

**Background Information on Teacher Education  
in Hong Kong Relevant to the Review**

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***Overview***

The Government's objective is to ensure that students in Hong Kong receive an all-round quality education to prepare them for life and work and to provide them with an aptitude towards life-long learning. Currently, the Government provides 13 years\* of free education through public sector primary and secondary schools.

2. In order to facilitate the development of Hong Kong's knowledge-based economy and meet the corresponding manpower demand, the Government set a policy target in 2000 that 60 per cent of senior secondary school leavers will have access to post-secondary education by the 2010/11 academic year.

3. Higher education in Hong Kong is heavily subsidized by the Government. Hong Kong has 12 degree awarding higher education institutions. They are:

1. City University of Hong Kong (City U)
2. Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU)
3. Lingnan University (LU)
4. The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK)
5. The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd)
6. The Hong Kong Polytechnic Universities (PolyU)
7. The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST)
8. University of Hong Kong (HKU)
9. Chu Hai College of Higher Education
10. Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts

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\* The Government has been providing nine-year free and universal basic education through public sector primary and secondary schools. Free education will be extended to include senior secondary education provided by public sector secondary schools starting from 2008/09 academic year. The beneficiaries will include Secondary 4 to 7 students under the current secondary school structure and Senior Secondary 1 to 3 under the New Senior Secondary structure to be introduced from the 2009/10 academic year.

11. Hong Kong Shue Yan University (HKSYU)
12. The Open University of Hong Kong (OUHK)

The first eight are funded by UGC.

### ***“3+3+4” Education Reform***

4. To meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and the demands of the rapidly developing knowledge-based society, the Government endorsed the Education Commission’s recommendation on reforming the academic structure for senior secondary education and higher education to help develop the full potential of students.

5. *“The New Academic Structure for Senior Secondary and Higher Education – Action Plan for Investing in the Future of Hong Kong”* was published in May 2005 to set out the roadmap for introducing the new academic structure with 3-year junior secondary, 3-year senior secondary and 4-year undergraduate academic system (“3+3+4”) for the implementation of a more flexible, coherent and diversified new senior secondary and higher education curriculum starting from 2009.

### ***Teacher Education***

6. In 1997, the Chief Executive announced a long-term policy objective to require all new teachers to be trained graduates. The UGC then conducted the teacher education review in 1998 to give advice on how best to plan the future development of the tertiary sector to meet the Chief Executive’s new policy objective.

7. One of the major outcomes of the review was that HKIEd would concentrate its efforts in developing areas where it has identified strength, *i.e.* in primary teacher education and pre-school teacher education and in language training for teachers. It should phase out its 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.

8. 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 Advisory Committee on Teacher Education and Qualification which was set up to advise Government on education needs and resources, introduced language proficiency requirements. English and Putonghua teachers holding a permanent post in a public-sector school or a local private primary/secondary day school offering a full curriculum from the 2000/01 school year are required to meet the language proficiency requirements by the end of 2005/06 school year. Since 2004/05 school year, all graduates of pre-service teacher education training places for primary and secondary schools are degree holders.

9. Teacher education in Hong Kong is mainly provided by four Teacher Education institutions, that is, the HKIEd, HKBU, the CUHK and HKU. In general, graduates holding a BEd qualification or graduates with an undergraduate degree plus Postgraduate Diploma in Education are qualified to become teachers in Hong Kong.

10. BEd programmes of the Teacher Education institutions are full-time four-year programmes. Upon graduation, students are qualified as teachers in Hong Kong without the need to undertake any other teaching qualification programme.

11. Postgraduate Diploma in Education is a one-year full-time programme. To be eligible for admission, the students should hold a recognized Bachelor's degree which includes a field of study relevant to their chosen teaching subject. The Postgraduate Diploma on Education 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.

12. BEd and Postgraduate Diploma in Education courses are offered in key learning areas which include English, Chinese, Mathematics, General Studies, Science Education, Technology Education, Personal, Social and Humanities Education, Arts Education, Physical Education and Liberal Studies. Both subject area knowledge and pedagogy are included in the curriculum.

13. Training is also provided to in-service teachers. Professional upgrading courses are available and they are mainly offered by HKIEd.

## ***Manpower Planning***

14. For most disciplines, Government does not specify the manpower requirements for individual disciplines and professions for the purpose of allocating student numbers to the universities. However, to avoid severe over- or under-supply of certain professions, the Administration offers advice to the UGC on disciplines and professions where the public sector is the major employer or where there is a strong case for assured provision. The advice will then be conveyed to the eight UGC-funded institutions to facilitate their preparation of *Academic Development Proposals*. Areas with specific manpower requirements include teachers, lawyers, medical doctors, traditional Chinese medicine practitioners, dentists, nurses and social workers.

15. Since higher education is a crucial element in determining the supply of human resources of Hong Kong, manpower requirement is an important element in the academic planning exercise of the UGC. The provision of teacher education places under the academic planning exercise is subject to the specific manpower planning requirements of the Administration. Such provision thus takes into account 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.

16. In considering the allocation of student numbers among its eight funded institutions during an *Academic Development Proposals* exercise, which is normally conducted on a triennial basis, the UGC will take into account relevant factors such as institutions' proposals, the manpower requirements as advised by the Government, the capacity of institutions, availability of staff, *etc.* After considering all proposals, the UGC will submit its recommendations to the Government and then the Legislative Council for funding approval.