

Self-financing Post-secondary Education Fund

Annual Report for the 2011/12 Academic Year

Establishment of the Self-financing Post-secondary Education Fund

To support the long-term and healthy development of the self-financing post-secondary education sector and further enhance Hong Kong's status as a regional education hub, the Government established the Self-financing Post-secondary Education Fund (SPEF) with an initial commitment of \$2.5 billion in August 2011 to provide scholarships for students of self-financing sub-degree and undergraduate programmes as well as support quality enhancement projects by institutions and quality assurance activities.

2. SPEF was set up as a trust with the Permanent Secretary for Education Incorporated acts as its trustee. The investment income from SPEF was used to support the following two main schemes –

(a) Self-financing Post-secondary Scholarship Scheme

3. The Self-financing Post-secondary Scholarship Scheme (SPSS) was set up under SPEF to offer scholarships and awards to students pursuing full-time locally-accredited self-financing sub-degree or undergraduate (including top-up degree) programmes at non-profit-making education institutions.

4. For the 2011/12 academic year, two types of scholarships/awards were established under SPSS, namely the Outstanding Performance Scholarship (OPS) and the Best Progress Award (BPA).

OPS

5. OPS was offered to students with –

- (a) a high standard of academic performance;
- (b) demonstration of leadership and good communication skills;
- (c) valuable contribution to the institution/community; and/or

- (d) a strong commitment to the Hong Kong community.

For undergraduate and top-up degree students, the amounts of scholarship for each local and non-local awardee were \$40,000 and \$80,000 per year respectively. For sub-degree students, the amount of scholarship for each local or non-local student was \$30,000 per year.

BPA

6. BPA was established to encourage and recognise students with significant progress and improvement in their studies. Each undergraduate or sub-degree awardee would be granted \$10,000, irrespective of whether he/she is a local or non-local student.

Distribution of Award/Scholarship

7. In the 2011/12 academic year, a total of 1 290 awardees, including 952 students studying sub-degree programmes and 338 pursuing undergraduate programmes from 30 participating institutions, received about \$36 million under SPSS. Among them, 1 000 students were granted OPS and 290 students were awarded BPA.

(b) Quality Enhancement Support Scheme

8. The Quality Enhancement Support Scheme (QESS) was set up under SPEF to support projects that enhance the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning in the self-financing post-secondary sector.

9. Non-profit-making education institutions offering full-time locally-accredited self-financing sub-degree or undergraduate (including top-up degree) programmes were eligible to apply. Other related bodies such as the federations of these education institutions and quality assurance agencies might also apply.

10. QESS supported two types of projects, namely theme-based projects and open-ended projects. Theme-based projects should normally be initiatives jointly developed by multiple institutions to foster closer collaboration among institutions and benefit the sector as widely as possible. With reference to the development and needs of the sector, the themes for the first round of applications in coming 2012/13 academic

year were set to be –

- (a) Joint institutions' platform for sharing of resources (e.g. e-library, common curriculum on general education and language courses to facilitate recognition and transfer of credits, etc.);
- (b) Joint institutions' information technology platform for improving teaching and learning, enhancing student support and career guidance services; and
- (c) Joint institutions' project in preparing students for further studies or employment.

[Note: successful applications for the first round of applications under QESS are summarised in the annual report for the 2012/13 academic year.]

Secretariat, Self-financing Post-secondary Education Fund