
Chapter 4

Professional-led Quality Education

Preamble

We firmly believe that talent, in particular our young talent, is the most important element for Hong Kong's development, and education is the key to nurturing them. Government expenditure on education is therefore the most meaningful investment for our future.

Our education policy objective is to nurture future generations to become citizens who are socially responsible and equipped with a sense of national identity, a love for Hong Kong and an international perspective. Through learning, young people will be able to explore their potential, cultivate their interests and enhance their strengths. Well-equipped for the future, they are set to contribute to the community.

Since its inception, the current-term Government has immediately increased recurrent expenditure on education by \$3.6 billion per annum commencing the 2017/18 academic year for the implementation of a package of priority measures in the education system (covering kindergarten, primary, secondary and special education as well as post-secondary education), with the aim of improving the quality of education and creating a stable, caring, inspiring and high-quality teaching and learning environment for students, teachers, parents and schools. We will continue to conduct reviews on other aspects of education, and engage education experts, including those with good knowledge of frontline teachers in the reviews, with a view to ensuring that the formulation of education policies will be led by professionals.

Policy Initiatives

Simplifying Policies and Relieving Pressure

- The Government will conduct review in various education areas, including clarifying the Education Bureau's (EDB) relationship with school sponsoring bodies and schools, forging ahead with school-based management, reviewing the Territory-wide System Assessment, strengthening parent education and home-school co-operation to discourage the culture of excessive competition, with a view to removing encumbrances for the education sector and relieving pressure for students, teachers and principals. (EDB)
(New Initiative)

New Resources for Education

- Starting from the 2017/18 academic/school year, the Government has increased recurrent expenditure on education by \$3.6 billion a year for the implementation of a package of priority measures in the education system, with the aim of attaining quality education. (EDB)

Comprehensive Review Led by Professionals

- To nurture the younger generation, we will invite education experts to lead in the further reviews and follow up work on the following issues:

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- enhancing the professional development of teachers, which includes establishing a professional ladder for teachers in recognition of the expertise of the teachers in certain subjects and as encouragement to teachers to acquire specialised skills in teaching Chinese as a second language and students with special educational needs (SEN), and exploring the policy on an all-graduate teaching force;
 - reviewing the existing curricula, inculcating in students a stronger sense of national identity and an international perspective, providing opportunities for students' all-round development in culture, arts, sports and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), etc. and instigating innovative thinking;
 - reviewing the Territory-wide System Assessment and school-based assessment to seek enhancements in teaching and learning;
 - promoting vocational and professional education and training (VPET) to cater for students' diverse abilities and interests, and fostering closer business-school collaboration to meet the manpower needs of Hong Kong;
 - revisiting the role and positioning of self-financing post-secondary institutions;
 - clarifying the EDB's relationship with school sponsoring bodies and schools, forging ahead with school-based management, and removing encumbrances for the education sector to provide more room for studies and exchanges on education policies;

- attaching importance to parent education and strengthening home-school co-operation to discourage the culture of excessive competition so that children can grow up happily and healthily; and
 - strengthening funding support for research and hostel development in the University Grants Committee-funded sector. (EDB) (New Initiative)
- Set up task forces and invite education experts, including professionals who understand the situation of frontline teachers, to conduct the above review. The Government will also strengthen its research efforts to assist teachers and schools in enhancing their professional standards, and to improve teaching methods and strategies continuously. (EDB) (New Initiative)

New Style Through Active Listening

- The Chief Executive will host an annual “Chief Executive Summit on Quality Education” in the second quarter of 2018. Stakeholders of the education sector, including frontline teachers, will be invited to the summit to chart the future together. (EDB) (New Initiative)

Kindergarten Education

- The Free Quality Kindergarten Education Policy has been implemented from the 2017/18 school year onwards to provide eligible local non-profit-making kindergartens with a direct subsidy and to improve the quality of kindergarten education in various aspects. A grant is provided for kindergarten students from needy families to cover their school-related expenses. (EDB)

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- Adjust the salary-related subsidies for teaching staff under the free quality kindergarten education policy on a school year basis according to the annual civil service pay adjustment starting from the 2018/19 school year. (EDB)
 - Extend the two-year tide-over grant (2017/18 to 2018/19 school years) for three more years up to the 2021/22 school year so that the kindergartens may retain their long serving teachers with higher salaries within the reference salary range promulgated under the free quality kindergarten education policy. The Government will review the salary arrangements for kindergarten teachers to explore the feasibility of putting in place a salary scale for kindergarten teachers. (EDB)
 - Continue to strengthen the professional development of principals and teachers of kindergartens to enhance the quality of kindergarten education. Measures include organising a Guangdong-Shenzhen-Hong Kong-Macao forum on kindergarten education to deepen the exchange and collaboration among Hong Kong, the Mainland and Macao in kindergarten education. (EDB)
 - The Standing Committee on Language Education and Research (SCOLAR) will make use of the Language Fund to provide Chinese and English enhancement programmes for kindergarten teachers (including training on skills in teaching Chinese to non-Chinese speaking students) in order to dovetail with the launch of the updated Kindergarten Education Curriculum Guide. (EDB)

Primary and Secondary Education

- Upgrade the hardware and software provided for schools, including providing air-conditioning in standard teaching facilities (including classrooms and special rooms), student activity centres and assembly halls of public sector schools to create a better learning environment. Starting from the 2018/19 school year, a recurrent Air-conditioning Grant will be provided for all public sector schools for the related daily expenses. In addition, depending on the actual situation of individual schools, we will install air-conditioning system in the related facilities as necessary in phases. Schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme will also benefit from the initiative. (EDB) [\(New Initiative\)](#)

- Provide a non-recurrent funding of \$500 million to support suitable projects under the T-excel@hk strategic work plan of the Committee on Professional Development of Teachers and Principals and to implement various measures to enhance the professional development of teachers and principals in the coming 10 years starting from the 2018/19 school year, with an annual disbursement of around \$50 million. Teachers and students of primary and secondary schools, kindergartens and special schools may all benefit from the initiative. (EDB) [\(New Initiative\)](#)

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- Increase the teacher-to-class ratio for public sector primary and secondary schools (including special schools) by 0.1 across-the-board starting from the 2017/18 school year to provide additional teaching staff for schools to take forward various education initiatives and enhance the quality of education for the benefit of our students. The additional teaching posts so generated will all be graduate posts but will not be counted towards the calculation of promotion post entitlement, pending the completion of the review to establish a professional ladder for primary and secondary school teachers. (EDB)

 - Enhance the learning and teaching environment of existing school premises and in this regard, improve the facilities of “matchbox-style school premises” as agreed with the sector. Relevant improvement works have commenced in the 2017 summer break. In addition, among the 28 public sector primary schools currently operating in “matchbox-style school premises”, four have been allocated with new school premises/vacant school premises for reprovisioning through the school allocation mechanism. (EDB)

 - Introduce a three-year paid non-local study leave scheme on a pilot basis for serving secondary school teachers to broaden their professional perspective and keep them abreast of the latest trend in global education developments by taking part in professional development activities, such as specific courses or experiential learning attachment programmes lasting for about one to three months. The first batch of two programmes scheduled for April to June 2018 includes two different themes, namely “Interdisciplinary Learning & Entrepreneurship Education” and “Catering for Students with Special Educational Needs”, which will be held in Finland and Australia respectively. (EDB)

- Enhance the support for English learning in primary schools through the use of the Language Fund by SCOLAR to provide a grant for primary schools for enriching the language environment on campus and refining the school-based English Language curriculum, catering in particular for the transition from kindergarten to junior primary as well as learner diversity with equal emphasis on more able and less able students. (EDB)

- SCOLAR will make use of the Language Fund to provide a vocational English programme for senior secondary students who are interested in pursuing VPET or prepared to join the workforce, so as to enhance their English proficiency and provide opportunities for attaining relevant recognition that is beneficial to further study and employment. (EDB)

- Capitalise on the advantage of Hong Kong as an international city to further co-operation and exchange in the realm of education with countries along the Belt and Road to facilitate the understanding of students on the diverse cultures of different ethnic groups, and the development and opportunities of these countries and cities. Related measures include providing suitable learning and teaching resources, widening opportunities for students to learn foreign languages, and further promoting through the Quality Education Fund student visits and exchange activities on the Mainland, countries along the Belt and Road and other overseas countries. Students may, for example, participate in service-learning and English Language Immersion programmes so as to enhance their skills of communication with people of these countries as well as showcase the potential contributions that Hong Kong, as an international city, can make towards the Belt and Road Initiative. (EDB)

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- To stabilise the teaching force and facilitate the sustainable development of secondary schools amidst the progressive rebound of the overall secondary one student population, the Government will continue to implement relief measures, including allowing aided secondary schools with surplus teachers arising from reduction of secondary one classes from the 2013/14 to 2017/18 school years to apply for extending the retention period of the teachers concerned up to the 2018/19 school year and to liaise with stakeholders to reinstate the number of students per class to that prior to the 2013/14 school year. (EDB)
 - To meet the demand of public sector primary one places which is anticipated to peak in the 2018/19 school year, we will continue with flexible measures to increase the supply of public sector primary school places, including temporary allocation of more students per class; further diverting cross-boundary students through the revised arrangements for the central allocation under the Primary One Admission System, and facilitating the arrangements for cross-boundary students of tender age through proper management of traffic and security measures at the boundary areas. Meanwhile, we will discuss the arrangement to stabilise the primary teaching force after the peak with stakeholders. (EDB)
 - Continue to monitor the supply and demand of international school places, especially to meet the demand from non-local families coming to Hong Kong for work or investment, and allocate vacant school premises and greenfield sites for development of international schools when necessary. (EDB)

- To support the promotion of STEM education, the curricula of Science, Technology and Mathematics education have been updated and additional resources have been disbursed to primary and secondary schools. In addition, computational thinking and coding education will also be strengthened in primary schools and intensive training programmes on STEM education will be organised for school leaders and middle managers. We will continue to arrange STEM education forum and professional training for teachers, as well as relevant learning activities for students. (EDB)
- Promote students' understanding of Chinese history and culture. The EDB will make Chinese history an independent compulsory subject at junior secondary level as early as possible and will continue to enhance teacher training to support subject teachers of Chinese Language, Chinese History and Chinese Literature, so as to enable secondary and primary school students to appreciate and inherit the spirit of excellence and the civilisation of the Chinese people. We will also continue to renew the curricula of Chinese History and History to enhance the contents of these subjects. Meanwhile, the EDB will provide learning and teaching resources for enlivening lessons in order to enrich the learning experience of students, foster their interest in and understanding of Chinese history and culture, as well as to broaden their international perspectives. (EDB)

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- Learning elements related to the Basic Law and the concept of “one country, two systems” have long been embedded in the curricula of primary and secondary schools. The EDB will encourage schools to strengthen their school-based planning on Basic Law education and continue to provide multiple support, including principal/teacher training, authentic learning and teaching resources, diversified learning activities, for principals/teachers and students to have a comprehensive understanding of the Basic Law. (EDB)
 - Continue to implement the Fourth Strategy on Information Technology (IT) in Education. Most of the public sector schools have completed the construction of their Wi-Fi campus as planned. All public sector primary and secondary schools (including special schools) receive an extra recurrent cash grant starting from the 2017/18 school year onwards for strengthening their IT staffing support to practise e-learning and take forward various IT-related education initiatives. (EDB)
 - In alignment with the curriculum renewal, we will continue to provide ample Mainland exchange opportunities for primary and secondary school students through a variety of strategies. The aim is to deepen students’ understanding of the history and culture of our country, and enable them to appreciate and inherit the distinctive Chinese culture and national spirit, as well as to learn through their first-hand experience of our country’s development in various aspects and reflect on the opportunities and challenges for Hong Kong and our country. Over 100 000 subsidised quotas are expected to be provided every year from the 2017/18 school year onwards for every student to join at least one Mainland exchange programme in the respective primary and secondary stages. (EDB)

- Follow up the provision of designated funding and professional support for local public sector and primary and secondary schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme as well as special schools that have formed sister school pairs with the Mainland under the three-year pilot scheme launched in the 2015/16 school year. As at end of the 2016/17 school year, about 620 local schools had participated in the Sister School Scheme, exceeding the target. In the 2017/18 school year, the EDB will commission an independent consultant to conduct an overall review of the effectiveness of the pilot scheme and advise on the way forward. (EDB)
- After increasing the ratio of graduate teacher posts in public sector primary schools from 50% to 55% and 60% in the 2015/16 and 2016/17 school years respectively, we further enhance the ratio to 65% in the 2017/18 school year. The EDB will expedite the implementation of the policy on an all-graduate teaching force to attract more talent to join the teaching profession, so as to enhance the quality of teaching. (EDB)
- Allow schools to opt to turn the Senior Secondary Curriculum Support Grant and the Career and Life Planning Grant into regular teaching posts from the 2016/17 school year for enhancing the implementation of the senior secondary curriculum and strengthening life planning education and related guidance services. About 320 public sector secondary schools have turned the Senior Secondary Curriculum Support Grant and/or the Career and Life Planning Grant into regular teaching posts in the 2016/17 and 2017/18 school years. Subject to the progress of implementation, the EDB will conduct a review in the 2017/18 school year. (EDB)

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- Continue to provide secondary schools with support for implementing life planning education and related guidance services. We will also strengthen the professional development of teachers and mobilise more business organisations to organise career exploration activities for students through district development networks so as to help secondary students better understand the world of work and prepare themselves for further studies and employment in future. The EDB will commission a consultant to conduct a comprehensive review on life planning education and Business-School Partnership Programme in the 2017/18 school year to map the way forward. (EDB)

Post-secondary Education

- Invite the University Grants Committee (UGC) to review the existing research support strategy as well as the level and allocation mechanism of research funding for the higher education sector, with a view to ensuring that the world-class research undertaken by the sector is sustainable, and can meet the needs of Hong Kong and contribute to our social-economic development. Depending on the outcome of the review, additional resources will be provided in future to support the academic and research development of the higher education sector. (EDB) (New Initiative)
- To groom more research talent locally, we will inject \$3 billion into the Research Endowment Fund, the investment income from which will be used for non-means-tested studentships fully covering the tuition fees for all local students of UGC-funded research postgraduate programmes. (EDB) (New Initiative)
- To expedite development of student hostels for UGC-funded universities, we will establish a \$12 billion Hostel Development Fund to meet all outstanding shortfall. (EDB) (New Initiative)

- Regularise the Hong Kong Scholarship for Excellence Scheme from the 2019/20 academic year onwards to continue the effort to subsidise up to 100 outstanding local students per cohort in their pursuit of undergraduate and postgraduate studies in world-renowned universities outside Hong Kong, with a view to nurturing more top talent in various fields to support the development of Hong Kong. (EDB) [\(New Initiative\)](#)
- Starting from the 2017/18 academic year, we provide a non-means-tested annual subsidy of \$30,000 for eligible students pursuing full-time locally-accredited local and non-local self-financing undergraduate (including top-up degree) programmes (save for those enrolled in places already supported under the Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors) offered by eligible institutions in Hong Kong. We also provide a non-means-tested annual subsidy of \$5,000 for eligible students pursuing eligible undergraduate (including top-up degree) programmes on the Mainland. (EDB)
- The Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors will become a recurrent initiative from the 2018/19 academic year onwards and the number of subsidised places will be increased from about 1 000 per cohort to about 3 000 per cohort. Current students of the designated programmes will also receive the subsidy starting from that academic year. It is estimated that about 13 000 students can benefit from the scheme in each academic year. (EDB)
- Launch the seventh round of Matching Grant Scheme with a commitment of up to \$500 million for eligible self-financing local degree-awarding institutions to apply. (EDB)

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- After increasing the senior year intake places of institutions funded by the UGC to 4 600 per annum in the 2016/17 academic year, we will further increase the number to 5 000 per annum by the 2018/19 academic year. (EDB)
 - Continue to implement a pilot scheme to provide an option for Hong Kong sub-degree graduates to articulate to top-up degree programmes offered by Huaqiao University in Fujian Province. (EDB)
 - Continue to encourage students from regions along the Belt and Road to enrol in post-secondary programmes in Hong Kong. Following the provision of 10 additional offers of scholarship for students from Indonesia under the Targeted Scholarship Scheme starting from the 2016/17 academic year, 10 offers of Belt and Road Scholarship, funded by private donations, are provided for students from Malaysia and Thailand respectively in the 2017/18 academic year. (EDB)

Supporting Students with Different Needs

- Regularise the Pilot Project on Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) under the Community Care Fund from the 2017/18 school year onwards. The Government will provide each public sector ordinary primary and secondary school with an additional Assistant Primary School Master/Mistress post or Graduate Master/Mistress post in the teaching establishment in phases over three years to facilitate the assignment of a designated teacher to take up the role of SENCO to support integrated education. The Government will keep in view the implementation of the SENCO provision, including the ranking of the post and teaching load arrangement, etc. (EDB)

- Continue to develop in the 2017/18 school year an evidence-based model with strategies and related teaching and learning resources for supporting the learning and development of students with autism having average to high average intelligence, based on a support model having been developed in phases for primary to junior secondary school students with autism. (EDB)
- Continue to provide additional resources, professional support and teacher training to help primary and secondary schools cater for their students with SEN, and to adjust the rates of the Learning Support Grant on an annual basis according to the established mechanism; continue to provide the School-based Educational Psychology Service for all public sector primary and secondary schools, and provide enhanced service for schools with a large number of students with SEN progressively. (EDB)
- Starting from the 2017/18 school year, the Learning Support Grant for public sector ordinary primary and secondary schools also covers students with mental illness so as to help schools cater for their learning, social, emotional and behavioural needs. In addition, the EDB conducts the “Professional Development Programme for Mental Health” from the 2017/18 school year onwards to enhance teachers’ capacity to identify and support students with mental health needs. The programme includes elementary training for teachers at large and in-depth training for designated teachers, with the EDB providing Supply Teacher Grant for schools. (EDB)
- Continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the current policy and measures to help non-Chinese speaking students (notably ethnic minority students) learn Chinese as a second language, with due regard to the views of relevant stakeholders in refining the support measures. (EDB)

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- Continue to implement improvement measures in special schools, including the provision of additional teaching staff, allied health staff and resources to enhance support for students in special schools. (EDB)
 - Continue to support the work of the Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education in nurturing exceptionally gifted students aged between 10 and 18 and provide special academic and non-academic training as well as counselling services through the newly set up Gifted Education Fund. Meanwhile, the EDB will continue to implement school-based gifted education programmes, which include training for principals and teachers in primary and secondary schools, and establish school networks to share practices and experiences, so as to enable schools to identify more talent, expand the talent pool in Hong Kong and enhance our competitiveness. (EDB)
 - The Department of Health is preparing for the setting up of a new Child Assessment Centre (CAC) to handle the increasing caseloads. It expects that, with the completion and full operation of the new CAC, the waiting time for child assessment service will be shortened. As an interim measure before the completion of the new CAC, the department will set up a temporary CAC in its existing facilities which is expected to be in operation by early 2018. (FHB)

Vocational Education

- Improve facilities and policy support for vocational education, such as supporting the expansion of the Vocational Training Council (VTC) campuses. The Government will further enhance the facilities for VPET by carrying out planning work of a site identified in Cha Kwo Ling, Kowloon East to develop a sizable VTC campus with state-of-the-art facilities. In addition, the Government supports the VTC in principle to construct an Aviation and Marine Engineering Centre on the site of the Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education (Tsing Yi). (EDB)
- Consider aligning the courses offered by the VTC with the findings of the Report on Manpower Projection compiled by the Labour and Welfare Bureau so that the training and re-training efforts can be focused on addressing the manpower needs of different sectors. (LWB) (New Initiative)
- Set up an International Culinary Institute under the VTC. As a centre of excellence in international cuisine, the institute aims at enhancing Hong Kong's status as a Gourmets' Paradise and regional education hub, and improving education opportunities for young people. The institute, to be completed in 2018, will provide advanced and all-rounded training for students to prepare them for a future career in the internationalised culinary industry. (EDB)
- Continue to provide funding for the VTC to implement the Pilot Subsidy Scheme for Students of Professional Part-time Programmes to provide tuition fee subsidy for students admitted to designated professional part-time programmes in the disciplines of construction, engineering and technology. (EDB)

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- Explore the use of a site in Tai Po for construction of a multi-storey campus for the Construction Industry Council to train more high-calibre and professional construction practitioners, to keep pace with the use of cutting-edge technologies in the construction industry for enhancing productivity and to attract more new entrants. (DEVB) [\(New Initiative\)](#)

Qualifications Framework

- Inject an additional \$1.2 billion to the Qualifications Framework Fund for ongoing support for various stakeholders to participate in the Qualifications Framework (QF) and the promotion and public education of QF, so as to promote lifelong learning and support the manpower need of Hong Kong. (EDB) [\(New Initiative\)](#)
- Play an active role in the setting up of the country's QF and share our experience in the implementation of QF in Hong Kong and provide advice where needed. We will also continue to explore opportunities for co-operation with other countries or places in the development of QF, with a view to enhancing the international image and recognition of Hong Kong QF and supporting mobility of learners and labour. (EDB)

Continuing Education

- Inject an additional \$1.5 billion into the Continuing Education Fund and enhance its operation, with measures including the expansion of the scope of the courses, so as to encourage the public to pursue lifelong learning and continuing education. (LWB)