set up under the aegis

- HKIEd letter to the EDB of 7 July 2014;
- The response from HKIEd to the questions put to it by the Review Group in December 2014;
- The views expressed by local associations and other interested stakeholders (**Annex D**);
- The responses of HKIEd Council officers, senior management, staff, students and others during the visit to the HKIEd Tai Po Campus on 9 - 10 February 2015, as well as observations made by Review Group members during that visit.

Determination of assessment criteria

3.3.2 The Review Group developed a set of key criteria, based on approaches used in a number of jurisdictions elsewhere and by, for instance, the QAC and HKCAAVQ in Hong Kong³³, covering the following seven areas:

1. Vision, Mission and Strategic Direction of HKIEd
2. Academic Breadth and Subject Complementarity
3. Governance
4. Academic Standards and Quality Assurance
5. Research Accomplishments and Capacity
6. Academic and Academic Supporting Staff
7. Resources and Support Structures

3.3.3 In the following sections, the two key criteria which guided the Review Group's evaluation of HKIEd's application in each of the above areas are highlighted. The conclusions and recommendations of the Review Group resulting from its assessment of these criteria against evidence are set out in **Part Four**.

3.4 AREA ONE: VISION, MISSION AND STRATEGIC DIRECTION

of the University Grants Committee (UGC) in 2007. The QAC assists the UGC in providing third-party oversight of the quality of the institutions' educational provision, including the undertaking of periodic quality audits of the institutions.

³³ see for example the United Kingdom's Quality Assurance Agency guidelines at <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/daput>

Criterion 1.1: Institutional vision and mission are appropriate and clearly articulated

Criterion 1.2: Staff and students understand and accept the mission

3.4.1 The vision of HKIED is:

“... to be a leading University in the Asia Pacific Region, focusing on Education and complementary disciplines and recognized for our excellence in nurturing competent and caring professionals and (for) the impact of our scholarship”³⁴.

3.4.2 The mission of the Institute to fulfill that vision is grounded in Education as its particular area of academic expertise, but complemented by related academic disciplines to create what the Institute describes as, ‘Education-plus’.

Review Group Commentary: ‘Education-plus’

Education-plus is an approach to academic study developed by HKIED. Based on its long-term expertise in pedagogy/teacher education, the Institute has used the introduction of complementary disciplines as a catalyst for enhancing the curricular content of both teacher education and non-teacher education degrees. It also provides opportunities for cross-programme synergies.

These opportunities enable students to interact academically and professionally across discipline boundaries, thereby enriching their learning experience and broadening their horizons. The exposure to a multi-disciplinary environment has the potential to enhance the quality of future teachers, as well as to provide students with a wider range of subject choices and specialisms, leading to broadened academic and career pathways.

The key to Education-plus is the curricular framework, which is common across all programmes. Four curricular components (General Education; Language Enhancement; Co-curricular Learning; and Overseas Learning Experiences) provide students with a common grounding in each of these areas. Students may also choose a second major or minor from outside their programme area. In addition, all students are required to complete at least one elective course from outside their home faculty.

³⁴ Vision of HKIED as expressed in http://www.ied.edu.hk/web/hkied_vision_and_mission.html

3.4.3 The Review Group sought evidence that the vision and mission were understood and actively supported by senior management, academic and support staff and students, as well as by the Institute's governing body, the Council. The Review Group also considered the question of whether the climate in the Institute was one in which members of the HKIEd community believed their opinions were valued.

3.4.4 The 'Responses to Questions' (attached as Annex G) document submitted to the Review Group by the Institute in December 2014 provided some of that evidence. Nonetheless, it was not wholly clear to the Review Group in advance of its visit to the Institute in February 2015 how the mission (Education-plus) flowed from the vision and, indeed, how the mission was being implemented in relation to teaching and research. Although the vision was clear, the means by which the Institute would achieve it were not well articulated.

3.4.5 Discussions held during the February 2015 visit with Council Officers, Senior Management, staff and students, at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, clarified for Review Group members that 'Education-plus' was seen as the particular characteristic of HKIEd which differentiated it from the other UGC-funded higher education institutions in Hong Kong. Education-plus drew on HKIEd's long-established expertise in and approach to pedagogy but added teaching and research in complementary areas to create what was described by President Stephen Cheung as, "a new brand".

3.4.6 The Review Group was satisfied that this "new brand" represented valuable opportunities for future teachers in Hong Kong to be able to study in a multi-disciplinary environment, contributing to the knowledge base of their field. Such opportunity would previously not have been possible. On the other hand, the number of undergraduates in the complementary areas taking advantage of the Education-plus common curricular structure by adding Education-based classes to their studies was growing on a year-by-year basis³⁵. In 2014/15, for example, 19 students from Language Studies, 67 students from Creative Arts and Culture, 68 students from Global and Environmental Studies and 121 students from Psychology were enrolled in at least one Education class (representing a 57% increase over 2013/14). BEd students enrolled in

³⁵ Supplementary information requested by the Review Group following the February 2015 visit and supplied by HKIEd in February 2015 contained data on non-teacher education students taking teacher education classes and *vice versa*. The data shows an increase in 'cross-choice' of subjects between 2013/14 and 2014/15.

non-Education classes in 2014/15 were as follows: 287 in Language Studies; 185 in Creative Arts and Culture; 39 in Global and Environmental Studies; and 661 in Psychology. These totals represent a 43% increase over 2013/14.

3.4.7 There is still progress to be made in further exploration and manifestation of the 'Education-plus' concept within the Institute, which reflects the fact that it has only been in operation for a limited time. In general, the Institute would benefit from a clearer articulation of the framework and structures and the resulting benefits of its 'Education-plus' approach, especially for external audiences, not least potential students.

3.4.8 One important aspect of the vision is its international dimension. The Institute has set its sights well beyond Hong Kong, taking in a region (Asia-Pacific), which contains a number of jurisdictions where higher education is well developed and well-resourced, not least in the area of teacher education. Competition for students and for the best researchers has become more intense, as higher education institutions have increasingly looked beyond their local boundaries. It is by any measure a bold step to take what has essentially been a local institution and set it against universities which have developed global reputations for excellence over many years of international activity. Reputations are not developed overnight. However, the Review Group found evidence that HKIED is making rapid progress in developing its reputation as a respected member of the global higher education network. In addition, members were impressed with the adoption of an international element as a core pillar of the Education-plus common structure, as well as by the encouragement and financial support given to students to pursue study abroad as part of their degree programme.

3.4.9 Staff recruited from overseas and the encouragement given to researchers to participate in the international community of scholars in their various disciplines are further evidence that HKIED is developing as an institution which does not feel constrained in its activities by local boundaries. Although global league tables have their shortcomings, the appearance of HKIED in fifteenth place in the top 100 of the 2014/15 QS Top Universities in Education³⁶, having improved its position from being between fifty-first and one hundredth in 2013/14, is an indication that the

³⁶ Quacquarelli Symonds QS World University Rankings 2015, Page 17 - the improvement in HKIED's position was described as a "standout performance" in the QS media statement accompanying the release of the rankings . See: <http://www.topuniversities.com/qs-world-university-rankings>

strategy of taking HKIEd well beyond the borders of Hong Kong is beginning to pay dividends.

3.4.10 One important aspect of strong governance is the ability of an institution to measure its performance across a wide spectrum of activities and to use the outcomes of that measurement as a cornerstone of a policy of continuous quality improvement. Benchmarking with like organisations or institutions is a useful tool as part of such a policy. While the Review Group was pleased to note that HKIEd had entered into some form of benchmarking arrangements with Tokyo Gakugei University, Beijing Normal University and National Taiwan Normal University (each ‘market leaders’ in teacher education in their respective jurisdictions), the Review Group thought that the exercise needed to be developed beyond the exchange of descriptive information towards sharing and comparison of hard outcomes data. Such a development would increase significantly the effectiveness of the benchmarking exercise as a tool for enhanced performance.

Conclusion

3.4.11 The vision, mission aims and objectives of HKIEd are clearly stated and appropriate. 'Education-plus' as a vision is understood by staff and students, serves as a guiding concept in institutional development and, importantly, appears sustainable. Communication of the Education-plus concept to external audiences would benefit from clarification.

3.5 AREA TWO: ACADEMIC BREADTH AND SUBJECT COMPLEMENTARITY

Criterion 2.1: The range of disciplines is appropriate to its mission

Criterion 2.2: Complementary disciplines meet stakeholder expectations of their having been chosen strategically and of their success in enhancing teacher education in Hong Kong

3.5.1 The development of complementary disciplines was a key part of the recommendations contained in the Report of the 2009 Review Group. It has already been noted (*see Paras. 2.1.3 to 2.1.8 above*) that the Government’s acceptance of the recommendations set the Institute firmly on its current development path, based on Education-plus. As already mentioned the Government had also stated that such development should not lead to “inappropriate overlaps”.

Review Group Commentary: additional subject areas

The key to the success of the mix of teacher education and non-teacher education programmes in HKIED stems from the common curricular framework. The common framework has allowed programmes to be designed across Education and the additional subject areas of Creative Arts (Creative Arts and Culture); Language Studies (Chinese Studies; English Studies); and Humanities (Global and Environmental Studies; Psychology), thereby providing opportunity for synergies to develop. Evidence from external examiners and assessors, as well as from staff in the Institute, plus statistics on student performance, on the employment of teacher education and non-teacher education graduates and on employer satisfaction with both cohorts shows that the original aim of enhancing the student experience and encouraging synergy is being achieved.

3.5.2 The 2009 Review Group suggested that two or three disciplines additional to Education would provide additional breadth. The choice of disciplines (Creative Arts and Culture, Chinese Studies, English Studies, Global and Environmental Studies, Psychology) needed to be academically sound (links to and from Education would lead to substantive developments in the subject areas), strategic (growth in these areas would be consistent with the longer-term vision of the Institute) and pragmatic (they were extensions of existing interests and strengths within the Institute rather than entirely new disciplines for HKIED). Materials submitted by HKIED suggest that growth since 2009 has been steady and consistent with these recommendations, both across the new disciplines themselves and with Education.

3.5.3 The Review Group was aware of the possibility that enhanced multi-disciplinarity might have led to some distraction from the Institute's primary mission ("to promote and support the strategic development of teacher education in Hong Kong"³⁷). However, in the Review Group's discussions at the Institute during the February 2015 visit, there was no evidence to suggest any distraction from the core mission of teacher education. The Review Group noted in particular the

³⁷ See Strategic Plan 2013-16 "*Shaping the Future: Excellence in Learning, Teaching and Scholarship*" at http://www.ied.edu.hk/sp2013-16/1_ENG_The%20Planning%20Context.html

commitment to the primary mission and the understanding of its importance to the long-term success of the Institute shown by the senior members of the Council.

3.5.4 It was emphasised to the Review Group during discussion that this primary mission in teacher education was fundamental to any further development of the Institute. As already noted, the new disciplines on offer had been identified on account of their fit with Education and the possible synergies to be gained. That reasoning would be applied to any further additions to the current subject mix. While the Review Group had no specific subjects to suggest, a broadening of interests beyond Education, Humanities and Social Sciences would add richness to the academic make-up of the Institute. In the short run, collaborations in place with other higher education institutions in Hong Kong³⁸ would be another way of adding further breadth to its activities, including in the potentially capital-intensive Life and Natural Sciences.

3.5.5 The Review Group noted the Institute's further commitment to achieving synergies and stimulating innovative approaches through a requirement for inter-disciplinary collaboration in programme development. During discussions with staff from all faculties in February 2015, the Review Group was impressed with the evidence of a climate characterised by academic cohesiveness and cross-fertilisation across subject areas.

3.5.6 HKIED's senior management are confident that using the mix of disciplines as a means of achieving synergies and interdisciplinary development gives the Institute its particular niche within the higher education sector in Hong Kong. They see "Education-plus" as a strong brand. On the evidence encountered by the Review Group, their aspirations for the Institute's further development seem realistic and attainable.

3.5.7 Future developments, such as the offering of new double degrees or an enhancement of provision related to the teaching of children with special educational needs (SEN), look likely to build on existing structures, rather than necessitating investment in new subject

³⁸ Collaboration between the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) and HKIED has resulted in HKUST offering BSc degrees in science subjects (including Biochemistry and Physics) and education, with HKIED providing the education input. Graduates of the programmes are granted Registered Teacher Status (RTS) by the Education Bureau. Such collaborations have allowed HKIED to broaden its activities without a need to invest in provision for (expensive) laboratory-based subject areas. It provides a good model for further collaboration of this kind between HKIED and other universities in Hong Kong.

areas. The Review Group agreed that this approach to development was sensible at the present time.

Conclusion

3.5.8 HKIED meets expectations of academic breadth. The development of complementary disciplines takes into account their potential contributions to the enhancement of teacher education and overall educational practice in Hong Kong. Choices have been consistent with the 2009 Review Group Report.

3.6 AREA THREE: GOVERNANCE

Criterion 3.1: Inclusive academic planning and management processes, which facilitate the implementation of HKIED's mission

Criterion 3.2: Robust and effective financial planning and resource allocation

3.6.1 Strength in governance is universally recognised as an essential element in institutional success at all educational levels. In higher education, evidence of such strength is explicitly demanded in many jurisdictions as a pre-requisite for self-accreditation or the right to use the title 'University'³⁹. The Review Group was keen to test that strength within HKIED at all levels from the Institute's governing body down to its departments (academic and support).

3.6.2 The Institute provided the Review Group with extensive material on its governance structure. The Review Group also had as background material observations made by the earlier UGC Review Group in their 2009 Report, the QAC Audit Report on HKIED in 2011 and the progress report submitted by HKIED in 2013 and the HKCAAVQ July 2014 PAA Report. This material allowed the Review Group to tailor the questions it put to the Institute, both in advance of its February 2015 visit and during the visit. For example, while there was clarity in respect of the structures in place (the Council, the Academic Board and so on), the Review Group was keen to establish how the different elements within the overall structure interact with each other, how effective they were in ensuring that there is sound governance within the Institute and how individuals at HKIED perceived the effectiveness of governance

³⁹ For example, the Finland Universities Act, 2009 or the New Zealand Education Act of 1989 in Section 2.3.

processes, including the extent to which they believed their views are taken into account during decision-making.

3.6.3 The Review Group sought assurance on these elements, as well as on the overall management and financial control being sufficient both to manage existing operations effectively and to support future developments in pursuit of the Institute's vision and mission. Reference has been made above (see Para 3.5.3) to the discussion held between Council Officers and the Review Group. As strength of governance relies fundamentally on the quality of an institution's governing body, the Review Group was particularly impressed by the grasp demonstrated by the senior members of the Council of the current and future issues facing the Institute, both locally within Hong Kong and in the region.

3.6.4 For an institute of higher education, effective academic governance is as important as good financial and operational governance to institutional success. The Review Group accordingly met with members of the Institute's Academic Board and with staff and students to discuss academic governance at faculty and departmental level.

3.6.5 The Review Group found the climate of governance in the Institute to be collaborative, not least because of a commitment to transparency at all levels. Structures in place to facilitate staff and student participation are key to their success. Evidence emerged during discussions with staff and students that they placed their confidence and trust in such structures. When asked a direct question about the extent to which the Academic Board (or, at a lower level, a faculty board) was a 'rubber-stamping body', the answer was that there are often active debates within the Academic Board, both on broader academic issues and more specific course development proposals. Such debates often lead to rejection or revision of proposals, rather than unquestioned acceptance.

3.6.6 Comments had been made in previous reports that the academic decision-making structures at faculty and departmental levels seemed unduly complex. The Review Group noted that structures had been simplified, thereby increasing effectiveness. The Institute had also acted on comments made by the QAC in 2011 about a lack of clarity in academic leadership at sub-institutional level. There had accordingly been a clarification of the role of the deans, who now bring academic leadership to their respective faculties. The meetings at HKIEd in February 2015 provided the Review Group with clear evidence that this development had been beneficial.

3.6.7 The Review Group considers that the Institute has in place transparent policies, sound governance structures and a climate of governance and management characterised by the following:

- Responsive structures and sufficient institutional controls that are sustainable;
- Transparent and coherent governance and management systems at institutional, faculty and department levels;
- Strong academic leadership;
- Involvement of staff and students in the development, implementation and communication of policies and systems;
- Understanding of and support for the overall mission among staff and students;
- Regular monitoring of performance in relation to policies and systems and of action being taken as a result of such monitoring.

Conclusion

3.6.8 HKIED demonstrates robust governance and management of its activities. It has implemented decision-making practices that incorporate participation by various campus constituencies and external stakeholders, allowing for oversight and for feedback to its benefit. Strong financial planning and transparent resource allocation have allowed HKIED to build on opportunities, such as the expansion of its international activities.

3.7 AREA FOUR: ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

Criterion 4.1: Academic standards are appropriate and rigorous

Criterion 4.2: Quality Assurance is integral to HKIED's academic activities, including quality enhancement based on QA outcomes

3.7.1 High academic standards, consistently maintained and validated through robust quality assurance of teaching and of student performance, are rightly expected of any successful higher education institution. In the case of HKIED, it has in place a structure of external examination and assessment of student attainment. There has been rigorous examination of its academic standards and of its quality assurance processes and procedures since 2003 (these reviews and audits

are summarised above in Paras 2.1.2 to 2.1.8, to which might be added work undertaken by the QAC in 2011⁴⁰).

3.7.2 As well as documentation from these reviews and audits, HKIED supplied additional material to the Review Group. In short, the Review Group had a wealth of evidence to support its assessment of the quality of the Institute's academic standards and the robustness of its processes and procedures to maintain such standards. The Review Group also spoke directly to a number of external examiners. They unanimously confirmed that the standards attained by HKIED students were at least on a par with students in other institutions of which they had experience, including their 'home' institutions.

3.7.3 Criteria used to evaluate appropriate academic standards and whether institutional quality assurance procedures are fit for that purpose commonly include the following:

- Quality of student performance, as measured in areas such as examination performance, graduation rates and employer satisfaction;
- Clear and consistent policies and procedures in setting and maintaining academic standards, including the adoption of external reference points and benchmarking with peer institutions;
- Arrangements for assessing and ensuring that academic programmes meet stated objectives and learning outcomes;
- Inherent cultures of critical self-assessment and quality enhancement;
- Evidence of actions to address identified weaknesses in performance, to promote strengths and to encourage continuous quality enhancement;
- Programme design, approval, monitoring and review procedures which are enriched by ideas and expertise from colleagues within the institution, as well as from global developments in their areas of academic specialisation; and
- Resource allocation processes and mechanisms which are focused on academic development in keeping with the institution's agreed role and mission.

⁴⁰ 2011 UGC Quality Assurance Council First Cycle Quality Audit of HKIED - <http://www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/qac/publication/report/hkied201109e.pdf>

3.7.4 The Review Group had heard speculation that the entry requirements for HKIED students were lower than at other higher education institutions in Hong Kong. However, evidence indicates that the minimum achievement levels required of entrants to HKIED are in fact broadly comparable to the standards required in universities in Hong Kong admitting students to comparable programmes.

3.7.5 In relation to the quality of graduates, the Review Group explored with external examiners, among others, their views on HKIED in comparison with other higher education institutions. In response to a specific question on how HKIED students in Global and Environmental Studies compared to those elsewhere, the answer was that the HKIED students were of comparable quality on graduation to students in other Hong Kong institutions and that the Education aspect of their degree might have made a positive difference to their knowledge base. Conversations with other external assessors confirmed that there was equivalent quality between HKIED students and students in other higher education institutions in their subject areas, including institutions beyond Hong Kong. Evidence from employers and school principals, cited below in 3.7.6, confirmed this view.

3.7.6 The Review Group's discussion with a group representing employers and internship advisors during its February 2015 visit to HKIED provided further evidence of the high regard in which HKIED graduates were held, both in teaching positions and in other professions such as arts administration. The general view was that, "the performance and aptitude of HKIED graduates were on par with graduates from other universities in Hong Kong, if not better".⁴¹

3.7.7 The Review Group was impressed with the rigorousness of the academic quality assurance in the Institute. Commitment started at the most senior level, with the procedures and processes in place being well resourced and fit for purpose. Staff had embraced the centrality of quality assurance to institutional activity, using its outcomes to ensure that continuous quality enhancement ran through the Institute. The praise given by the QAC and in the PAA exercise were further evidence for the Review Group that HKIED was exemplary in relation to its quality assurance.

⁴¹ Comment made during the discussion between members of the Review Group and certain HKIED External Examiners held as part of the visit to HKIED, Tai Po Campus, 9 - 10 February 2015

3.7.8 The use of data to create a suite of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) by HKIEd was commendable, although the Review Group could see that their use in the Institute was something of a ‘work in progress’ at this stage. Developing the use of KPIs to incorporate clear targets against which actual performance might be measured is fundamental to continuous quality improvement. Setting ambitious but realistic targets requires skill: it is easy to fall into the trap of aiming too high. It was not clear to the Review Group whether the Institute had set such targets. If not, the view of members was that there would be benefit in so doing.

Conclusion

3.7.9 Academic standards set by HKIEd and attained by its students are appropriate to a higher education institution of good standing, as are its quality assurance processes and procedures. Traditional indicators of student quality (e.g. examination scores and class standing) are comparable to those in universities in Hong Kong also engaged in the preparation of teachers. Employer satisfaction with graduates is strong. The quality assurance system is fit for purpose, with assessment outputs used to enhance practice.

3.8 AREA FIVE: RESEARCH ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CAPACITY

Criterion 5.1: Research and scholarly activity are fostered and supported among academic staff, postgraduate and undergraduate students

Criterion 5.2: Research draws on academic strengths from across HKIEd and contributes to innovation in curriculum design and content

3.8.1 A major recommendation of the 2009 Review Group was the enhancement of research activity and the development of a research training environment in HKIEd. In accepting the view that a deepening of HKIEd's research activity would greatly strengthen the Institute, the Government agreed in 2009 to provide through the UGC a total of 30 Research Postgraduate places, to be spread over three years⁴². These places were contingent on the UGC being satisfied that HKIEd had in place a coherent research plan, including a research framework which allowed for proper supervision and support of full-time research students.

⁴² Legislative Council Brief - Institutional Development of the Hong Kong Institute of Education (Annex B to this report). It can also be found at http://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/about-edb/press/legco/others/legco%20brief%20on%20hkied%20development%20_eng_.pdf

The present Review Group noted that by 2014/15 the number of RPg places allocated had increased to 46 places overall, with a further increase to 50 places planned for 2015.

3.8.2 The decision to award these places acted as a catalyst for HKIED, enabling the Institute to enhance its research capacity alongside its development of complementary disciplines. There was a deliberate policy of recruiting research-active staff. The growth in the number of research active staff has had a commensurate impact on HKIED's performance in the UGC's Research Assessment Exercise (RAE)⁴³.

3.8.3 When the Institute first came into being as a teacher education institution in 1994, "research used to be seen as something of an individual sideline or hobby". By 2014, 98% of the-then 327⁴⁴ staff categorised as Academic Staff (i.e. active in teaching and research) were in possession of a higher research degree. The brisk increase in recent years of HKIED's grant applications and successes is evidence of the growing strength of its research performance. In the case of competitive Research Grants Council (RGC) funding, HKIED stands in favourable comparison with other UGC-funded institutions in terms of both the number of proposals submitted and the proportion of proposals being funded.⁴⁵ Both these outcomes offer clear evidence of the positive effect of the Government's original decision to invest in the enhancement of HKIED's research capacity.

3.8.4 An observation made by one of the external academics who spoke to the Review Group in February 2015 was that HKIED had in the past lacked confidence in its research capabilities and capacity, evidenced by some reluctance among staff to submit their papers to top-rated journals. The Review Group considered that the Institute's encouraging performance in the RAE 2014 should both enhance HKIED's reputation as a research institution and lead to increased confidence of academic

⁴³ In the RAE 2014, the aggregate overall quality profile at institutional level of HKIED shows that 93% of the Institute's research activity was judged to meet the standard of "regional standing" (i.e. 1*) and above, which is comparable with the sector-wide level at 96%. Twenty-six percent of its research activity was judged to meet the standard of "internationally excellent" and "world leading" (i.e. 3* and 4*), as compared to 46% at the sector-wide level.

⁴⁴ That number had increased to 343 by January 2015 with there being a comparably high percentage of staff with a higher research degree.

⁴⁵ For example, allocation of the Research Grants Council's 2015/16 General Research Fund saw HKIED win 16 of the 35 projects supported in Education (HK\$7.952M of HK\$17.553M awarded), 5 of 69 in the Humanities and Creative Arts, 1 of 59 in Computer Science and IT, 6 of 26 in Psychology and Linguistics and 2 of 102 in the Physical Sciences. 30 projects supported compares with 11 in 2009/10 and 15 in 2012/13 (<http://www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/rgc/result/grf/grf.htm>)

staff, with a commensurate lifting of sights in relation to the publication of scholarly papers.

3.8.5 The Review Group examined the question of research support, notably the research training environment, raised in the QAC quality audit progress report in 2013 and as part of the PAA exercise of 2014. What interested the Review Group in particular was how research policies and the support infrastructure worked in practice. Questions during the February 2015 visit directed to a cross-section of staff and students covered such topics as the mentoring of junior academic staff, supervision of graduate students, incentives to publish, formal training in research methods and how the cross-disciplinary nature of Education-plus had impacted on research activity. The impression gained by the Review Group from these discussions was positive. The stated aim of the Institute in creating a, “culture that encourages self-improvement, trust and mutual support whilst being responsive to change”⁴⁶, showed itself at all levels in relation to research activity and scholarship. Staff described examples of multi-disciplinary research projects, for example one involving Education and Global and Environmental Studies, and a project on educational leadership which had a strong input from Health Studies⁴⁷. Students spoke of the accessibility and supportiveness of faculty and the autonomy they were permitted in identifying research issues to pursue.

3.8.6 Review Group members were shown research projects in a number of discipline areas, which served to illustrate the ethos underpinning research in the Institute. Expressed in simple terms, the research outputs are expected to lead to social impact or benefit. This grounding in current social issues and educational needs in Hong Kong and the surrounding region gives a particular flavour to HKIED’s research activity. An external assessor described it during discussion in the February 2015 visit as an, “interesting thematic approach”⁴⁸. A number of other external academics who met the Review Group in February 2015 also explicitly recognised the value of such an approach. The external academics also suggested that the involvement of undergraduate students in research projects gave value both to the students and to the research outcomes.

⁴⁶ HKIED Strategic Plan for 2013 - 2016 - http://www.ied.edu.hk/sp2013-16/1_ENG_SA_TOC.html

⁴⁷ Details of cross-disciplinary research projects are included in HKIED’s website - http://www.ied.edu.hk/web/hkied_research.html

⁴⁸ Comment made during the discussion between members of the Review Group and certain HKIED External Examiners held as part of the visit to HKIED, Tai Po Campus, 9 - 10 February 2015

3.8.7 The Review Group was in no doubt about the quality and value of what HKIED had achieved so far in developing its research capabilities. The RAE results and the HKIED’s relative success with RGC funding showed HKIED to be an institution where research is becoming a fundamental element in its corporate identity. The focus on applied research with a strong emphasis on pragmatic outcomes adds to the ‘Education-plus brand’, not least through providing experiential learning opportunities for students.

Conclusion

3.8.8 Investment from 2009 onwards in boosting the research capacity within HKIED has brought significant dividends in terms of quantifiable research outcomes and of the quality of the students’ overall education. Indicators of research engagement (e.g. the increased number and success of RGC applications from 2009 to 2015; RAE 2014 performance) showed improvement among Academic and Academic Supporting staff. Collaboration across disciplinary boundaries in key areas such as Special Education and Psychology is evident. HKIED has enhanced the breadth of knowledge and outlook of students by broadening their participation in courses and projects, both in Education and in the complementary disciplines.

3.9 AREA SIX: ACADEMIC AND ACADEMIC SUPPORTING (TEACHING) STAFF

Criterion 6.1: A significant proportion of the Academic and Academic Supporting staff have gained higher degrees/doctorates or equivalent qualifications and actively contribute to the advancement of knowledge in their fields

Criterion 6.2: A coherent and comprehensive strategy for staff recruitment, development and retention

3.9.1 The Review Group noted that the headcount of staff in the Institute at 31 January 2015 was as follows:

Staff Type	Grade	Female	Male	Total
Academic, Senior ^[1]		30	70	100
Academic, Junior ^[2]		125	118	243

Academic Supporting Staff ^[3]	77	38	115
Technical Research Staff ^[4]	1	0	1
Non-academic, Senior ^[5]	4	9	13
Non-academic, Junior ^[6]	482	225	707
TOTAL	719	460	1 179

- [1] including Chair Professor, Research Chair Professor, Professor, Associate Professor and Principal Lecturer
- [2] including Senior Lecturer, Assistant Professor and Lecturer
- [3] including Senior Teaching Fellow, Teaching Fellow I, Teaching Fellow II, Senior Instructor, Instructor I and Instructor II
- [4] including Post-doctoral Fellow, Senior Research Assistant and Research Assistant
- [5] including senior administrative staff at the highest salary bands of the Institute, e.g., Directors, Associate Directors and Senior Assistant Registrars of central administrative units
- [6] including all other administrative and support staff not included in Note 5 above, ranging from middle management level (e.g., Assistant Registrar, Finance Manager, Assistant Project Manager, Executive Officer I), officer level (e.g., Property and Facility Officer, Communications Executive, Assistant Computer Officer) to supporting staff level (e.g., Clerical Officer I / II, Office Assistant and Workshop Attendant)

3.9.2 It has already been noted (see Para. 3.8.3 above) that the great majority of the 343 staff in the Academic Staff category possess a higher degree. The Review Group was supplied with a list of these staff, showing details of individual qualifications. The Institute also supplied information on the scholarly activities and achievements of senior staff. The external examiners whom Review Group members met during the February 2015 visit to HKIEd spoke very positively about the quality of the academic staff in the Institute.

3.9.3 The proportion of staff in the Non-academic staff categories (i.e. defined as 'support' staff) to staff in the Academic and Academic Support staff categories (i.e. staff defined for this purpose as 'academic') was roughly 1.57 to 1.0 (i.e. 721 support staff and 458 academic and teaching staff). The proportion of the former to the latter seemed quite high relative to similar institutions known to members. It was explained

that this ratio was a legacy from the Institute's constituent colleges. Part of the agreement with staff at the time of amalgamation was a guarantee of job security. With individuals gradually reaching retirement age, it is expected that the number of support staff will decline.

3.9.4 The expansion of the Institute to allow for the development of the complementary disciplines has seen a significant influx of new academic staff since 2009. As was noted by the QAC quality audit in 2011⁴⁹ and in HKIED's submission of progress report in 2013⁵⁰, the development of support mechanisms to ensure that these staff are properly managed and encouraged in their teaching and research was a task approached with commendable thoroughness by the Institute.

3.9.5 The Institute supplied the Review Group with extensive documentation on staff development mechanisms and measures, including mentoring, funding to allow for conference attendance and travel, training in teaching and research techniques and the development of other skills (e.g., people management, management of resources), all of which constitute a comprehensive staff development programme. The visit to the Institute in February 2015 gave Review Group members an opportunity to test the effectiveness of that programme. Through discussion with staff at all levels, it was clear that staff felt valued, that junior staff appreciated the mentoring they received from more senior staff and that there was a strong sense of collegiality in the Institute.

3.9.6 An issue which arose during the visit was that of workload planning. Time is often cited as the most precious of resources for academic staff because it is needed both for quality teaching and for the achievement of research outputs. Finding an appropriate balance of those activities is a challenge for every university. The Review Group asked how the formal approach to workload planning operated, to which the response was in tabular form as follows:

Staff Category	Minimum Proportion of Time Allocation for Teaching	Minimum Proportion of Time Allocation for Research	Minimum Proportion of Time Allocation for Service
Chair Professor	20%	50%	20%
Professor	20%	50%	20%
Associate	30%	30%	15%

⁴⁹ <http://www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/qac/publication/report/hkied201109e.pdf>

⁵⁰ <https://www.ied.edu.hk/qac/view.php?m=3962&secid=3994>

Professor			
Assistant Professor	40%	20%	10%
Principal Lecturer	30%	30%	20%
Senior Lecturer	30%	25%	15%
Lecturer	40%	10%	10%

Notes:

**For the definition of staff grades, classifications are adopted from the Common Data Collection Format (CDCF) Guidance Notes. At HKIEd, the posts for respective staff grades are as follows:*

Staff Grade	HKIEd Post
A	Chair Professor and Research Chair Professor
B	Professor
C	Associate Professor
D	Principal Lecturer
F	Senior Lecturer
G	Assistant Professor
H	Lecturer (old academic title)
I*	Lecturer (new academic title)

**The Institute considers this grade as an entry rank to the academic track. Incumbents are expected to advance to the staff post classified under Staff Grade G after completion of one contract of three years or earlier if they perform well in the three domains of Teaching, Research and Service.*

3.9.7 The Institute has defined the normal teaching load for academic and teaching staff. The establishment of these norms was designed to ensure that the time of all academic and teaching staff members was allocated in an equitable fashion. The details included the following ‘rules of thumb’:

- For Academic Staff at Professor/Chair Professor level: 2 to 4 courses* per year, plus academic research and a leading/mentoring role in relation to research;
- For Academic Staff up to Associate Professor level: 6 courses per year, including Teaching Practice supervision; and
- For Teaching staff: 9 courses per year, including Teaching Practice supervision.

* a course for this purpose is defined as 39 hours teaching per semester

3.9.8 The Review Group noted that these norms allowed for a range of emphases in workload. It was informed that the Dean or the Head of Department – as part of the formal staff appraisal process – had

the flexibility to discuss and agree on variations with individual members of staff to reflect their particular circumstances.

3.9.9 It was also noted that Faculties and Departments were “given a free hand to make slight variations due to their individual situation in terms of discipline areas and programme involvement. Faculties/Departments may also formulate their own criteria for teaching allocations in the best interests of both the programme and the Faculty/Department, and to cater for the strategic and special manpower needs of the Faculty/Department. For example, the balance of effort between teaching and research could be adjusted to enable individual staff to develop or enhance their research profile or to allow a staff member to focus on teaching”⁵¹.

3.9.10 Evaluations of teaching made by external assessors as part of the quality assurance process were made available to the Review Group, as well as feedback from students. On the basis of these evaluations, members of the Review group judged that there was a high standard of pedagogy within the Institute. These evaluations also encouraged the Review Group to consider issues such as the extent to which cross-disciplinary connections were encouraged and supported at HKIEd, in view of the strongly interdisciplinary identity captured by the phrase ‘Education-plus’. The Institute produced evidence to show that staff across the disciplinary spectrum teach on both teacher education and non-teacher education programmes.

3.9.11 Statistics for staff turnover (7.1% in 2013/14) suggest that the Institute’s staff profile is relatively stable. Institute staff, responding to questions from the Review Group about how they saw the Institute both now and beyond 2015, made a convincing case for the attractiveness of HKIEd as a place to work. HKIEd is seen as an enlightened employer, where staff want to further their careers. It has well-resourced strategies in place to ensure the continuous development of academic staff and of staff in academic support roles. As noted earlier, staff workload is planned and negotiated in a systematic way, which plays to staff competencies and strengths as well as to institutional needs and priorities. The Institute has acted to simplify the previously complex and time-consuming staff appraisal process and has expanded its role in staff development. It was reported that senior management listen to junior staff, who in turn feel free to contribute to debate on the development of their particular department (or faculty), as well as the Institute itself.

⁵¹ Extracted from the supplementary information provided by HKIEd in response to a request from the Review Group, following its February 2015 visit.

Conclusion

3.9.12 The HKIEd justifies its confidence in the quality of its staff. It has successfully recruited academic staff with doctorates at various ranks. Recent international rankings indicate that recognition of the quality of its research is spreading from the local to regional and international arenas. Academic staff show a commitment to remain at HKIEd, with positive retention data as illustration. Workload is planned and negotiated in a systematic way to ensure staff time to pursue scholarly interests. Student evaluations and external assessment indicate satisfaction with the quality of teaching.

3.10 AREA SEVEN: RESOURCES AND SUPPORT STRUCTURES

Criterion 7.1: Campus resources (financial, physical, IT, library) are well managed and are appropriate, given HKIEd's aims and objectives for its future development

Criterion 7.2: Systems and services provide support for both teaching and research

3.10.1 The Review Group noted the sound financial position of HKIEd. It has benefitted from the financial oversight of the Council, as well as careful control of expenditure by senior management. It has been returning surpluses, which have allowed its reserves to be built up to a satisfactory level. This position represents a positive turnaround for the Institute, which had experienced financial deficits up to 2010.

3.10.2 Self-funded activities in the Institute (i.e. activities not funded by the UGC) represent 24% of its overall income. The Review Group noted that income from self-funded activities was used in part to provide financial support enabling students to study abroad.

3.10.3 The UGC is encouraging an increase in income from other non-UGC sources as an important goal for all higher education institutions in Hong Kong. HKIEd recognises that an important source for such income may lie in philanthropy. By nature of the career path of most of its graduates, the size of gifts from alumni is likely to be modest, albeit potentially significant in number. The strong public service ethos of the Institute might also be used to generate interest among philanthropic organisations and wealthy individuals in Hong Kong and the Mainland. While the Institute does not yet have a fully functioning Development

Office, the Review Group was interested to hear the views of the senior members of the Council on plans for this activity. HKIEd had responded strongly in recent years to the UGC's 'Matching Grant Initiative', with the Council providing much of the impetus underlying that response. Senior members of the Council expressed their confidence in the ability of HKIEd to build on what it had achieved through the UGC initiative, which would require the initial investment of resources against a plan for their best use to increase 'giving' to the Institute.

3.10.4 One issue raised in the 2014 PAA Report⁵² related to development funding for new programmes. Such seedcorn funding was used throughout higher education worldwide but did not seem to be present in HKIEd at the time of the PAA Report. The Review Group noted that the Institute now sets aside a percentage of its income (about 5% of the total recurrent funds received from the UGC each year) as a Central Reserve for strategic development. Review Group members considered that 5% should allow the Institute sufficient resources to explore areas for future development, without disadvantaging its current activities.

Review Group Commentary: the HKIEd Student Portal

The Review Group was provided with first-hand experience of the infrastructure in place where students and staff demonstrated the function of a portal developed by the Institute, using the student record system as a development platform (itself based on Banner proprietary software). In an era where the use of information and communication technologies is a key element in enhancing institutional effectiveness, as well as driving a more efficient use of scarce resources, the successful launch of the portal as an everyday tool for staff and students was a positive indication of the Institute's capacity to develop educational technology tools.

⁵² Accreditation Report on the Hong Kong Institute of Education Programme Area Accreditation – Institutional Review and Discipline Review of Chinese Studies, English Studies and Environmental Studies, Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ), July 2014

3.10.5 The 2011 QAC Audit Report highlighted the need to develop a closer alignment of the ICT infrastructure with the teaching and research activities of the Institute by developing (“...a pedagogically-based policy and strategy for the development of the ICT infrastructure to support learning...”)⁵³. Evidence was forthcoming of the development of this policy and strategy, both in relation to the Institute’s library facilities and the access enjoyed by both students and staff to the student portal.

3.10.6 The February 2015 visit gave the Review Group the opportunity to experience the Institute’s Tai Po campus at first hand. Although its location (in the New Territories) and its relative distance from the MTR system make the journey relatively time-consuming and costly for some non-resident students, the Institute ensures that there is a good bus service connecting the campus and the MTR network.

3.10.7 Set against such relatively minor disadvantages is the attractiveness of the campus location with its proximity to both countryside and the sea. Although the topography places some constraints on expansion, there is room for further development and expansion of facilities without compromising the park-like quality of much of the campus environment. Members visited the Library, the Learning Commons and various classrooms and laboratories. While minor issues with building maintenance were observed, there was little difference from what might be experienced in higher education institutions elsewhere. In the Review Group’s discussion with the Director of Estates and other senior administrative staff, it was clear that there was a sound estates strategy in place and that regular building maintenance conforming to UGC norms and expectations formed part of that strategy.

Conclusion

3.10.8 Adequacy of resources and a flexible support structure for teaching and research are evident in HKIEd. Improvements to existing facilities and new building projects are scheduled. Planning is underway to ensure that HKIEd keeps pace with changes in instruction and research that require upgrades in library facilities, educational support technology and in computing resources and support.

⁵³ Page 4, Para 8 of 2011 UGC Quality Assurance Council First Cycle Quality Audit of HKIEd - <http://www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/qac/publication/report/hkied201109e.pdf>

PART FOUR: RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 TASKS

4.1.1 The Review Group has been asked to undertake the following tasks:

1. To advise the Government, in the light of the community's needs and the promotion of excellence in the higher education sector, and having regard to the Government's decision on the institutional development of The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIED) on 23 June 2009⁵⁴, the Programme Area Accreditation (PAA) Report on HKIED issued by the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) in July 2014, as well as any other evidence that may be obtained through a special review on HKIED, on:

(a) HKIED's progress in developing into a multi-disciplinary institution with a focus on teacher education and a good spread of other complementary disciplines and implementing the recommendations made in the University Grants Committee (UGC)'s Report of the Review Group on Hong Kong Institute of Education's Development Blueprint published in February 2009;

(b) Whether HKIED should be granted self-accrediting status in the programme areas covered by its existing PAA status, having regard to the quality of the relevant programmes and in terms of both teaching and research performance;

(c) Whether HKIED already possesses the qualities and attributes commonly expected of a university and should be granted the university title at this juncture;

(d) Whether there are any other actions HKIED should take in future to further its role and improve the quality of education it provides.

2. To bring to the Government's attention issues of concern, if any, in relation to HKIED's application for university title.

⁵⁴ Legislative Council Brief - Institutional Development of the Hong Kong Institute of Education (Annex B to this report). It can also be found at http://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/about-edb/press/legco/others/legco%20brief%20on%20hkied%20development%20_eng_.pdf

4.2 REVIEW CRITERIA AND REVIEW GROUP FINDINGS

4.2.1 Part Three sets out in detail the criteria adopted by the Review Group in each of seven areas and its findings in each of these areas as follows:

CRITERIA	REVIEW GROUP FINDINGS
<p>1. VISION, MISSION AND STRATEGIC DIRECTION</p> <p>Criterion 1.1: Institutional vision and mission are appropriate and clearly articulated</p> <p>Criterion 1.2: Staff and students understand and accept the mission</p>	<p>The vision, mission, aims and objectives of HKIED are appropriate and sustainable. 'Education-plus' as a concept is widely understood by staff and students, serves as a guiding concept in institutional development and, importantly, is shown to be sustainable. Communication of the vision and mission to external audiences would benefit from further clarification.</p>
<p>2. ACADEMIC BREADTH AND SUBJECT COMPLEMENTARITY</p> <p>Criterion 2.1: The range of disciplines which currently constitute the academic offerings of HKIED is appropriate to its mission</p> <p>Criterion 2.2: Complementary disciplines developed since 2009 meet stakeholder expectations of their having been chosen strategically and of their success in enhancing teacher education in Hong Kong</p>	<p>HKIED meets expectations of academic breadth. The development of complementary disciplines takes into account their potential contributions to the enhancement of teacher education and educational practice in Hong Kong. Choices of discipline have been consistent with the 2009 Review Group Report.</p>

CRITERIA	REVIEW GROUP FINDINGS
<p>3. GOVERNANCE</p> <p>Criterion 3.1: Inclusive academic planning and management processes, which facilitate the implementation of HKIEd's mission</p> <p>Criterion 3.2: Robust and effective financial planning and resource allocation</p>	<p>HKIEd demonstrates robust governance of its academic activities. It has implemented decision-making practices that incorporate participation by various campus constituencies and external stakeholders, allowing for oversight and for feedback to its benefit. Strong financial planning and transparent resource allocation have allowed HKIEd to build on opportunities, such as the expansion of its international activities.</p>
<p>4. ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE</p> <p>Criterion 4.1: Academic standards are appropriate and rigorous</p> <p>Criterion 4.2: Quality Assurance is integral to HKIEd's academic activities, including quality enhancement based on QA outcomes</p>	<p>Academic standards set by HKIEd and attained by its students are appropriate to a higher education institution of good standing. Traditional indicators of student quality (e.g. examination scores and class standing) are comparable to students enrolled in teacher education programmes in other universities in Hong Kong. Employer satisfaction with graduates is strong. Exemplary quality assurance processes and procedures are fit for purpose, with assessment output used to enhance practice.</p>
<p>5. RESEARCH ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CAPACITY</p> <p>Criterion 5.1: Research and</p>	<p>Investment from 2009 onwards in</p>

CRITERIA	REVIEW GROUP FINDINGS
<p>scholarly activity are fostered and supported among academic staff, postgraduate and undergraduate students</p> <p>Criterion 5.2: Research draws on academic strengths from across HKIED and contributes to innovation in curriculum design and content</p>	<p>boosting research capabilities and capacity within HKIED has brought significant dividends in terms of research outcomes and of an enhancement of the quality of the student experience. Research quality trend indicators (e.g., HKIED's RAE 2014 performance; the increasing number and success of RGC applications between 2009 and 2015) demonstrate a growth in the research engagement and strength of Academic and Academic Supporting staff. Collaboration across disciplinary boundaries in key areas such as Special Education is evident. HKIED has enhanced the research capacities of students by broadening their participation in courses and projects, both in Education and in the complementary disciplines.</p>
<p>6. ACADEMIC AND ACADEMIC SUPPORTING STAFF</p> <p>Criterion 6.1: A significant proportion of the Academic and Academic Supporting staff have gained higher degrees/doctorates or equivalent qualifications and actively contribute to the advancement of knowledge in their fields</p> <p>Criterion 6.2: A coherent and comprehensive strategy for staff recruitment, development and retention</p>	<p>HKIED has provided sound evidence on the quality of its staff. It has successfully recruited doctorally qualified staff at a variety of levels. Recent rankings indicate that recognition of the quality of its research is spreading from the local to regional and international arenas. Academic staff members indicate a commitment to remain at HKIED, with positive retention data as illustration. Workload is planned and negotiated in a systematic way</p>

CRITERIA	REVIEW GROUP FINDINGS
	to ensure that staff have time to pursue scholarly endeavours. Student evaluations and external assessment indicate satisfaction with the quality of teaching.
<p>7. RESOURCES AND SUPPORT STRUCTURES</p> <p>Criterion 7.1: Campus resources (financial, physical, IT, library) are well managed and are appropriate, given HKIEd's aims and objectives for its future development</p> <p>Criterion 7.2: Systems and services provide support for both teaching and research</p>	<p>Adequacy of resources and a flexible support structure for teaching and research are evident in HKIEd. Improvements to existing facilities and new building projects are scheduled. Planning is underway to ensure that HKIEd keeps pace with changes in teaching and research that require ongoing upgrades in library facilities, educational technology and in computing resources and support.</p>

4.3 DISCHARGING THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

a) HKIEd's progress since 2009

To assess HKIEd's progress in developing into a multi-disciplinary institution with a focus on teacher education and a good spread of other complementary disciplines and implementing the recommendations made in the University Grants Committee (UGC)'s Report of the Review Group on Hong Kong Institute of Education's Development Blueprint published in February 2009

4.3.1 HKIEd has made commendable progress since 2009 in developing into a multi-disciplinary institution. Its traditional strength in teacher education has broadened to reflect the wider development of Education as an important professional field. That strength has been enhanced through the successful development of complementary disciplines. In addition, the Institute has rapidly developed its research

capabilities, using the funding and other support made available to it to build a solid foundation for further growth in its research activity

RECOMMENDS that the UGC note the satisfactory progress made by HKIEd since 2009 in developing into a successful multi-disciplinary institution.

4.3.2 Evidence of this progress includes the following:

- 'Education-plus' and the related common curricular framework being firmly embedded within HKIEd, allowing cross-fertilisation between Education and the complementary disciplines developed since 2009. Examples of cross-disciplinary synergies made possible by Education-plus include the use of Education as a lens for understanding and imparting the impact of environmental changes in Hong Kong, as well as enhancements to the teaching of students with special educational needs through research in clinical and cognitive psychology;
- The use of resources for research support provided since 2009 to recruit a cohort of research-active staff and postgraduate research students. A lively research-based culture is emerging, with the quest for research impacts and outcomes permeating activities throughout the Institute. Performance in the RAE 2014 and in competition for Research Grants Council awards reflects these developments;
- Strengthened governance, given impetus by the investment in new disciplines and in research capacity and reflected in the improved financial position of the Institute;
- Increased internationalisation, reflected in study abroad opportunities for students, support for staff to participate in activities such as conferences worldwide and working with peer institutions globally on activities such as benchmarking. The significant uplift in the international standing of HKIEd stems in part from such activities;
- In overall terms, the maturity of HKIEd as an institution in which high quality teaching flourishes and research is growing in strength.

b) Self-accreditation in the 2014 PAA subject areas

Whether HKIED should be granted self-accrediting status in the programme areas covered by its existing PAA status, having regard to the quality of the relevant programmes and in terms of both teaching and research performance

4.3.3 HKIED has had the authority to self-accredit the courses it offers in Education since 2004. As such courses constitute the major part of the Institute's activities, the Review Group considers that the processes and structures in place to satisfy external scrutiny by the QAC are as mature and well-founded as in the other UGC-funded institutions in Hong Kong. In view of this maturity and of the ample evidence of high quality teaching and research performance as detailed below, the Review Group

RECOMMENDS to the UGC that HKIED be granted self-accrediting status in the three programme areas covered by its existing PAA status.

4.3.4 Evidence to support this recommendation includes the following:

- The effectiveness of quality assurance in HKIED, reflecting more than a decade of self-accreditation in its main discipline area of Education, as well as five years of working with HKCAAVQ in new programme areas, as reflected in the PAA re-accreditation in July 2014. Quality assurance processes are thorough, with minor improvements recommended in the PAA Report having been implemented;
- The quality of teaching and learning overall, resulting in well-qualified graduates from the new programme areas, with a breadth of skills welcomed by employers;
- The development of research capabilities in the complementary disciplines, increasingly recognised by external peers.

c) Grant of University title

Whether HKIED already possesses the qualities and attributes commonly expected of a university and should be granted the university title at this juncture

4.3.5 Awarding the right to use the title “University” is not an action to be taken lightly. There are rigorous expectations of an

institution with university title, both from the global academic community and also from the local community within which it is based. Hong Kong has a distinguished record in relation to its universities, with high expectations in relation to their academic standards, quality of governance, approaches to teaching and learning, research productivity and capacity and their commitment to public service.

4.3.6 One question considered by the Review Group in responding to the terms of reference was "Does the community of academic institutions that it seeks to join acknowledge HKIEd as a worthy peer with a vision and mission which command their respect?" Responses from external stakeholders plus a judgment based on the evidence seen by the Review Group make the answer to the question an unequivocal "yes".

4.3.7 The Review Group considers that HKIEd already possesses the qualities and attributes commonly expected of a university. It is fully worthy of joining the ranks of the other UGC-funded universities in Hong Kong and sharing their status as institutions with full powers of self-accreditation. The Review Group

RECOMMENDS to the UGC that HKIEd should be granted university title at this juncture.

4.3.8 Evidence to support this recommendation includes the following:

- A coherent vision and mission, understood by staff and students, with Education at its core and with 'Education-plus' providing a sound base for further development;
- Breadth of academic provision, achieved through the development of self-standing programme areas which are complementary to Education;
- Governance structures and processes appropriate to a well-managed university;
- Exemplary QA, with external peer involvement in process review, supporting a culture of continuous quality improvement in the Institute;
- Staff and students at different levels are involved in research and scholarly activities, with outputs of good external standing;
- High academic standards, seen in the externally-validated quality of teaching, in the quality of graduates and reflected in employer satisfaction;

- Administrative and other support services which are fit for purpose and appropriately flexible in dealing with the changing environments in teaching and learning and in research.

d) Other actions to be recommended to HKIED

Whether there are any other actions HKIED should take in future to further its role and improve the quality of education it provides.

4.3.9 The Review Group considers that HKIED would benefit from taking action in a small number of areas. Details of its suggestions are contained in **Part Five**.

4.3.10 The Review Group was also asked in its terms of reference, “to bring to the Government’s attention issues of concern, if any, in relation to HKIED’s application for university title”. The Review Group is happy to report that no issues of concern have arisen.

PART FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTED ACTIONS FOR HKIEd

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 This concluding part of the Report sets out the views of the Review Group on two substantive issues which arose a number of times during discussion: self-accreditation and the risk of mission drift. While the issues themselves do not bear directly on the discharge of the Review Group's terms of reference, they are relevant in taking forward the recommendations made by the Review Group. In addition, the question of the future title of the Institute is addressed. This part also sets out recommendations for actions which the Review Group considers would benefit HKIEd.

5.2 Self-accreditation

5.2.1 The Review Group considered a number of future scenarios for HKIEd as part of its deliberations:

1. The status quo: no university title; self-accreditation in Education only; accreditation in other areas to continue with HKCAAVQ;
2. University title, with no change in current accreditation arrangements (as in 1 above);
3. University title with limited self-accrediting status: self-accreditation status in Education programmes; self-accreditation status to be granted in the three programme areas (Chinese Studies; English Studies; Global and Environmental Studies) which had obtained PAA status in July 2014; accreditation to continue with HKCAAVQ in other areas;
4. University title with full powers of self-accreditation.

5.2.2 The first and second of the above scenarios were dismissed outright by the Review Group, as should be clear from the recommendations set out in Part Four. The Review Group then considered the third and fourth of the scenarios. As stated earlier, HKIEd has been self-accrediting its Education programmes making up the bulk of its academic activities since 2004, as well as being re-accredited for most of its non-Education programmes in 2014. These facts pointed to an institution in which the processes and procedures associated with the quality assurance and validation of its teaching and curriculum were operating effectively with such processes being able to sustain HKIEd in the future as it matured as a university. It might be observed that the

confidence shown by the UGC Review of HKIEd in 2004 has been amply borne out.

5.2.3 Evidence from, *inter alia*, quality audits conducted by QAC across UGC-funded institutions in Hong Kong suggests that there is no substantive difference between HKIEd and the universities in relation to the quality of internal academic processes underpinning the validation and award of degrees and sub-degree qualifications. Student outcomes in terms of graduate quality are also comparable to the other Hong Kong universities. Bearing that in mind, the Review Group considers that the fourth scenario is appropriate for the Institute. The phasing of the move to the new status of full self-certification would need to be a matter for more detailed consideration but the move to self-certification in the three PAA programme areas should be initiated as soon as is practicable.

5.3 Mission Drift

5.3.1 The risk of possible 'mission-drift' on the part of HKIEd should it be awarded university title and rights of self-certification was raised with the Review Group by an external stakeholder. The Review Group responded by raising the issue with the President of HKIEd and his senior colleagues and, separately, with the Chairman of the HKIEd Council and colleagues. They were asked directly whether the award of university title might lead the Institute to develop programmes in areas with little or no connection to Education, thereby leading to distraction from its core mission. Assurances were given by the Institute's leadership that Education must remain the keystone of HKIEd's activities now and into the future.

5.3.2 The Review Group welcomed these assurances. Now and into the future, formal safeguards to preserve the core mission lie in the strong governance of the Institute. It should be made explicit in the formal enabling instruments that HKIEd's core activity will remain the enhancement of educational practice, particularly through the education of teachers, and that the programmes it offers must be directly relevant or complementary to such an end.

5.4 Institutional title

5.4.1 The Review Group considers that it will be a matter for the HKIEd Council, staff and students to decide on an appropriate title for the Institute, signifying that it has University status. Analogous to the question of the preservation of the core mission in the enabling

instruments, the Review Group believes that the future title should refer explicitly to the core mission of education and thus should contain the word "Education".

5.5 Areas for further improvements

5.5.1 The use of 'University' in its title will bring with it heightened external expectations of the Institute. In this context, the Review Group proposes the following actions, which it believes may help the Institute to respond to such expectations.

Clearer articulation and further development of the vision and mission

5.5.2 In its initial discussions, the Review Group sometimes struggled to understand what exactly was meant by 'Education-plus'. Clarification came through discussion with senior managers and staff at HKIEd. As 'Education-plus' will be a core characteristic of the Institute in moving forward, the elements underlying it and the way in which they interact to create 'Education-plus' as a whole need to be more clearly explained for external audiences, whether potential students, research collaborators or other interested parties.

5.5.3 In relation to the longer-term mission of the Institute, Education is by its nature a multi-disciplinary area of academic activity, drawing primarily on roots in the Humanities and the Social Sciences but is now coming to embrace research in computer science, ecology and the natural sciences. The new programme areas chosen to give more academic breadth to HKIEd have been developing across a broad spectrum, with Psychology, for example, taking in clinical aspects of the subject in addition to the behavioural and cognitive. Research in Global and Environmental Sciences has encompassed the sciences involved in ecology, while research in Education includes work in Mathematics and Science. The Review Group welcomes such developments, as the added breadth strengthens HKIEd's core mission and also its identity as a university. HKIEd should explore adding to that broader subject spectrum, possibly through deeper collaborations with Life, Mathematical, and Natural Sciences departments in other universities.

Planning for changing external circumstances

5.5.4 It was noted by the Review Group that the Institute's current Strategic Plan is largely predicated on the goal to achieve university title. While the plan gives some attention to changing external circumstances, greater attention should be paid in future plans to the relevant impact of such changes, such as the projected demographic changes in Hong Kong's school-age population. Such changes are likely to affect the demand for teachers and societal change may create new demands for specialist teachers such as the move towards greater professionalisation of the kindergarten workforce and increased needs of students with SEN.

Research co-ordination and support

5.5.5 Review Group members have benefited in their 'home' institutions from the existence of research offices, which are designed to support the work of academic researchers and increase competitive grant success rates. These offices disseminate information on research grant schemes, provide intelligence about external opportunities, facilitate research applications, help guide researchers through intellectual property matters and generally provide co-ordination of the research endeavour across the institution as a whole. The Review Group noted that the Institute had established a Research and Development Office to carry out some of these functions. As the nature and scale of research at HKIED increases, the Review Group suggests that HKIED should explore the enhancement of this Office, initially possibly through undertaking a comparative study of comparable offices in peer institutions.

International Advisory Forum

5.5.6 The Review Group was impressed with the value gained by the Institute from hosting an annual international conference for senior university managers. This gathering of senior academic leaders from around the world heightened the international profile of HKIED. With its increasing recognition worldwide among peer institutions and a university title, the Review Group believes that HKIED would benefit from establishing a small International Advisory Forum, with members drawn from leading Education-focused universities and relevant institutions around the world. The President and his colleagues might initially use the Forum as a resource in furthering development of the Institute but gradually the meetings may serve as an occasion for discussion of issues facing Education-focused universities around the

world. Such activities would help the Institute continue to expand its international profile.

Fund-raising

5.5.7 In universities around the world, fund raising has become an essential element of income generation. University Development Offices play an important role in bringing a structured professional approach to 'friend-raising', as well as to fund-raising. The existence of such an office in HKIED would focus its activities in these areas and help raise the profile of HKIED within Hong Kong. The Hong Kong community can be proud of HKIED for producing teachers of high professional calibre and for its excellent research, as well as for HKIED's strong commitment to the public good. The Review Group recommends that HKIED establish a Development Office, with a remit wide enough to encompass increasing public consciousness of all of the achievements of the Institute as well as encouraging fund-raising from benefactors.

5.6 Conclusion

The right to use university in its title has long been an ambition of HKIED. Since first meeting in October 2014, the Review Group has had an extensive opportunity to learn about HKIED - its current activities, its achievements and its potential. The Review Group has concluded that the award of this right to the title of 'university' is now fully warranted. The Review Group has been impressed by the importance that Hong Kong places on education and the critical role played by HKIED in ensuring that the teachers, in whose hands that education lies, are of the highest quality. As well as the strong evidence of the primacy that the HKIED gives to the quality of its teaching and research, the Review Group was consistently impressed with the enthusiasm and commitment of staff at all levels within HKIED and, it should be added, of its students. The Review Group wishes the HKIED a long and prosperous future as the eighth UGC-funded campus-based university.



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部教育局
Education Bureau
Government Secretariat, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
The People's Republic of China

本局檔號 Our Ref. : EDB(HE)CR 4/2041/07

電話 Telephone : 2810 2568

來函檔號 Your Ref. :

傳真 Fax Line : 2868 5916

27 August 2014

Mr Edward Cheng, SBS, JP
Chairman
University Grants Committee
7/F Shui On Centre
6-8 Harbour Road
Wan Chai
Hong Kong

Dear *Edward,*

**The Hong Kong Institute of Education :
Application for University Title**

On 7 July 2014, The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd) submitted a formal application for university title to the Government (**Annex A**^(a)). As HKIEd is one of the institutions under the aegis of the University Grants Committee (UGC), in line with the established practice, I am writing to invite the UGC to conduct a special review on HKIEd for this purpose and let us have UGC's expert views for our assessment on the application.

Background

As you are aware, HKIEd submitted a development blueprint together with an application for university title for the first time in June 2007 via a document entitled *Development Blueprint: Becoming a University of Education*. Subsequently, the UGC kindly accepted the Government's invitation and established an ad hoc Review Group to conduct a special review, resulting in the publication of a Report in February 2009. Having considered the UGC Review Group Report, the Chief

Executive-in-Executive Council (CE-in-Council) decided on the way forward with respect to institutional development of HKIEd on 23 June 2009. Among other things, the CE-in-Council decided to support HKIEd to develop into a multi-disciplinary institution with a focus on education and a good spread of complementary disciplines, as well as to strengthen its research capability, through provision of additional student numbers (120 first-year first degree and 30 research postgraduate places). On the question of whether or not HKIEd should be granted university title, the CE-in-Council decided that it should be considered at a later date. Paragraphs 17 to 19 of the relevant Legislative Council brief on the CE-in-Council's decision in 2009 are extracted in full below in view of their significance:

“17. In considering whether a higher education institution should be granted the university title, the Administration will take into account all relevant factors, including the quality and standard of its academic programmes, the level and mix of programmes offered, the quality of students and standing of academic staff, research capability, internal governance, quality assurance structures and the extent of self-accrediting powers, resources available to the institution, and the public interest.

18. As a UGC-funded institution, HKIEd is already funded on the same basis as the other seven UGC-funded institutions. We agree with the assessment of UGC that HKIEd is not at this point in time ready to be granted the university title, and believe that the developments now envisaged, including the offering by HKIEd of new programmes complementary to and supportive of teacher education and the enhancement of its research capability, represent the necessary steps that HKIEd should take as it strives to develop into a university with teacher education as the primary focus.

19. Following the implementation of these necessary steps, HKIEd may, when it is ready and willing to do so, submit to the Government a formal request for being granted the university title. Therefore, it should be emphasized that the development of new programmes complementary to teacher education and the building up of research capacity will not automatically lead to a university title. Before such a title may be so granted, HKIEd must be able to demonstrate that it already possesses the qualities and attributes

commonly expected of a university. This implies that the new disciplines and research programmes will need to be in operation long enough for their quality to be assessed. Otherwise, we will be degrading the value and meaning implied by the university title, with adverse implications for the higher education sector as a whole. Accordingly, upon receipt of a request for being granted the university title from HKIEd, the Government intends to invite UGC to conduct a special review having regard to the matters referred to in paragraph 17 above. The Government will then take a view on the request in the light of UGC's advice and other relevant considerations."

HKIEd has been granted self-accrediting status in teacher education programmes since 2004. Further to the CE-in-Council's decision, HKIEd has introduced a number of new undergraduate programmes in complementary disciplines, as well as research programmes. Of note, HKIEd successfully went through Programme Revalidation of its BSocSc(Hons) in Global and Environmental Studies and BA(Hons) in Language Studies programmes by the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) in November 2013. In July 2014, HKIEd was further granted Programme Area Accreditation (PAA) status by HKCAAVQ for the programme areas of Chinese Studies, English Studies and Environmental Studies at QF Level 5, with a validity period of five years from the 2014/15 to 2018/19 academic years. The PAA status is subject to Periodic Reviews by HKCAAVQ under its Four-Stage Quality Assurance Process. More information about HKCAAVQ's Four-stage Quality Assurance Process can be found at: <http://www.hkcaavq.edu.hk/en/services/accreditation/four-stage-qa-process>.

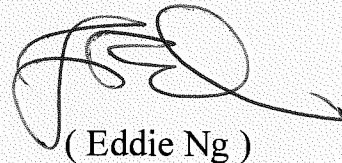
Invitation to UGC to conduct special review

Against the above background, I would like to invite the UGC to consider HKIEd's present application for university title in detail by conducting a review on HKIEd, with a view to letting the Government have the UGC's recommendations by September 2015. In this exercise, the UGC may, where appropriate, also wish to make reference to the PAA Report issued by HKCAAVQ in July 2014 which contains a number of observations on and recommendations for continuous improvement for HKIEd at the institutional and discipline levels. Our terms of reference to the UGC for this review are set out at **Annex A**⁽²⁾.

As in the exercise conducted last time, we are fully aware that HKIED may need to engage relevant key stakeholders on some of the major issues involved. Please let us know if we can be of assistance in any such process that the UGC may decide to initiate as the exercise unfolds.

We very much hope that, as in the last time, you and your Committee will be generous enough to agree to take on this important and most meaningful exercise. We look forward to receiving your favourable response soon.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Eddie Ng', written in a cursive style.

(Eddie Ng)
Secretary for Education

Encls.

**# This annex
is NOT for public consumption.**

Note: Due to the sensitive nature of this document, this annex is not for public consumption. Readers may enquire with the Hong Kong Institute of Education for access to such information.

Terms of Reference

1. To advise the Government, in the light of the community's needs and the promotion of excellence in the higher education sector, and having regard to the Government's decision on institutional development of The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIED) on 23 June 2009^{*}, the Programme Area Accreditation (PAA) Report on HKIED issued by the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications in July 2014, as well as any other evidence that may be obtained through a special review on HKIED: –
 - (a) on HKIED's progress in developing into a multi-disciplinary institution with a focus on teacher education and a good spread of other complementary disciplines and implementing the recommendations made in the University Grants Committee (UGC)'s Report of the Review Group on Hong Kong Institute of Education's Development Blueprint published in February 2009;
 - (b) on whether HKIED should be granted self-accrediting status in the programme areas covered by its existing PAA status, having regard to the quality of the relevant programmes and in terms of both teaching and research performance;
 - (c) in light of (a) and (b), on whether HKIED already possesses the qualities and attributes commonly expected of a university and should be granted the university title at this juncture;
 - (d) on whether there are any other actions HKIED should take in future to further its role and improve the quality of education it provides.
2. To bring to the Government's attention issues of concern, if any, in relation to HKIED's application for the university title.

^{*} Details are set out in the relevant Legislative Council brief which is available at: http://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/about-edb/press/legco/others/legco%20brief%20on%20hkied%20development%20_eng_.pdf

File ref: EDB(HE)CR 4/2041/07

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BRIEF

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE HONG KONG INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd) submitted a document entitled *Development Blueprint: Becoming a University of Education* (“the Blueprint”) to the Education Bureau (EDB) in June 2007. The document outlines the development plans for the Institute for the next ten years including but not limited to the repositioning of the Institute as a University of Education. Upon receiving the Blueprint, EDB has invited University Grants Committee (UGC) to examine the document and to give its expert views on the proposals therein. UGC has subsequently set up a Review Group, led by Professor John Niland, to consider the matter. UGC submitted a Report of the Review Group to EDB in February 2009 (copy of the executive summary of UGC’s *Report of the Review Group on Hong Kong Institute of Education’s Development Blueprint* (“the Review Group Report”) is at **Annex A**).

A

2. At the meeting of the Executive Council on 23 June 2009, the Council ADVISED and the Chief Executive ORDERED that –

- (a) support should be given to HKIEd so that it can develop into a multidisciplinary institution to best enhance teacher education and promote excellence in the Hong Kong higher education sector;
- (b) additional student numbers (120 first-year-first-degree (FYFD) and 30 research postgraduate (RPg) places) above the level originally envisaged for the 2009-2012 triennium should be provided to UGC for allocation to HKIEd as soon as the relevant prerequisites have been fulfilled;
- (c) the Administration should continue its existing flexible approach in providing teacher education institutions, including HKIEd, with advice on future demands for teachers for different subjects and levels; and

- (d) the question of whether or not HKIEd should be granted university title should be considered at a later date.

JUSTIFICATION

3. The shape of Hong Kong's future is to a large extent determined by our ability to ensure the continued success of our higher education sector. Over the past decade, Hong Kong has continued to develop a diverse set of institutions with distinctive roles and missions, and doing so in the knowledge that the higher education system, when taken as a whole, is and should be greater than the sum of its parts. Role differentiation, however, is not meant to be a straitjacket that would make it impossible for our higher education institutions to evolve in response to the calls of changing times. Rather, an institution should be able to build on the strength of its core mission and capability in planning its future development.

4. Teacher education has consistently been a key theme of our higher education, as it is widely recognized in the community that the quality of our teachers impacts significantly on students' learning experiences and overall development and, in the long term, the quality of our talent pool and Hong Kong's competitiveness in an increasingly globalised economy. Since its foundation in 1994, HKIEd has come a long way in raising the quality of teacher education as a teacher education institution. The award of self-accreditation status for teacher education programmes in 2004 duly recognised HKIEd's capacity in this respect. While the issue of university title has received much publicity, it is subordinate to the broader and more important issue of how to help the Institute lift its capacity, acquire the attributes of a university and bring significant improvement to teacher education in Hong Kong. In considering HKIEd's future development, we cannot afford to lose sight of the latter. We note UGC's concerns that the direction and the nature of developments identified in the Blueprint will not genuinely transform HKIEd, and see UGC's recommendations as constructive to fulfilling the Institute's aspiration.

5. UGC states in the Review Group Report that, as evident from the experience of most teacher education institutions across different continents and cultures, developing a multi-disciplinary learning environment and strong research capacity are two of the keys to enhancing teacher education. Students trained in such a setting can have a richer learning experience, and are often found upon graduation to be more adaptive to the changing classroom and ever more challenging world, thereby being better equipped to tackle real life problems as a teacher. Hence, a monotechnic University of Education should not be established in the UGC sector. That said, while HKIEd does not yet possess all the attributes generally demonstrated by a university (including multidisciplinary, strong research capability and

complete self-accrediting status), UGC believes that the Institute has the capacity to expand and develop in research and other disciplines.

6. We see merits in UGC's view that an institution with complementary disciplines will present students with the best learning environment and agree that HKIEd can, if it takes the opportunity, develop into a multidisciplinary institution with a focus on education and a good spread of other complementary disciplines¹, and undertaking research and research training. Such development will on the one hand retain education as the core identity of HKIEd, hence avoiding the concern about mission drift and over-academisation of education, and on the other hand enrich the teaching, learning and research environment in the Institute, to the benefit of its students and faculty as well as teacher education in Hong Kong. It should, in this connection, be emphasized that such development should not lead to HKIEd's expansion into a comprehensive institution that goes beyond its core mission and capability, which could in turn result in excessive duplication and wastage of resources in the UGC-funded sector. Also, pursuing the stand-alone option will not and should not preclude HKIEd from continuing and exploring deep collaboration with other institutions on teaching or research, having regard to the best interests of its students.

Priorities for HKIEd

7. As HKIEd continues to evolve as an institution with a primary focus on teacher education, we believe that priority should be given to –

- (a) the strategic development of teacher education in Hong Kong;
- (b) the development of additional disciplines that are complementary to education; and
- (c) the development of a research and research training environment.

These were not the main foci of the Blueprint, which stressed self-financing activities beyond the traditional professional boundary of teacher education and export of its educational products.

¹ While it is difficult to define an academic discipline in precise terms, the Review Group suggests that a discipline area (such as Humanities, Creative Arts, Social Sciences, Information Technology, Health Studies, Management and Administration Studies, etc.) would require a fully fledged department that provides adequate academic and professional coverage and can offer one or preferably more major concentrations for a stand-alone degree.

8. In identifying new discipline areas, we believe HKIEd may wish to consider –

- (a) how the new discipline will contribute to its programmes in teacher education;
- (b) its existing strengths;
- (c) what sub-disciplines (other than education-linked) should be represented at HKIEd;
- (d) employment opportunities for students on graduation;
- (e) avoidance of inappropriate overlap with other Hong Kong universities; and
- (f) opportunities for teaching and research collaborations with other universities in the new discipline(s).

Specifically, HKIEd may wish to consider some of the proposals presented in the Blueprint, including those relating to research environment, programme offerings, continuous professional development and research-based teaching in the context of the above priorities and in view of the other comments in the Review Group Report.

9. We note UGC’s concerns about HKIEd’s proposed shift towards self-financing activities beyond the traditional professional boundary of teacher education and export of its educational products. We agree that such activities could absorb the energy of HKIEd management and staff and deflect them from more important priorities above for the successful transformation of the Institute as well as the implementation of the “3+3+4” academic structure. The community will expect the Institute to remain committed to its core mission, i.e. teacher education, and be fit for purpose. HKIEd will thus have to take into account the internal competition for resources and find ways to effectively combine such expansion with the needs of Hong Kong in considering future expansions in the areas in question.

Further support for HKIEd

10. Against the above considerations, we believe that UGC’s recommendations provide a credible and workable basis on which the Government can formulate its further support for HKIEd. We also note that such support should not come at the expense of other higher education institutions.

Development of additional disciplines

11. To facilitate HKIED's development of a minimal spread of disciplines complementary to education, we recommend providing HKIED a maximum total of 120 additional FYFD places per academic year for the three new discipline areas. These new places will be provided on top of the existing 14 500 FYFD places approved for the 2009-2012 triennium. HKIED's proposals for new disciplines should be assessed to ensure they have the attributes identified in paragraph 8 above and UGC is the most appropriate body to carry out the assessment. There will be further discussion between the Institute and UGC in the light of the Government's decision to provide HKIED with the resources and FYFD places required to pursue its further development. While it will be up to HKIED to come up with detailed proposals regarding what the additional discipline areas may be, we believe the community expects that they will be complementary to and supportive of HKIED's main focus on teacher education.

12. HKIED will also have to obtain accreditation from the Hong Kong Council on Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) for the programmes offered under the three new discipline areas, as its present self-accrediting status applies to teacher education programmes only.

13. Given that HKIED has to go through the above processes, it is difficult at this stage to predict exactly when HKIED can start to provide the new programmes, as it would be difficult to predict the time that HKIED might need to take to satisfy the relevant requirements. Nevertheless, we believe it is achievable for HKIED to start the new programmes in the three additional discipline areas within the 2009-2012 triennium. We will earmark necessary resources to accommodate this development.

14. In line with the existing practice, all the 14 620² FYFD places will form the central pool for allocation to UGC-funded institutions in the 2015-2018 triennium on the basis of the merits of their relevant Academic Development Proposals (ADPs), and all institutions will have to compete on an equal footing in that and subsequent exercises.

² Viz. 14 500 plus 120 FYFD places per academic year.

Development of research capacity

15. To support further development of HKIEd's research capability, we recommend providing HKIEd, through UGC, with a total of 30 RPg places, to be spread over three years. The Review Group Report suggests that, prior to any RPg allocation, HKIEd should discuss with UGC its research framework and, among other things, satisfy UGC that it has the capability to provide such research places and is committed to providing adequate supervision and support for the graduate students concerned. Accreditation by HKCAAVQ will similarly be required if the RPg places are in disciplines that lie outside teacher education. Whilst it would be difficult to predict the time that HKIEd might need to take to satisfy the relevant requirements, we again believe that it is likely for HKIEd to be able to start to offer some RPg places in question within the 2009-2012 triennium. We will earmark necessary resources to accommodate this development.

Flexibility in manpower planning

16. UGC recommends that the Government should continue to take a flexible approach in planning the manpower dimension in teacher education. Since the 2008/2009 rollover year, the Administration has been taking a liberal approach in providing advice on forecast of supply and demand of teachers to HKIEd for reference. This has proven to provide much needed flexibility to HKIEd in its planning. We agree with UGC that this flexible approach, which has also been adopted for the 2009-2012 triennium, should be continued in future.

Granting of university title

17. In considering whether a higher education institution should be granted the university title, the Administration will take into account all relevant factors, including the quality and standard of its academic programmes, the level and mix of programmes offered, the quality of students and standing of academic staff, research capability, internal governance, quality assurance structures and the extent of self-accrediting powers, resources available to the institution, and the public interest.

18. As a UGC-funded institution, HKIEd is already funded on the same basis as the other seven UGC-funded institutions. We agree with the assessment of UGC that HKIEd is not at this point in time ready to be granted the university title, and believe that the developments now envisaged, including the offering by HKIEd of new programmes complementary to and supportive of teacher education and the enhancement of its research capability, represent the necessary steps that HKIEd should take as it strives to develop into a university with teacher education as the primary focus.

19. Following the implementation of these necessary steps, HKIEd may, when it is ready and willing to do so, submit to the Government a formal request for being granted the university title. Therefore, it should be emphasized that the development of new programmes complementary to teacher education and the building up of research capacity will not automatically lead to a university title. Before such a title may be so granted, HKIEd must be able to demonstrate that it already possesses the qualities and attributes commonly expected of a university. This implies that the new disciplines and research programmes will need to be in operation long enough for their quality to be assessed. Otherwise, we will be degrading the value and meaning implied by the university title, with adverse implications for the higher education sector as a whole. Accordingly, upon receipt of a request for being granted the university title from HKIEd, the Government intends to invite UGC to conduct a special review having regard to the matters referred to in paragraph 17 above. The Government will then take a view on the request in the light of UGC's advice and other relevant considerations.

20. It would not be pragmatic to try to predict at this stage the time that the relevant processes would take, not to mention their likely outcome, and much will depend on HKIEd's efforts and whether it can succeed to develop the qualities befitting a university in the coming years. It should be pointed out that, if HKIEd's bid to acquire the university title eventually succeeds, consequential amendments will have to be made to the Hong Kong Institute of Education Ordinance (Cap. 444).

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSAL

B 21. The proposal has financial and sustainability implications as set out at **Annex B**.

22. The proposal is in conformity with the Basic Law, including the provisions concerning human rights. It has no productivity, civil service, economic or environmental implications.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

23. On matters concerning tertiary education, especially with regard to UGC-funded institutions, the Administration seeks the advice of UGC. The LegCo Panel on Education discussed the subject on 16 April 2009. HKIEd management, staff members and students present at the meeting expressed their desire for HKIEd to be granted the university title.

PUBLICITY

24. A press release will be issued on 24 June 2009. A spokesman will be available to respond to enquiries.

BACKGROUND

25. HKIED was formally established in 1994 by merging the four former Colleges of Education (i.e. Grantham, Northcote, Sir Robert Black and the Hong Kong Technical Teachers' College) and the Institute of Language in Education. Offering sub-degree (SD) teacher education programmes at the initial stage, HKIED started to offer programmes at the degree and above levels in September 1998. In March 2004, HKIED was granted self-accrediting status in respect of its own teacher education programmes at degree and above levels. During the 2009-2012 triennium, HKIED will provide about 440 taught postgraduate, about 480 FYFD intakes and 1 293 SD publicly-funded places each year at an annual recurrent funding of about \$510 million.

ENQUIRY

26. For enquiries on this brief, please contact Ms Amy Wong, Principal Assistant Secretary for Education, on 3540 7468.

Education Bureau
24 June 2009

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background to the Report

1. The Government has invited the University Grants Committee (UGC) to give expert advice on the development of the Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd) in the context of the HKIEd's Development Blueprint. The Terms of Reference provided by the Government request the UGC to consider the Blueprint, having regard to the needs of the Hong Kong community, including the promotion of excellence in the higher education sector. The UGC set up a Review Group to advise on how to respond to the Government's request. This Report presents the findings of the Review Group, and its conclusions, as endorsed by the UGC.

2. Education is the essential foundation of a thriving and innovative society. The quality of education in a society is no less important for economic development. As competition among economies becomes more intense, the importance of education as the key to future success intensifies. Above all, following the structural shift from manufacturing to a service-oriented economy in recent decades, Hong Kong will need to develop strong and appropriate human capital to stay in the forefront of competition, and this will be affected by the quality of education delivered by its schools and teachers. One of the best ways to achieve this is to enhance Teacher Education programmes so as to train high quality teachers for Hong Kong's schools.

3. Where relevant, the Review has sought to advance the interests of higher education students and be attentive to approaches to Teacher Education that –

- attract and retain good quality students for the teaching profession;
- provide a rich learning environment at undergraduate and postgraduate levels; and
- provide flexible career pathways for students throughout their course of study.

Institutional Profile

4. HKIEd is a relatively new higher education institution, whose first bachelor degree graduates emerged in 2001. The current strength of HKIEd is in the training of teachers for the primary and pre-primary school sectors. Currently about 80% of new primary teachers in Hong Kong are graduates of the Institute. This dominant status is significant in considering changes to the profile of the institution. At secondary level, HKIEd provides about 25% of new teachers. In addition, HKIEd provides programmes at sub-degree and non-degree levels to a large student body. It has very few postgraduate research enrolments and receives no UGC-funded places for research.

International Trends – Teacher Education Institutions and Teacher Education Reforms

5. After taking account of the historic and recent trends in upgrading Teacher Education institutions around the world, the Review Group is persuaded that there is considerable merit in the path followed in most higher education systems in the developed world. Specifically, there are clear advantages to students, staff and the community in universities providing a multidisciplinary environment. Here students can choose to specialise in one or two disciplines, thus opening alternative career paths to them. In such an environment interdisciplinary research and teaching can also be fostered, and this adds to the richness of the student experience.

6. For teachers and Teaching Education institutions, powerful challenges are being driven by substantial changes in political, social and economic forces. These include the growth of an interconnected, complex global economy, unprecedented developments in communication technologies, and the effect of changing social mores on school and classroom environments. In many countries, education reform is driven by a community's perception of falling educational standards reflected in reduced student learning outcomes.

7. The Blueprint, research literature, and other materials provided by HKIED demonstrate the Institute's awareness of the profound changes in the international environment of Teacher Education, and for previously monotechnic Teacher Education institutions. This examination of international concerns, reforms and policy issues also provides the background against which the Review Group has evaluated HKIED's development proposals.

Evaluation of HKIED's Development Blueprint

8. Recent and emerging trends and transformational opportunities for Teacher Education institutions rather underscore the limitations in the Institute's own transformation agenda. The Review Group is concerned that overall, the direction and the nature of developments identified by HKIED will not genuinely transform the Institute and contribute to significant improvement of Teacher Education in Hong Kong. The Review Group is concerned that the large number of initiatives proposed in self-financing (including non-local) activities may absorb the energy of HKIED's management and staff, deflecting them from more appropriate and important endeavours, particularly in the concurrent implementation of the "3+3+4" reform. We suggest that HKIED should reconsider its development agenda by seeking support for a wider array of cognate disciplines, advancing continuing professional development, shifting its priority from the export market to meeting the needs of Hong Kong, or finding ways efficiently to combine the two. From discussions with the new management team at HKIED, and taking account of the supplementary materials provided, it appears to the Review Group that the Blueprint may represent a more conservative vision than that shared by the current leadership. We hope that HKIED will recognise the confidence being placed in its potential and will see the recommendations in this Report as constructive to its further development.

9. The aspiration to become a university is a recurring theme throughout the Blueprint. University title is presented as fundamental to many of the proposals contained in the Blueprint, even though it does not appear to be a prerequisite for implementing most of the proposals. It is the view of the Review Group that the Blueprint relies too heavily on the strength of university title to drive improvement and change, rather than on the active acquisition of attributes that would lead to real improvements in the Institute's teaching, learning and research environment. The Blueprint seeks university title in advance of achieving the attributes that would commend consideration of this proposal. In the mind of the Review Group there is an important issue of sequencing here. Those who advocate university title have generally done so based on notions of "status", social and cultural factors, and perceived precedents in Hong Kong. We are in no doubt that these views are strongly held, but we do not believe that the answer commonly suggested – university title now – addresses the key issue, which is the prior development and strengthening of HKIED.

10. The Review Group has given primary attention to the development and strengthening of HKIED as an institution set within the context of the Hong Kong higher education sector. In this endeavour, it has drawn on the experience of a wide range of relevant higher education systems where transformational changes have taken place.

11. In summary, the overwhelming majority of previously monotechnic Teacher Education institutions have gone through some form of transformation in order to establish a learning environment that is characterised by a minimum spread of complementary disciplines, research capability, and the significant majority of students being enrolled in undergraduate and postgraduate programmes (as opposed to sub- and non-degree programmes).

12. The Blueprint presents a vision for HKIED to develop as a monotechnic University of Education. However, the Blueprint does not address the issue of how a single discipline environment would off-set the demonstrable benefits of multidisciplinary, or what superior benefits accrue to the monotechnic model which the Blueprint proposes. The Review Group is persuaded that the benefits put forward by HKIED in favour of retaining its single focus are outweighed by the widely recognised benefits of genuine broadening of the discipline range. In addition to the benefits of a broadened learning and research environment, the Review Group believes that the interests of students are better served by the introduction of genuine alternative academic and career pathways.

Recommendation 1

That a university of Education, particularly one of a monotechnic character, not be established in the UGC sector, and that other strategies be followed to lift the capacity of HKIED to best enhance Teacher Education and promote excellence in the Hong Kong higher education sector.

13. While the Blueprint proposes a transformation of HKIEd built on self-financing and regional developments (paragraphs 39-40), the Review Group believes that such an approach should be secondary to the central and primary mission of HKIEd, which is to develop and provide high quality Teacher Education and to be a source of educational research to support Hong Kong's schools. While the UGC encourages institutions to pursue more entrepreneurial activities, it places even greater emphasis on the central roles of its institutions, which is Teacher Education in the case of HKIEd. We are also mindful of the substantial challenge faced by HKIEd in preparing for the changes associated with the "3+3+4" reforms.

Recommendation 2

That HKIEd should give priority to:

- **the strategic development of Teacher Education in Hong Kong;**
- **the development of additional disciplines that are complementary to Education; and**
- **the development of a research and research training environment.**

14. HKIEd has made clear its determination to develop and strengthen the Institute, and the Blueprint contains proposals, other than those discussed above, that would support these goals. The Review Group welcomes the Blueprint's stated commitment, along with appropriate strategies, to develop research and research training capacity, and notes that these are consistent with our concern that HKIEd develop an appropriate research capability.

15. The Review Group also welcomes the Blueprint's proposals on extended involvement in continuing professional development and in-service programmes for teachers. Other sound proposals relate to international benchmarking and the quality of the Teacher Education experience for individual students.

The Future of HKIEd

16. Having examined HKIEd's Blueprint, its 2009-12 *Academic Development Proposal*, and other supplementary information provided by the Institute, and speaking with the Institute's management team, the Review Group believes that HKIEd has the capacity to expand and develop in research and other disciplines if it chooses to take such opportunity. However, more work needs to be done in these areas and enhancing Teacher Education quality should be at the centre of each of these developments.

17. Transformed along the lines suggested by the Review Group, HKIEd would offer a broadened scope of academic disciplines, while continuing to focus on its core Education programmes. We would anticipate particular strengths in early childhood and primary education, expansion in secondary education, postgraduate activities in provision of Postgraduate Diploma in Education, continuing professional development of teachers and expanding research programmes at the doctoral level. All of these changes are consistent with the proposals put forward by HKIEd in its Blueprint and other supporting materials.

18. To help HKIED move forward, the Review Group proposes that the Institute expand its degree-level student load, research capability and discipline base. We understand that HKIED wishes to retain its core identity with the discipline of Education, in an expanded and enhanced context.

19. The Review Group believes that the inclusion of other disciplines at HKIED will enrich the teaching, learning and research environment and provide flexible academic and career pathways for its students. We are confident that, appropriately planned, the Institute can develop strategies to ensure that such disciplinary expansion does not undermine educational coherence or deflect resources and focus from its academic goals.

20. The Review Group is well aware that HKIED wishes to follow a path that leads to university status. For this reason, we considered the attributes generally demonstrated by higher education institutions in a number of relevant jurisdictions that carry the name 'university'. Clearly, HKIED does not have those attributes at this time. However, the Review Group believes that by implementing the proposals set out in this Report, HKIED can strengthen its case for a re-consideration at some point in the future for university title. More importantly, these developments would provide a richer learning environment, broaden research opportunities, provide access to more diverse programmes and greater flexibility and career pathways for students. A further benefit would be the promotion of excellence in Hong Kong's higher education sector.

21. We have been persuaded by evidence that throughout the developed world, higher education institutions have been strengthened by broadening or partnering with other institutions in order to provide superior benefits to students, staff and the communities that they serve.

Institutional Integration Option

22. As our review of world-wide developments of Teacher Education institutions has shown (Chapter 2), most cases of upgrading of Teacher Education involved mergers with other monotechnic or multidisciplinary institutions. Such mergers and other forms of institutional integration have been expressed through the formation of faculties of Education or other federated structures that allow Education academics to pursue discipline-specific goals within a broader scholarly setting.

23. The Report describes some of the benefits to HKIED, Teacher Education in general and the Hong Kong higher education sector that are likely to flow from institutional integration. These include the immediate opening of access to an array of established, accredited, academic disciplines to enrich the Institute's Education programmes; the attainment of university status for the Education programmes and their staff and students in a relatively short time frame; and the inclusion in an active research community with opportunities for interdisciplinary research.

24. Compared to developing into a stand-alone multidisciplinary institution, partnership with an established university would allow HKIED to implement the majority of this Report's proposals while pursuing its own Education-focused goals in a relatively short time frame and at a reduced cost to the Hong Kong community.

Stand-Alone Option

25. HKIED could also address all of the recommendations in this Report to strengthen the institution and Teacher Education in Hong Kong by developing into an Education-focused, multidisciplinary institution with research capability. With this option, HKIED could work toward a unique and distinctive vision. The new institution could add value to the Hong Kong higher education sector if it develops in a planned and coherent manner. Such planning must take account of the education needs of Hong Kong as well as the academic, research and employment opportunities for its students.

26. The Review Group proposes that if the stand-alone option is chosen, HKIED would be expected to develop into an institution offering a good spread (for example, at least three) of discipline areas in addition to Education. This prerequisite of a minimum discipline spread in the academic footprint of a university reflects established practices in other jurisdictions, including Mainland China.

Recommendation 3

That HKIED should seek to implement the proposals set out in this Report by one of two options:

- (a) develop into a multidisciplinary institution with a focus on Education and other complementary disciplines, primarily offering undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes and undertaking research and research training; or**
- (b) partner with an existing university in order to provide a multidisciplinary learning and research environment and flexible career pathways for its students while developing other proposals that are congruent with the mutually agreed development plans of HKIED and the partner university.**

Financial Implications

27. Several recommendations in this Report carry financial implications. The Review Group considers that Teacher Education is such a vital area within the overall Education policy that it is worth additional investment by the Government. It would not be desirable or reasonable if extra funding to HKIED is to be at the expense of the other UGC-funded institutions. However, beyond whatever additional Government funding becomes available to HKIED, the UGC also welcomes private funding or other innovative income sources, and is open to new strategies towards that end. While the financial implications of the integration or stand-alone options are difficult to project,

we appreciate that the public and the Government will wish to have some idea of the costs, and these are provided in the Report.

Manpower Planning

28. HKIED, like other Teacher Education institutions, is subject to the Government's goal of balancing teacher supply with demand. Given that this can profoundly affect HKIED, since all its UGC-funded programmes are currently shaped by manpower planning considerations, the Review Group invites the Government to continue to take a flexible approach towards balancing teacher supply and demand. This will enable HKIED to make longer-term plans, whether it goes forward as a stand-alone institution or as an institute partnered with an existing university.

Recommendation 4

That Government:

- **approach the institutional development of HKIED as a matter requiring additional funding, over and above existing levels of funding provided to UGC; and**
- **continue to take a flexible approach in planning the manpower dimension in Teacher Education.**

The Challenges Ahead

29. The Review Group is confident that HKIED's management is committed to advancing the Institute and has the vision and capacity to implement far-reaching changes. That being said, the Review Group emphasises that the changes proposed, whether implemented in the context of institutional integration, or as a stand-alone institution, are very challenging and likely to consume the human and financial resources and creative energy of the Institute for several years to come.

30. The Review Group sees great potential for HKIED to advance to a significant new level of achievement and standing. We believe that becoming a monotechnic university (of Education) would set the sights too low, and would not be in the longer term interests of HKIED or its graduates. Beyond this, such a path would not serve to promote excellence in the higher education sector. HKIED does not have an appropriate spread of attributes of a university, including multidisciplinary, deep research capability and self accrediting status beyond its Teacher Education programmes. Unless it achieves university status through institutional integration, HKIED would need to demonstrate that it had undergone a significant transformation before seeking re-consideration of its status by taking the stand alone, multidisciplinary option. The Review Group recognises that this transformation is a serious and arduous exercise made more so by the concurrent demands of the implementation of "3+3+4".

31. In considering the challenges and opportunities set out in this Report, the Review Group proposes that HKIED be provided with the support it may need to examine and explore the options proposed. The Council of HKIED is encouraged to

supplement its own counsel with advice from external experts with experience of institutional change of the types proposed. UGC will endeavour to provide all reasonable support and advice to the HKIEd Council while it develops a planned and coherent approach to its development opportunities.

Conclusions

32. The Review Group's suggestions are made with the student learning experience at the forefront of our deliberations. If the suggestions of this Report are implemented, graduates of HKIEd will have a greater variety of courses to choose from, either at HKIEd itself, or in a programme organized jointly with a partner institution, and be better equipped for tackling real world problems and accessing more career options.

33. The output of an active research environment at HKIEd will inform undergraduate programmes, and influence policy and curricula in Hong Kong's schools. Proposals included in the Blueprint and the supplementary materials should ensure that research students will work in research teams and will enjoy regular interactions with fellow research students through local and international research networks.

34. The Blueprint lays out a vision for the future of HKIEd based on changes to the title and direction of the Institute. After evaluating that vision, and engaging with the management of HKIEd, the Review Group supports the development of research and research training at the Institute, and proposes the further development of HKIEd into a multidisciplinary institution. The Review Group believes that its suggestions will promote excellence in the Hong Kong higher education sector and will provide a strong foundation going forward for HKIEd and Teacher Education in Hong Kong. This also will serve the institution well in the event it decides in the future to re-submit itself for consideration for the university title.

Implications of the Proposal

Financial Implications

Based on current price levels, the estimated annual recurrent cost for providing the additional student places is \$76 million for the 120 first-year-first-degree (FYFD) places and \$11 million for the 30 research postgraduate (RPg) places in full implementation. Of this total annual recurrent funding of \$87 million, \$65 million will be met by redeployment of resources already allocated to Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd) in the following areas –

- (a) Resources of some \$60 million a year made available by the removal of the monotechnic premium currently given to HKIEd¹; and
- (b) Resources recouped from HKIEd due to under-enrolment in HKIEd's Professional Upgrading Courses (PUC)². We have assumed that \$5 million a year could be made available for redeployment.

The remaining additional cost of \$22 million will be met from the Secretary for Education (SED)'s operating expenditure (OPEX) envelope. How the total recurrent funding of \$87 million would be phased in would depend on the readiness of HKIEd in offering the programmes.

2. The additional student places may also give rise to additional recurrent funding requirement in student financial assistance in the form of grants and loans. We estimate that for each year, around \$7.1 million for grants (to be borne by SED's OPEX envelope) and \$3.2 million for low-interest loans (to be borne by the Centre) would be required for the additional student places.

3. Separately, there may be one-off costs required for the transformation such as those associated with curriculum development, course accreditation and the build up of a research environment. We

¹ This monotechnic premium has been provided to HKIEd since 2005/06 to cushion against the constraints on its flexibility of operation brought about by a single discipline focus (such as the limited ability to absorb manpower cycles, which is a lesser problem for multi-disciplinary institutions). The justification for the monotechnic premium falls away with the addition of the 120 new FYFD places, and that pending further discussion with HKIEd, the amount should be withdrawn in phases and be fully removed by the time the 120 additional FYFD places are in place.

² The \$5 million is derived by assuming a 15% under-enrolment rate in the PUC programmes which have experienced under-enrolment in recent years, ranging from 9% in 2005/06 to 27% in 2007/08.

expect that such costs should be borne by HKIEd from its reserves. As regards academic facilities and/or student hostels for the additional students, the existing facilities at HKIEd will be sufficient to cater for the needs of these students based on the existing formulae for calculating space requirement.

Sustainability Implications

4. Developing a multi-disciplinary learning environment and strong research capacity in our major teacher education institution will enhance teacher education which impacts on the quality of our teachers, and in turn will uplift the students' learning experiences. This will help enhance the quality of our workforce and is conducive to the sustainability principle of achieving a competitive economy.

Terms of Reference

1. To advise the Government, in the light of the community's needs and the promotion of excellence in the higher education sector, and having regard to the Government's decision on institutional development of The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIED) on 23 June 2009*, the Programme Area Accreditation (PAA) Report on HKIED issued by the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications in July 2014, as well as any other evidence that may be obtained through a special review on HKIED -
 - (a) on HKIED's progress in developing into a multi-disciplinary institution with a focus on teacher education and a good spread of other complementary disciplines and implementing the recommendations made in the University Grants Committee (UGC)'s Report of the Review Group on Hong Kong Institute of Education's Development Blueprint published in February 2009;
 - (b) on whether HKIED should be granted self-accrediting status in the programme areas covered by its existing PAA status, having regard to the quality of the relevant programmes and in terms of both teaching and research performance;
 - (c) in light of (a) and (b), on whether HKIED already possesses the qualities and attributes commonly expected of a university and should be granted the university title at this juncture;
 - (d) on whether there are any other actions HKIED should take in future to further its role and improve the quality of education it provides.
2. To bring to the Government's attention issues of concern, if any, in relation to HKIED's application for university title.

* Details are set out in the relevant Legislative Council brief which is available at <http://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/about-edb/press/legco/others/legco%20brief%20on%20hkied%20development%20eng.pdf>

**Review Group on the Hong Kong Institute of Education's
Application for University Title
Membership List**

Convenor

- Sir Ivor Crewe
- Master of University College, Oxford, UK
 - Former Vice-Chancellor, University of Essex, UK
 - President of the Academy of Social Sciences, UK

Deputy Convenor

- Mr Irving Koo, SBS, JP
- Former UGC Member
 - Deputy Convenor of the Review Group on HKIEd in 2009

Overseas Academic Members

- Professor Hans Van de Ven
- Convenor of Humanities Panel, 2014 Research Assessment Exercise, UGC
 - Professor of Modern Chinese History, University of Cambridge, UK
- Emeritus Professor Sandra Vianne McLean AM
- Panel Chair, HKIEd Audit Panel, Quality Assurance Council's First Round of Quality Audits
 - Former Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Teaching Quality), Queensland University of Technology, Australia
- Professor Janet H Lawrence
- Professor, Center for the Study of Higher and Post-secondary Education, School of Education, University of Michigan, US

Local Members

- Dr Michael Mak Hoi-hung, SBS, JP
- UGC Member
 - Medical Practitioner
 - Vice-Chairman of School Council, St. Paul's Co-educational College
- Mr Cheung Pak Hong Tommy, BBS
- UGC Member
 - Principal, Munsang College (Hong Kong Island)

**List of Stakeholders consulted by the Review Group on
HKIED's Application for University Title**

A. Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs)
The Chinese University of Hong Kong (香港中文大學)
The University of Hong Kong (香港大學)
Hong Kong Baptist University (香港浸會大學)
The Open University of Hong Kong (香港公開大學)
B. School Associations
Committee on Home-school Cooperation (家庭與學校合作事宜委員會)
Council of Non-profit-making Organizations for Pre-primary Education (非牟利幼兒教育機構議會)
Hong Kong Primary Education Research Association (香港初等教育研究學會)
Hong Kong Aided Primary School Heads Association (香港資助小學校長會)
Hong Kong Association of Heads of Secondary Schools (香港中學校長會)
Hong Kong, Kowloon & New Territories Kindergarten Education Advancement Association Ltd (港九新界幼稚園教育協進會)
Hong Kong Subsidized Secondary Schools Council (香港津貼中學議會)
Non-profit-making Kindergarten Council of Hong Kong (香港非牟利幼稚園聯會)
The Association of English Medium Secondary Schools (香港英文中學聯會)
The Association of Hong Kong Chinese Middle Schools (香港中文中學聯會)
Subsidized Primary Schools Council (津貼小學議會)
Hong Kong Kindergarten Association (香港幼稚園協會)
Grant Schools Council (補助學校議會)
Hong Kong Direct Subsidy Scheme Schools Council (香港直接資助學校議會)
C. Teachers' Union and Professional Development
Committee on Professional of Teachers and Principals (教師及校長專業發展委員會)
Hong Kong Teachers' Association (香港教師會)
Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union (香港教育專業人員協會)
Hong Kong Early Childhood Educators Association (香港幼兒教育人員協會)
D. Chambers of Commerce and Employers' Associations
Employers' Federation of Hong Kong (香港僱主聯合會)
Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce (香港總商會)
Hong Kong Institute of Human Resource Management (香港人力資源管理學會)
The Chinese General Chamber of Commerce (香港中華總商會)
E. HKIED related groups
The Academic Staff Association of the HKIED (香港教育學院教學人員協會)
Hong Kong Federation of Education Workers (香港教育工作者聯會)
The HKIED Alumni Association (香港教育學院校友會)
The HKIED Students' Union (香港教育學院學生會)
F. Others
Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education (香港資優教育學苑)
The Hong Kong Council for Educational Administration Limited (香港教育行政學會)



沈祖堯
校長
莫慶堯醫學講座教授
中國工程院院士

Joseph J.Y. Sung SBS JP MBBS (HK) MD PhD FRCP (London) FRCP (Edin) FRCP (Glasgow) FRACP FACG FAGA FHKCP FHKAM (Medicine)
Vice-Chancellor and President
Mok Hing Yiu Professor of Medicine
Academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering

Your Ref: UGC/GEN/274/23/2014

December 18, 2014

Dr Richard T Armour
Secretary-General
University Grants Committee
7/F, Shui On Centre
6-8 Harbour Road
Wan Chai, Hong Kong

Dear Richard

**The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIED):
Application for University Title**

Thank you for your letter of 10 December 2014, inviting us to make a written submission to the Review Group on HKIED's Application for University Title, and I am pleased to respond as follows.

We support HKIED's application so that it is allowed to incorporate "University" in its title, as HKIED has made progress in developing into an institution primarily focused on teacher education but complemented by other disciplines related to teacher education. As such, HKIED already possesses the qualities and attributes commonly expected of a university benchmarked internationally.

In regard to the future direction for HKIED, we believe that it will continue to be a major player under the strategy of role differentiation for the UGC sector as a whole to achieve international competitiveness. The current role statement of HKIED, as agreed with the UGC, emphasises its importance in the provision of teacher education programmes, and we believe that the sector should help HKIED excel in this endeavor to the highest level. As it incorporates "University" in its title, HKIED will also offer more higher degree programmes and conduct research in disciplines related to Education. This will be beneficial for it as a key provider of teacher education programmes to meet the manpower needs of the community. Moreover, there should continue to be clear differentiation between the role of the future HKIED and, say, that of CUHK's Faculty of Education which is an integral part of a research-led comprehensive University of international standing. We hope that the future development of HKIED will be guided by the strategy of role differentiation.

.../Page 2

Dr Richard T Armour, UGC

We have taken note that our views and comments articulated in this letter may be disclosed to the Administration, HKIEd and the general public during the course of the assessment or in the report of the Review Group. We hope that all stakeholders will find our comments helpful and appreciate that they are made with the intentions to help the UGC sector grow and develop to enhance its international competitiveness.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joseph J Y Sung', written in a cursive style.

Joseph J Y Sung

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

香 港 大 學



校長：馬斐森教授
President and Vice-Chancellor
Professor P.W. Mathieson

香港薄扶林道
Pokfulam Road, Hong Kong
電話 Tel: (852) 2859 2100
圖文傳真 Fax: (852) 2858 9435
December 30, 2014

Dr. Richard T. Armour
Secretary-General
University Grants Committee
7/F Shui On Centre
6-8 Harbour Road
Wan Chai
Hong Kong

Dear Richard,

**The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIED)
Application for University Title**

Thank you for your letter dated December 10, 2014 inviting the University of Hong Kong to comment on the application by the Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIED) for permission to incorporate the term 'University' in its title. I have much pleasure in sharing with the Review Group the views of our University on this matter.

The University of Hong Kong is fully supportive of the move towards granting University status to HKIED and permitting it to incorporate the term 'University' within its title. This is a beneficial move for both staff and students. Holders of degrees from HKIED should be able to enjoy the same regard within the community as those who have obtained similar-level qualifications from the other tertiary institutions in Hong Kong. Allowing the term 'University' to be included in the title of the institution will send out an appropriate positive message to the professional and the wider communities regarding the status of HKIED qualifications and graduates. For staff, too, the change of name would provide a welcome boost to their self-esteem.

The University supports HKIED's move to define its own role and mission, and to adhere to its chosen role focusing on initial teacher education, particularly at the primary level, and other areas of benefit to Hong Kong. In order for HKIED to thrive as a university, it will be important for it to collaborate with other universities to achieve excellence. We would therefore welcome further collaboration with HKIED, extending our long-standing cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Peter Mathieson
President and Vice-Chancellor

(Translation)

(Letterhead of The Hong Kong Primary Education Research Association)

30 December 2014

Support for the Retitling of the Hong Kong Institute of Education as a University

Dear Dr Richard Armour

Secretary-General of the University Grants Committee,

The Hong Kong Primary Education Research Association (HKPERA) presented its views on the matter to Mr Michael Vernon Stone, the then Secretary-General of the University Grants Committee (UGC), on 11 April 2008. Echoing the claim that getting the right people to become teachers and providing them with quality teacher education programmes are two of the three guiding principles in improving the education outcomes, as mentioned in the report “How the world’s best-performing school systems come out on top” published by the McKinsey & Company a few years ago, HKPERA holds the view that retitling HKIEd as a “university” enables the institute to attract more senior secondary students of high calibre to enroll in its Bachelor of Education (BEd) programmes, thereby drawing more suitable talents to join the education sector in Hong Kong.

According to the established requirements, HKIEd has to go through a three-step process to pursue a university title. It is noted that the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) completed the Programme Revalidation for the Institute’s non-BEd programmes and granted Programme Area Accreditation status for its Social Sciences and Humanities programmes in November 2013 and April 2014 respectively. A review group has been set up under UGC to undertake the third step: institutional accreditation. HKPERA supports the retitling of HKIEd as a university. If the Institute goes through the third step successfully, HKPERA considers that it should continue to focus its efforts on training teachers for local school education under the “Education-plus” vision and ensure that the programmes offered are able to address the future needs of local teachers.

Besides, in its “How the world’s most improved school systems keep getting better” published in 2010, the McKinsey & Company regarded Hong Kong’s education system as one of those which were successful in achieving sustained improvement, and also pointed out that all the “sustained improvers” had raised their

(Translation)

professional development requirements. The report further said it was a crucial step in the improvement journey of an education system. With the retitling, HKPERA expects that HKIEd will provide more appropriate pre-employment and on-the-job training programmes for Hong Kong teachers in order to promote the professional development of local secondary, primary and kindergarten teachers.

HKPERA considers that HKIEd, after acquiring a university title, should enhance further its applied research efforts in areas of education policy and teaching practices, while maintaining the momentum in nurturing the youth in the disciplines of education, humanities and social sciences. In addition, as a university with a primary focus on education, HKIEd should diversify its programmes to develop teachers specialised in different education fields, such as parent education, education for the elderly, vocational education as well as instructors of community training programmes, in order to holistically foster the development of Hong Kong into a learning society.

SUN Lit-yau
Chairman of HKPERA

(Translation)

(Letterhead of The Hong Kong Aided Primary School Heads Association)

Regarding the Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIED)'s application for university title, the Hong Kong Aided Primary School Heads Association (HKAPSHA) is in principle positive to it. Our views are summarised as follows:

1. Following the path of the former colleges of education, HKIED has produced a vast number of excellent front-line teachers for secondary and primary schools over the past twenty years. This special role cannot be replaced by the faculties of education of any other universities. HKIED not only offers programmes that cover teaching skills, curriculum theory, psychology and sociology, but also conducts teacher training in line with various Government initiatives (such as primary education, Chinese learning for non-Chinese speaking students, teaching and learning for children with special learning needs, e-learning, etc.). All this demonstrates that the development of HKIED is heading towards a "normal university".
2. Over the years, professors in HKIED have been proactive in taking forward various research projects and setting up various kinds of centres (in areas like leadership, creativity and small class teaching, etc.) with a view to identifying the problems faced by the education sector nowadays and proposing practical reform measures. Their work is of paramount importance. If a university title is granted, we believe that HKIED may work on a wider direction and scope of research, which will bring significant benefits to the internationalisation of Hong Kong's education.
3. It is indeed worrying that the teaching skills of some teachers are found not up to par after their completion of teacher training programmes in recent years. This in effect has some impact on HKIED. However, the fact is that HKIED keeps a tight grip on the assessment and will not allow students with sub-standard performance in their placement to graduate. In this regard, we should keep our confidence in it. With a university title, HKIED will be able to enhance the strength of its teaching staff, so as to provide their students with more training in basic teaching skills, research methodology, professional ethics, as well as the practice and action-planning in collaborative learning and

(Translation)

self-learning. The education sector in Hong Kong as a whole will also benefit from this.

4. Educators are now in an even more challenging situation. Apart from dealing with a range of questions put forward by parents, students and the public, they are also required to state clearly their stance, compelling them to pay attention to things happening around them. As such, teachers should learn more about the methodology of thinking and analysing skills in order to respond more readily to different types of questions put up to them. The training provided by HKIED over the years has laid a solid foundation in this respect. To further improve teachers' capability, it is inevitable that HKIED has to enhance its programmes by enriching and expanding the programme content. It is therefore a matter of great urgency to retitle HKIED as a "normal university"; or else it will never be able to attract the most brilliant secondary school leavers.

HKAPSHA opines that HKIED should be granted a university title without delay, and that a relevant bill be drawn up as soon as possible in order to raise teachers' status to a higher professional level, which will be conducive to fostering the climate of respect for teachers and education.

LEUNG Siu-tong
Chairman of HKAPSHA



Hong Kong Subsidized Secondary Schools Council

香港津貼中學議會

CHAIRMAN'S OFFICE (主席辦公室)

c/o Lions College

90 Hing Shing Road, Kwai Fong, N.T., H.K.

聯絡處：獅子會中學 香港葵芳興盛路 90 號

Tel (電話): (852) 2614 7938 Fax (傳真): (852) 2614 5117

HON. SECRETARY'S OFFICE (義務秘書辦公室)

c/o HKTA Tang Hin Memorial Secondary School

Choi Yuen Estate, Sheung Shui, N.T., H.K.

聯絡處：香港道教聯合會鄧顯紀念中學 香港新界上水彩園邨

Tel (電話): (852) 2672 6820 Fax (傳真): (852) 3694 1150

HKSSSC website: <http://www.hksssc.edu.hk>**Chairman**

Mr. James LAM Yat-fung

林日豎校長

Vice Chairman

Ms Halina POON Suk-han

潘淑嫻校長

Hon. Secretary (External)

Mr LAU Chi-yuen

劉志遠校長

Asst. Hon. Sec. (Council)

Mr. TAM Kin-hung

譚劍虹校長

Asst. Hon. Sec. (EC)

Ms. LEE Yi-ying

李伊瑩校長

Hon. Treasurer

Mr. KWOK Man-leung

郭民亮校長

Ex-officio

Mr. LIU Ah-chuen

廖亞全校長

Area 1 Rep. (HKI)

Mr. TAI Tak-ching

戴德正校長

Area 2 Rep. (KNW)

Mr Michael LEUNG Chi-kin

梁志堅校長

Area 3 Rep. (KNE)

Mr. AU YEUNG Ka-keung

歐陽家強校長

Area 4 Rep. (NTS)

Mr. TSO Tat-ming

曹達明校長

Area 5 Rep. (NTW)

Mr. LAU Chi-kuen

柳子權校長

Area 6 Rep. (NTE)

Mr. CHUNG Lui-pong

鍾呂磅校長

Area 7 Rep. (NTN)

Mr. LEUNG Hok-po

梁學圃校長

Co-opted Member

Ms Michelle HO Miu-chun

賀妙珍校長

Ms. Catalina CHAN Yuen-ling

陳婉玲校長

Ms. Annette Yau Mei-sze

游美斯校長

Hon. Legal Advisor

Mr. Eddie MUI Ho-chow

梅浩洲律師

Hon. Legal Advisor

Mr. Kennedy WONG

Ying-ho

黃英豪律師

Hon. Auditor

Mr. KWOK Man-kwan

郭文坤校長

14th January, 2015

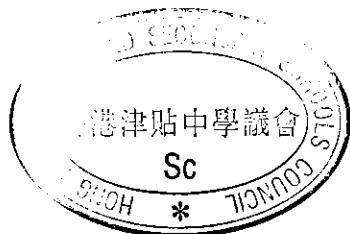
Mr. Richard T Armour
Secretary-General
University Grants Committee
7/F Shui On Centre
6 – 8 Harbour Road,
Wan Chai,
Hong Kong.

Dear Sir,

Re: The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIED):
Application for University Title

On behalf of the Hong Kong Subsidized Secondary School Council, I would like to express our great support for the permission for HKIED to incorporate 'University' in its title.

Thank you for your kind attention.



Yours faithfully,

Mr. LAU Chi-yuen
Honorary Secretary

(Translation)

(Letterhead of The Association of Hong Kong Chinese Middle Schools)

24 December 2014

To: The University Grants Committee Secretariat

The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd):
Application for a University Title

With reference to the letter dated 16 December 2014 issued by the University Grants Committee (UGC) to seek our opinions about the captioned issue, I write to express our support for the retitling of HKIEd as a university as unanimously decided after some discussion by our Association's Executive Committee on the following grounds:

- (1) Given the mission of nurturing teachers for Hong Kong's basic education, HKIEd will be able to draw brilliant students to join the teaching profession if it is granted a university title, thereby raising the standard of education in Hong Kong to keep in pace with the rapid development of society.
- (2) With a population of more than 7 million and hailed as a cosmopolitan city, Hong Kong has only 8 publicly-funded universities, lagging far behind other countries and cities. The Hong Kong Government should therefore catch up in the provision of publicly-funded university places to allow more capable students to pursue their study in local universities. Among all the publicly-funded tertiary institutions in Hong Kong, HKIEd is the most qualified one for upgrading to a university.
- (3) On both sides of the Strait, there are universities of education centering on pedagogy, and a good few of them are of high repute. Upgrading HKIEd to a university will enable it to measure up to the requirements under the tertiary education systems of the Mainland and Taiwan, dispelling the misconception that teacher education is not given due regard in Hong Kong.
- (4) The retitling entirely meets the expectation of parents, teachers, students and the community at large.

TAM Yat-yuk
Chairman, The Association of

(Translation)

Hong Kong Chinese Middle Schools



SPSC

主席：張勇邦
副主席：葉介君
秘書：胡艷芬
副秘書：徐起鸞
司庫：朱偉基

地址：香港灣仔堅尼地道 110 號 聖公會聖雅各小學
地址：新界荃灣海濱花園永順街 39 號 天主教石鐘山紀念小學
地址：九龍觀塘啟業道 23 號 九龍灣聖若翰天主教小學
地址：新界葵涌葵盛東邨 基督教香港信義會葵盛信義學校
地址：香港西環堅尼地城加惠民道 31 號 聖公會呂明才紀念小學

電話：2574 9369 傳真：2834 8709
電話：2408 6373 傳真：2407 7180
電話：2343 2311 傳真：2343 3011
電話：2422 5187 傳真：2419 9470
電話：2817 2305 傳真：2817 3950

津貼小學議會

University Grants Committee
7/F, Shui On Centre,
6-8 Harbour Road,
Wan Chai, Hong Kong

31st December 2014

Dear Chairman,

Our Opinions on HKIED : “Application for University Title”

The Subsidized Primary School Council gives full support to the Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIED) for its “Application for University Title”, reasons are as follows:

1. HKIED has longstanding and rich experience of providing teacher training programs; has outstanding teaching teams; and has comprehensive training courses as well as a well-established administrative system.
2. HKIED has been trained most of the teachers in Hong Kong. Some of them are very outstanding and brilliant who contributed tremendously to the education in Hong Kong.
3. HKIED is already functioning as an university – providing qualification of bachelor, master and doctorate degrees. However, she has still been underappreciated as an university, which is quite unfair to the teaching teams as well as the graduates.
4. In 1997, Hong Kong reverted to Chinese sovereignty, the system of organization of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government (HKSARG) and People’s Republic of China (PRC) should be unanimous. Therefore, Hong Kong should have a “Normal University” same as other provinces and cities in PRC.

The meaning and the impact of HKIED when given the title of university

If HKIED successfully applied for the university title, it will be a great significance and positive result that benefit both the education sector as well as Hong Kong. Firstly, under the severe competition among tertiary institutions at the moment, HKIED cannot fulfil the students and their parents’ aspiration of “enrolment to university”. As a result, HKIED is not able to enroll students with high qualification. After given the university



津貼小學議會

SPSC

主席：張勇邦
副主席：蔡介君
秘書：胡艷芬
副秘書：徐起鵬
司庫：朱偉基

地址：香港灣仔堅尼地道 110 號 聖公會聖雅各小學
地址：新界荃灣海濱花園永順街 39 號 天主教石鐘山紀念小學
地址：九龍觀塘啟業道 23 號 九龍灣聖若翰天主教小學
地址：新界葵涌葵盛東邨 基督教香港信義會葵盛信義學校
地址：香港西環堅尼地城加惠民道 31 號 聖公會呂明才紀念小學

電話：2574 9369 傳真：2834 8709
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title, HKIEd is able to attract and absorb more outstanding talents into the education profession. In this way, it helps to raise the quality of Hong Kong education in general. Moreover, the renaming of HKIEd as university can turn Hong Kong into a major education city in Greater China Region as well as Asia-Pacific Region. This helps to facilitate more professional communication and pave the way to develop Hong Kong's education industry.

Expectation of the “New University”

Hong Kong society is now developing rapidly, education is now facing significant challenges. Therefore, the traditional teacher training cannot fulfil the ever-changing needs. After HKIEd entitled as university, the “new university” not only provides teaching training programs, but also develops and provides

related professional courses and research so that the “potential” teachers can study in a more comprehensive university with both theories and practical aspects. Other students can also choose to take education-related courses in the “new university” and then provide education-related services in schools as well as in other related sectors. As a result, the “new university” will become a more human-centered university, playing the role of raising the quality of our future generations in Hong Kong.

Yours sincerely,

(Cheung Yung Pong Langton)
Chairman



GRANT SCHOOLS COUNCIL
補助學校議會

C/O La Salle College
18 La Salle Road, Kowloon, H.K.
e-mail: brsteve@lasalle.edu.hk
wongbym@lasalle.edu.hk

Tel: 2546 4757
Fax: 2559 7075

Diocesan Boys' School
拔萃男書院

Your Ref: UGC/GEN/274/23/2014

Diocesan Girls' School
拔萃女書院

20th December 2014

Heep Yunn School
協恩中學

Mr Richard T Armour
Secretary General
University Grants Committee
7/F Shui On Centre
6-8 Harbour Road
Wan Chai
Hong Kong

La Salle College
喇沙書院

Maryknoll Convent School
瑪利諾修院學校

Marymount Secondary School
瑪利曼中學

Methodist College
循道中學

Sacred Heart Canossian College
嘉諾撒聖心書院

Dear Mr Armour

St Clare's Girls' School
聖嘉勒女書院

The Grant School Council Principals wish to express their support for the Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIED) application for the use of the term 'University' in its title on condition that it fulfils all the UGC and international guidelines and regulations accorded the use of such a title.

St Francis' Canossian College
嘉諾撒聖方濟各書院

St Joseph's College
聖若瑟書院

St Mark's School
聖馬可中學

One reason for the Grant School Council support of this application by the HKIED is that the title as University will assist the institution in its further development plans. Also, the use of the word 'University' in its title will help student and parent perceptions view of the status of the qualifications offered

St Mary's Canossian College
嘉諾撒聖瑪利書院

St Paul's College
聖保羅書院

St Paul's Co-ed. College
聖保羅男女中學

Sincerely

St Paul's Convent School
聖保祿學校

St Paul's Secondary School
聖保祿中學

Br Steve
Chairman

St Stephen's Girls' College
聖士提反女子中學

(On behalf of the Grant School Council Principals)

Wah Yan College, HK
香港華仁書院

Wah Yan College, Kln
九龍華仁書院

Ying Wa College
英華書院

Ying Wa Girls' School
英華女學校

(Translation)

(Letterhead of Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union)

Position Paper on Retitling of the Hong Kong Institute of Education as a University

31 December 2014

The Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union considers the retitling of the Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd) as a university conducive to enhancing the status and professionalism of teachers in Hong Kong and in the long run, to raising the overall education quality of Hong Kong by attracting students of higher calibre to join the teaching profession. Hence, the Union supports the retitling proposal and puts forward the following views:

1. With continuous improvement in its academic standards in the past ten years or so, HKIEd has fulfilled the basic requirements for application for retitling as a university. Upon acquiring self-accrediting status in respect of its teacher training programmes at degree and above levels in 2004, HKIEd was recognised by the University Grants Committee as qualified for offering MPhil and PhD programmes in 2010. This has fully demonstrated that its programmes are quality assured, and its facilities as well as the quality of teaching and learning are of very high standards.
2. Apart from raising the quality of teaching and learning, HKIEd has striven to further enhance the quality of research in recent years. To meet the needs of Hong Kong, HKIEd has been developing progressively into an institution with its focus on education while offering a range of complementary programmes in related

disciplines. Some non-education related degree programmes have been offered since 2010 to provide students with more curriculum choices.

3. In 2007, the Government rejected HKIEd's application for retitling on grounds that its programmes called for a greater diversity. As a matter of fact, quite a number of renowned universities of education worldwide are dedicated solely to teacher training. Diversity in programmes is not a must. This is very common in Asia, in particular South Korea, Singapore, Mainland and Taiwan where there are a good few of world-famous universities of education.
4. Although some of such institutions in Europe and America have been subsumed into universities, for instance, the Teachers College of Columbia University which enjoys a high degree of autonomy including having an independent council of trustees and financial independence, most are upgraded to universities eventually. Hence, we hope that the Government will not reject HKIEd's application for retitling as a university on the excuse that it only provides teacher training programmes.
5. As a matter of fact, in the absence of a university title, HKIEd has failed to attract outstanding secondary school leavers, and its academic exchanges with other institutions has also been hindered because "institutes" entail a lower status in the Mainland and generally refer to those provincial institutions offering sub-degree programmes.

We hope that upon retitling, HKIEd will keep up the tradition by nurturing more teachers of good quality and integrity for the benefit of our society, while enhancing its standards of teaching and research as a university to improve teaching quality. To further the development of Hong Kong's education sector, we hope the UGC will accept our views.



Ref: G2015 - 001

6 January 2015

Mr Richard T Armour
Secretary-General
University Grants Committee
7/F., Shui On Centre
6-8 Harbour Road
Wanchai, Hong Kong

Dear Mr Armour,

The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIED): Application for University Title

Thank you for inviting Employers' Federation of Hong Kong to submit its view on the above.

Education is the cornerstone in incubating our young generation. A solid foundation will help equip them with sufficient competencies in growing and competing in the international arena. HKIED with its long history of establishment has played an irreplaceable role in nurturing our school teachers professionally. It will be in the interest of the whole community to provide the Institute with adequate pre-conditions in excelling its performance.

As the anchor for our next generation, it is crucial that our teacher students are prepared to the highest standard. The Federation trusts that the Committee has well proven assessment criteria in scrutinising the academic qualification of HKIED for the entitlement and thus has no intention to comment on this respect. We do reckon, at the same time, that the University title will help the Institute upgrade its teaching standard by attracting potential teaching staff around the globe. We also believe that the mission of the Institute to "promote and support the strategic development of teacher education in Hong Kong" could be further materialised under such condition.

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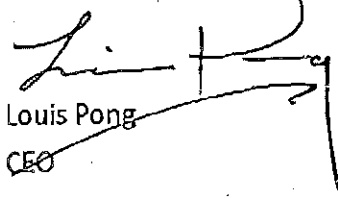
-2-

Each year, significant numbers of new teacher are trained from HKIEd but unlike teaching graduates from other tertiary institutions like University of Hong Kong and Chinese University of Hong Kong, they are considered as less competent status. As a vicious cycle, HKIEd is considered as the secondary choice for students desiring to work in the teaching profession. We do not see high possibility that HKIEd can play a more proactive role in upgrading our education system if this situation continues to exist. Our education system is undergoing different stages of changes in the past decade to meet the foreseeable challenges due to structural and demographic changes of our community. It is crucial that our teaching professionals are prepared and trained to bear this accountability, and to start with, from their own education and self-development.

Facing with intense competition, accessibility of quality talents will be the competitive edge for Hong Kong business to grow and to succeed. It is the core interest for employers that our young generation, the potential future workforce, is highly employable. This will not only apply to academic attainment, but the all-round development of our youngsters, from attitude to soft skills acquirements. There is no doubt that teachers are performing a highly important role in opening the eyes of our future generation. We thus have high aspiration on our teaching institutions in providing quality and professional teachers to meet the community need.

Should the Committee need further input from employers, please do not hesitate to contact the Federation. We are more than happy to contribute to the excellence of our education system.

Yours sincerely,



Louis Pong
CEO

The Academic Staff Association of the HKIEd
c/o Department of Science and Environmental Studies
Hong Kong Institute of Education
10 Lo Ping Road
Tai Po
New Territories

2 January 2015

Dr Richard T Armour
Secretary-General
University Grants Committee
7/F Shui On Centre
6-8 Harbour Road
Wan Chai
Hong Kong,

Dear Dr Armour

The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd): Application for University Title

Thank you for your letter of 19 December 2014, seeking the view of the HKIEd Academic Staff Association (ASA) on the captioned topic.

1. Since 2007, the ASA has offered vocal support to the HKIEd in seeking the “University” title. Our position is clearly stated in a paper submitted to Legislative Council Panel on Education on 10 March 2009

(English version)

<http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/ed/papers/ed0416cb2-1336-2-e.pdf>

(Chinese version)

<http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/chinese/panels/ed/papers/ed0416cb2-1336-2-c.pdf>

2. Since then, the HKIEd has further strengthened its academic development to demonstrate its research capacity, and high standard of learning and teaching. The Institute is truly at the standard of a university. The HKIEd community, both staff and students, welcomes the University title, which we believe is long overdue.

3. In the view of the ASA, the University title will have a positive impact on the Institute's core Education mission. The immediate effect will be to boost the morale of staff and students.

4. The University title will make the HKIED more competitive in attracting quality students to the education programmes of the Institute, providing a better competitive position in relation to other teacher training programs and higher degrees in education offered by other universities. Students will have higher self-esteem and a better sense of belonging compared with their counterparts in other universities' teacher training programmes.

5. The University title will clear some of the uncertainty about the future development of the HKIED and help to retain staff. The university title facilitates our colleagues in academic exchange with institutes outside Hong Kong, especially in the mainland where title "institute" only refers to institutions offering sub-degree programs.

6. In Hong Kong, there are still people who are not aware of the degree-granting status of the HKIED, and this misunderstanding affects donations and outreach activities. Many people have witnessed the "upgrade" (升格) process of other local universities which went from non-university title to university title. That memory has reinforced the impression that HKIED is still an institution for sub-degree programs. The name "Institute of Education" (教育學院) in Chinese is the same as "Colleges of Education" (教育學院), which were amalgamated to establish the HKIED in 1994. Though the quality of research and teaching at the HKIED is already at a university level, without retitling (正名) it is hard to change the stereotype of the Institute.

7. Since the HKIED is the largest teacher training institution at degree level in Hong Kong, a successful application for the University title will be seen as a recognition of the teaching profession on a par with the other professions which are trained by tertiary institutions with a "university" title. The teaching profession will benefit from this recognition and attract more quality students to join the profession.

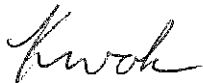
8. Granting a university title to the HKIED will raise its visibility and strengthen Hong Kong's role as regional education hub for higher education, including teacher training and educational research. The HKIED has already demonstrated its leadership in teacher education and provides support to neighbouring countries. The economic

activities associated with international students and visitors will benefit the local economy. Local students also benefit from more interaction with international students.

9. The Government should consider that refusing again to grant the HKIEd a university title will have an adverse effect on the teaching profession which Hong Kong cannot afford.

10. Therefore, the ASA of the HKIEd strongly recommends that the government grant the university title to the HKIEd. A positive decision will work for the betterment of the Hong Kong education profession and the development of Hong Kong into a regional education hub.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Kwok', written in black ink.

Kwok Ping Wai
President

(Translation)

(Letterhead of The Hong Kong Council for Education Administration Limited)

24 December 2014

The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd) should be retitled as a university

Dear Dr Richard Armour
The Secretary-General,

Regarding the consultation conducted, as the Hong Kong Council for Education Administration Limited (HKCEA) has learned, by the University Grants Committee (UGC) with relevant educational bodies on the retitling of HKIEd as a university, our views are as follows:

In the Report of the Review Group on Hong Kong Institute of Education's Development Blueprint released in 2009, UGC recommended that a university of education of a monotechnic character should not be established in Hong Kong. Later, under the "Education-plus" vision and with the support of the Education Bureau (EDB) and Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ), HKIEd offered a diversified range of programmes progressively between 2009 and 2013 and has developed itself into an institution not just focusing on the Education discipline, but also other complementary areas in the Humanities and Social Sciences discipline. Equipped with a body of 290 academic staff members, the institution is now one of the biggest pools of talent in the disciplines concerned in the region, with its academic capacity and mode of operation no different from any other UGC-funded universities in Hong Kong. In this regard, we support the retitling of HKIEd as a university.

Hong Kong Baptist University, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, City University of Hong Kong and Lingnan University were granted self-accrediting status in 1994 and 1999 and they changed their names from "college" to "university" one after the other with the award of a university title. In 2006, Hong Kong Shue Yan College acquired university title and became the first private university in Hong Kong. We observe that, after the retitling, these universities grow even further and nurture talents for the benefits of society. HKCEA, therefore, considers that the retitling of HKIEd as a university will also be conducive to the sustainable development of Hong Kong's education.

(Translation)

It is found in HKIED's website that the number of ongoing UGC-funded research projects increased to 49 in 2011-12, with the total funding received amounting to HK\$40.2 million. This represents a significant advancement when compared with 7 funded research projects and a funding of less than HK\$4 million in 2006-07, bearing testimony to the effectiveness of its conscious efforts in developing research over the past few years. With the retitling, HKCEA expects that HKIED will keep up the efforts and strive to foster teaching education while continuously developing its research capability in related disciplines with the aim of providing more evidence-based research findings for the betterment of Hong Kong's education. Lastly, since its establishment upon amalgamation of the then five colleges of education, HKIED has been providing training for teachers of kindergartens, primary schools and secondary schools (junior levels) of Hong Kong. When it is accorded a university title, we opine that the institution should preserve the tradition and give priority to teacher training for primary and kindergarten education, while assisting in nurturing secondary school teachers of related subjects in the Humanities and Social Sciences discipline.

LEE Siu-hok, William
Chairman of HKCEA

THE HONG KONG INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

UGC Review Group on HKIED's Application for University Title

Detailed Programme

Dates: 9 – 10 February 2015 (Mon – Tue)

Venue: Conference Room, B3-P-01D, HKIED Tai Po Campus

Day 1 on 9 February 2015

Time	Meeting Sessions / Participants
9:30 am – 10:30 am	Meeting with Senior Management and Chairman of Steering Committee on Institutional Review
10:30 am - 11:45 am	Meeting with Representatives of Academic Board and its Committees, Deans, Heads, Newly Appointed and Junior Faculties and Frontline Academic Staff
11:45 am – 12:45 pm	Meeting with Staff on Teaching and Programme Development
2:00 pm – 2:30 pm	<p>Tour of facilities [<i>guided by students</i>]</p> <p>Three separate groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Music Studio (B1-G/F-18) (ii) Biology Laboratory (D3-P-02) (iii) Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Laboratory (D4-LP-04) <p>Three separate groups will also go to Library and 7 x 24 Learning Centre (C-G/F), and pass by Learning Commons (C-LP)</p>
2:30 pm – 3:30 pm	Meeting with Academic Staff (including frontline academic staff) for the Non-teacher Education Programmes
3:30 pm – 4:30 pm	Meeting with Council Officers
4:30 pm – 5:30 pm	<p>Tea Meeting with Students (<i>in Parallel Sessions</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Postgraduate Students and Graduates (Meeting venue: B4-1/F-37) (ii) PGDE/Undergraduate Students and Graduates (Meeting venue: B2-1/F-37) <p><i>Note:</i> PGDE: <i>Postgraduate Diploma in Education</i></p>

Day 2 on 10 February 2015

Time	Activities / Group of Participants
9:15 am – 10:00 am	Meeting with Staff on Research and Scholarly Activities - on research projects (RAE), knowledge transfer
10:00 am - 10:45 am	Meeting with Staff (including junior researchers, PhD students, students on doctoral programmes) on Research Training
10:45 am - 11:15 am	Meeting with Heads/Representatives of Academic Support and Administrative Units
11:15 am – 12:15 pm	Tea Meeting with External Stakeholders (<i>in Parallel Sessions</i>) (i) External Examiners/External Review Panel (Meeting venue: B3-P-01D) (ii) Employers, Internship Advisors and Advisory Group Members (Meeting venue: B1-1/F-14)
12:45 pm – 1:00 pm	Concluding Meeting with Senior Management Team

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON EDUCATION PROVISION IN HONG KONG

Schools

“All-graduate, all-trained” policy

1.1 The Government adopted a policy in 1997 that all new primary and secondary school teachers should henceforth be degree graduates. Since that time, sub-degree pre-service teacher training places have been upgraded and replaced by places leading to the award of degrees. From 2004/05 onwards, all graduates of pre-service primary and secondary teacher education programmes have been degree holders.

Policy on Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for serving teachers

1.2 For teachers in public sector schools, the Education Bureau (EDB) has had a policy on Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in place since 2003/04. Teachers are encouraged to attain a soft target of engaging in at least 150 hours of CPD over a three-year cycle, including both structured learning (such as seminars, conferences and staff development days), as well as other modes of learning such as collaborative practices, mentoring and professional reading.

1.3 School principals have been required since 2002 to engage in at least 150 hours of CPD over a three-year cycle in the three areas of: school administration and development; mentoring and networking; and leadership enhancement. The CPD activity is based on structured learning, action learning and service to education and the community.

Education of students with special educational needs (SEN)

1.4 On the principle of “one curriculum framework for all”, students with special educational needs (SEN), like their able counterparts, follow the mainstream school curriculum and are offered essential life-long learning experiences. The Committee on Special Educational Needs (CSEN) under the Curriculum Development Council was established to develop this principle and is responsible for formulating policy and overseeing curriculum development for students with SEN. In this connection, various ad hoc committees have been set up to promote the following work:

- To develop programmes of study, learning objectives, learning and assessment exemplars for students with SEN;
- To conduct surveys in exploring the way ahead of curriculum reforms in special schools, to work in collaboration with schools on the development of school-based curriculum so as to enhance students' learning;
- To design and produce reference materials;
- To conduct seminars, workshops and experience sharing sessions for enhancing teachers' professionalism;
- To encourage schools to participate in the "Seed Project" on issues, which are in line with the aims of curriculum reform.

Kindergarten Education in Hong Kong¹

1.5 Kindergartens and kindergarten/child care centres registered with the Education Bureau provide education services for children from three to six years old. Kindergarten education in Hong Kong aims to lay the foundation of future learning through:

- nurturing children to attain all-round development in ethics, intellect, physique, social skills and aesthetics;
- developing good habits so as to prepare them for life;
- stimulating children's interest in learning; and
- cultivating in them positive learning attitudes.

1.6 Since September 2003, all newly appointed kindergarten teachers have been required to possess a sub-degree level qualification as a Qualified Kindergarten Teacher (QKT). All new Principals are required to have a degree in Early Childhood Education [BEd(ECE)], one-year post-qualification experience and a recognized certificate course in principalship.

1.7 The Committee on Free Kindergarten Education has published its Report², which deals with issues related to widening the availability and improving the quality of kindergarten education through enhancing the professionalism of kindergarten teachers. Included in the Committee's recommendations are that the Government should consider

¹ <http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/edu-system/preprimary-kindergarten/overview/index.html>

² 'Children First: Right Start for All': Report of the Committee on Free Kindergarten Education, May 2015 (<http://edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/edu-system/preprimary-kindergarten/kg-report/Free-kg-report-201505-Eng.pdf>) - see in particular Paragraph 4.7.

raising the entry qualification required of kindergarten teachers to degree level, that the Government should also study the issue of setting a graduate teacher ratio for each kindergarten when it reviews the future of kindergarten education after implementation of the Committee's recommendations and that more support should be provided for kindergarten teachers to upgrade their qualification. Such a development would clearly have implications for the teacher education institutions in Hong Kong.

Higher Education

General Government's Policy on Teacher Education

1.8 In 1997, the Chief Executive announced a long-term policy objective, "to require all new teachers to be trained graduates"³. A review on teacher education was conducted in 1998⁴. One of the major outcomes of the review was a recommendation that HKIEd should concentrate its efforts in developing areas where it already had identified strengths, i.e. in primary teacher education and pre-school teacher education and in language training for teachers. It should phase out its sub-degree Certificate of Education programmes and focus on providing undergraduate and postgraduate teacher education programmes. It should also continue to play an important role in providing in-service professional training and development programmes for serving teachers.

1.9 To ensure that all English and Putonghua teachers of primary and secondary schools possess at least the basic language proficiency, the Government, on the advice of the Advisory Committee on Teacher Education and Qualification (ACTEQ)⁵, introduced language proficiency requirements by advising that English and Chinese teachers holding a permanent post in a public-sector school or a local private primary/secondary day school offering a full curriculum from the

³ Paragraph 83 of the Chief Executive's Policy Address 1997 at <http://www.policyaddress.gov.hk/pa97/english/patext.htm>

⁴ To support the Government's policy objective to upgrade the professional qualifications, education and training of primary and secondary school teachers and principals, the UGC made a number of recommendations and suggestions in the report regarding the upgrading of the teaching profession and the development of the HKIEd and other teacher education providers. The Government later endorsed the recommendations and set aside resources to develop HKIEd into a degree-awarding teacher-training institute and start progressively upgrading its sub-degree level teacher education places to degree or above levels. Details can be found at – <http://www.ugc.edu.hk/english/documents/triennium/english/5reviewofteacher/5reviewofteacher.html>

⁵ ACTEQ was an advisory body under the Education Bureau. It was dissolved in 2013 and the Committee on Professional Development of Teachers and Principals (COTAP) replaced it.

2000/01 school year should be required to meet the language proficiency requirements by the end of 2005/06 school year. This requirement sits alongside the fact that, since 2004/5, all graduates of pre-service teacher education training places for primary and secondary schools are required to hold a degree.

Provision of Teacher Education Programmes in Hong Kong

1.10 Five teacher education institutions (TEIs), namely the HKIEd, the Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU), the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), the University of Hong Kong (HKU) and the Open University of Hong Kong (OUHK), are the main providers of teacher education in Hong Kong. Apart from OUHK, which is self-financed, the other four TEIs are publicly funded institutions. In the 2014/15 academic year, as advised by the Government, there are 770 approved UGC-funded FYFD places allocated to teacher education programmes, and among the four UGC-funded TEIs, HKIEd is allocated 501 places (i.e. 65% of the FYFD places).

1.11 On teachers' qualifications, in general, graduates holding the following qualifications are qualified to become teachers in Hong Kong:

- (i) A bachelor degree in teacher education (i.e. BEd programme); or
- (ii) An undergraduate degree in programmes other than teacher education plus a Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE)

UGC-funded BEd programmes offered by the TEIs are full-time five-year programmes. Upon graduation, students are qualified as teachers in Hong Kong without the need to undertake any other teaching qualification programme. PGDE is a one-year full-time (or two-year part-time) programme. To be eligible for admission, students should hold a recognized bachelor degree, which includes a field of study relevant to their chosen teaching subject. PGDE prepares university graduates to become qualified teachers in Hong Kong. It provides opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required of fully qualified teachers, and an understanding of the responsibilities and obligations of the teaching profession.

1.12 In-service teachers are also provided with professional development, which does not lead to formal academic qualifications. Professional upgrading courses are available with HKIEd as the major provider.

Teacher Education as a Manpower-planned Programme

1.13 In Hong Kong, the numbers of UGC-funded student places at various levels of study (i.e. sub-degree, undergraduate, taught postgraduate and research postgraduate) are decided by the Government. While institutions have flexibility to allocate places across programmes according to their own criteria, the Government offers advice to the UGC on certain disciplines and professions where the public sector is the major employer or where there is a strong case for assured provision. The advice is conveyed to the UGC-funded institutions in the context of the Academic Development Proposals (ADP) for a specific triennium⁶. Areas with specific manpower requirements include teachers, medical doctors, nurses, traditional Chinese medicine practitioners, dentists and other allied health professionals.

1.14 Against the above, the provision of teacher education places for the four UGC-funded TEIs is subject to the specific manpower planning requirements of the Government. When determining the numbers, the Government takes into account a number of factors such as the current number of teachers, projected demand for teachers (which in turn is affected by the projected school student population), demands for teachers in specific key learning areas, and anticipated needs in upgrading existing teachers in the coming years.

⁶ Funding allocation to the UGC-funded institutions is normally conducted on a triennial cycle basis.

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