

# Quality Enhancement Grant Scheme

**Progress Report**

**Project No.:**  
**05/QEGS/A-08-09**

Reporting Period: From May 2009 (month/year) to Nov 2009 (month/year)

## Part A

Project Title: Online student support service: Design and development of a career guidance kit for students in the self-financing post-secondary sector in Hong Kong

Name of Grantee: School of Professional and Continuing Education, University of Hong Kong

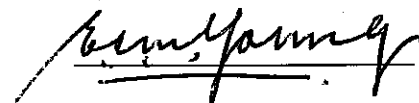
Project Period: From May 2009 (month/year) to May 2012 (month/year)

## Part B

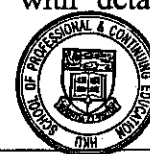
Please use separate A4-size sheets to report the progress with regard to the following aspects:

1. Types and brief descriptions of Project activities held/completed during the reporting period (*the information may be presented in the form of a table*).
2. The dates, time, venues and number of participants / beneficiaries of Project activities held, and resources (e.g. equipment, manpower) used for the implementation of Project activities.
3. Project milestone(s) and deliverables attained at the end of the reporting period and evidence showing the attainment of milestones and deliverables.
4. The percentage, in terms of key tasks, of the Project completed at the end of each reporting period.
5. Project variation\*, if any, during the reporting period, together with details and justifications

Signature:



Organization  
Chop:



Name of Authorized  
Person:

Prof Enoch C M Young

Name of  
Grantee  
Organization:

School of Professional and  
Continuing Education, the  
University of Hong Kong

Position of  
Authorized  
Person:

Special Adviser to Director,  
HKU SPACE; Chief Adviser,  
HKU SPACE Centre for  
Research in Continuing  
Education and Lifelong  
Learning

Date:

28 December 2009

\* A separate written application should be submitted to the Grant for prior written approval.

\*Progress Report of Project should be signed by the head of the Grantee organization, the person-in-charge of the Project or the person who signed the Quality Enhancement Grant Scheme Agreement for acceptance of the Grant on behalf of the Grantee organization.



**Online student support service: Design and development  
of a career guidance kit for students  
in the self-financing post-secondary sector in Hong Kong**

**1<sup>st</sup> Progress Report**

**The Project Team  
School of Professional and Continuing Education  
The University of Hong Kong**

**December 2009**

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## **Project objectives**

The overall objective of this project is to provide a systematic career guidance for students to prepare for, enter, and graduate from sub-degree, degree, and top-up degree programmes in the self-financing post-secondary sector in Hong Kong.

There are five major target goals:

- Develop an intelligent online programme preference assessment to help potential students understand their personal career interests and abilities in order to make a wise programme choice that could match their personal attributes.
- Conduct case studies on successful career experiences from outstanding graduates, and develop an online database on career experience-sharing for students in the self-financing post-secondary sector in Hong Kong.
- Collect and classify educational and job information and develop a comprehensive online database for sub-degree, degree, and top-up degree graduates of the self-financing post-secondary sector in Hong Kong.
- Develop an online kit on job-gaining skills, including career development, career plan, resume writing, interview preparation, and interview skills.
- Establish an online platform which accommodates all online programme preference assessment and database information mentioned above for students, parents, teachers, and career counsellors to use free of charge.

## **Project activities during the reporting period (25 May 2009 – 24 Nov 2009)**

1	Formation of Project Team: Recruitment of one full-time Research Associate, one full-time Research Assistant, and one half-time Programmer.
2	Development of an online assessment instrument – Academic Programme Preference Assessment (APPA): <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>2.1 Collection of programmes offered by self-financing post-secondary sector in Hong Kong</li><li>2.2 Classification of programmes offered by self-financing post-secondary sector in Hong Kong</li><li>2.3 Updating of norms of the career psychological test instrument entitled Online Programme Preference Assessment Instrument in Hong Kong</li><li>2.4 Analysis of different programme requirements based on programme leaders' assessments</li><li>2.5 Establishment of project website</li></ul>

### **1. Formation of Project Team**

The first task of the project was to recruit project staff who were specifically responsible for the logistics and implementations of the project. As approved in the budget, one Research Associate, one Research Assistant and one half-time Programmer were recruited. The Research Associate and Research Assistant are mainly responsible for the overall progress of the project, which includes conducting literature searches, organizing interviews, collecting and analyzing programme information, providing insights of the contents and designs for the project website and handbook, while the Programmer is mainly responsible for establishing the project website, updating the career psychological test instrument, and maintaining the

databases that support a one-stop-shop online platform for public use. All three new staff had reported for duty on 10 August 2009.

The half-time Programmer resigned from his post effective from 23 December 2009, and the Research Assistant will resign from his post effective from 10 January 2010. Replacements will be recruited.

Besides the recruited staff for the project, several experts were invited to participate in the project. The names and titles of team members as at 30 November 2009 are listed in the following table.

Member's name	Title and Organization
Professor Enoch Young (Person-in-charge of the project)	Special Adviser to Director, HKU SPACE; Chief Adviser, HKU SPACE Centre for Research in Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning.
Dr. Weiyuan Zhang (Project Coordinator)	Head and Chief Researcher, HKU SPACE Centre for Research in Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning; Associate Head, HKU SPACE Centre for Cyber Learning.
Mr. Tak-kay Ng	President, Hok Yau Club. Principal, CUHK FAA Thomas Cheung Secondary School.
Ms. Jeanne Lam	IT Manager, Centre for Cyber Learning, HKU SPACE.
Dr. Mandy Hoi	Programme Director, College of Humanities and Law, HKU SPACE.
Dr. Pansy Lam	Senior Programme Director, College of Humanities and Law, HKU SPACE.
Ms. Chrysa Keung	Research Associate, HKU SPACE Centre for Research in Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning.
Mr. Gary Tsang	Research Assistant, HKU SPACE Centre for Research in Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning.

The project managers who took the responsibilities of project administration and coordination are listed in the following table.

Member's name	Title and Organization
Ms. Dorothy Cheung	Administrative Officer, HKU SPACE Centre for Research in Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning.
Ms. May Lau	Research Coordinator, HKU SPACE Centre for Research in Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning

Project Team Meetings with the members listed above were held regularly with an interval of 1-2 months, while Sub-Team Meetings were held with an interval of 1-2 weeks. In the meetings, members would report on the project progress and discuss all project related matters. As of this reporting date, three Project Team Meetings and six Sub-Team Meetings had been held.

## **2. Development of an online assessment instrument – Academic Programme Preference Assessment (APPA)**

The prime objective of developing an intelligent online programme preference assessment is to help potential students understand their personal career interests and abilities in order to make a wise programme choice that could match their personal attributes.

To achieve the above objective, several tasks have to be carried out. First, information of local sub-degree, degree and top-up degree programmes is to be collected. Following the collection, the programmes are to be classified into subject categories and from them a programme database is to be developed.

### **2.1 Collection of programmes offered by self-financed post-secondary sector in Hong Kong**

One of the key tasks of the project in this stage is to establish a database that contains all the programme information of local sub-degree, degree and top-up degree programmes in the self-financing post-secondary sector in Hong Kong. Twenty-nine institutions are offering these programmes and these are listed in the table. (*Appendix 1*)

Programme information was collected by searching and reviewing from relevant websites, prospectuses, and course brochures of the 29 institutions. Seven programme types were identified, namely (i) Foundation Diplomas, (ii) Pre-Associate Degree; (iii) Associate Degree; (iv) Higher Diplomas; (v) Advanced Diplomas; (vi) Professional Diplomas; and (vii) Bachelor Degrees.

Programme information collected include: (i) institution names; (ii) programme names; (iii) programme types; (iv) modes of delivery; (v) areas of study and training; (vi) normal programme duration; (vii) exit award; and (viii) contact information.

During the process of reviewing the collected data, it was noted that some of the programmes had not undergone the accreditation process by the government authority. In order to ensure that the programmes to be uploaded onto our project website were accredited ones, we drew references from the programmes listed on the website of Information Portal for Accredited Self-financing Post-secondary Programmes (iPASS), the link is [www.ipass.gov.hk](http://www.ipass.gov.hk). After checking the iPASS information against the originally collected programme information, a final database of accredited full time sub-degree, degree and top-up degree programmes in the self-financing post-secondary sector in Hong Kong was established, which consists of 256 types of programmes, in 238 subject areas.

### **2.2 Classification of programmes offered by self-financed post-secondary sector in Hong Kong**

Taking reference from the iPASS programme classification, the collected 238 subject areas were further classified into 20 categories according to the areas of study and training of their core curricula. The categories are listed in *Appendix 2*. The processes of collection and categorization of programmes offered by self-financing post-secondary sector in Hong Kong was completed satisfactorily by 14 August 2009 as planned.

### **2.3 Updating of norms of the career psychological test instrument entitled Online Programme Preference Assessment Instrument in Hong Kong**

An intelligent online psychological career test instrument will help potential students to select sub-degree, degree, and top-up degree programmes offered by the self-financing post-secondary sectors. The developed online test consists of 112 questions so designed to measure students' personalities, abilities and interests, which is adapted from the Academic Programme Preference Inventory (APPI). The APPI was originally established by the Centre for Research in Distance & Adult Learning at the Open University of Hong Kong (OUHK)

and Hok Yau Club in 2004 under a research project funded by the Education and Manpower Bureau. Dr Weiyuan Zhang and Mr Tak-kay Ng, both of whom are members of the current project, were the Principal Investigators of APPI project. Written permissions have been obtained from both OUHK and Hok Yau Club for our project team to update the inventory and extend its use to the current project. The two copyright holders will be acknowledged in future materials wherever it is related to the use of the inventory.

The APPI has been linked to the website of Hok Yau Club since 2004, and over these years more than 87,000 users have completed the psychological test. These results constituted the norms which will be adapted to formulate the "Academic Programme Preference Assessment" (APPA).

The inventory of APPI, as accumulated since 2004, was downloaded from Hok Yau Club and transferred to the database of HKU SPACE in early October 2009. Since the major group of APPA users aged from 15 to 22, the records for those aged below 15 and above 23 in the APPI inventory were removed so as to provide a more precise set of norms for comparison. *Appendix 3* shows some updated figures (the norms) to be adapted into APPA.

The test will generate two results: nine personality types and a suggested list of programmes. The personality types will be adopted into APPA while a new database for generating the suggested list of programmes will be developed. Immediately after the respondent completed all the questions in the test, the "matching system" of APPA will analyze and match those programmes in the programme inventory to the respondent's personality types and a suggested programme list in ranking order will be generated.

#### **2.4 Analysis of different programme requirements based on programme leaders' assessments**

If students select programmes that match their psychological characteristics, they will have higher motivation, better personal fulfillment and ultimately academic success. The target group of users for APPA is senior secondary school leavers, students and graduates of local sub-degree, degree and top-up degree programmes, the APPA database is so developed to contain information of these programmes.

With the information collected and classified, programmes leaders nominated by Heads/Principals of respective institutions are invited to provide ratings of personality requirement for each subject categories. Individual invitation letters were sent to those experienced programme leaders on 20 November 2009 with a subject rating form (*Appendix 4*) and an instruction sheet (*Appendix 5*) by both e-mail and post. They were asked to rate the attributes on a scale of 0 to 9. "0" means the personality is not a necessary requirement for the subject; while "9" means the personality is the most needed requirement for the subject.

The initial plan is to collect ratings by face-to-face interviews with the nominated programme leaders, but it was suggested in a Project Team Meeting that it would be more effective to request help in rating the programmes in paper format. Hence, invitations and rating sheets were provided to programme leaders by both e-mail and post, instead of the original proposed face-to-face interviews. A list of institutions that participated in the rating process is shown in *Appendix 6*.

## 2.5 Establishment of the project website

The data collected from programme leaders would then be inputted into a computer programme to generate average scores of attributes for each subject, which would construct a programme database for the matching process in APPA. The APPA database is available by December 2009.

A bilingual project website was established that contains the information of the project, APPA, case studies of outstanding students, job gaining skills, education information and career information (Please refer to the sitemap and captured web pages shown in *Appendix 7*). The framework of the website has already been set up and the temporary link is: <http://appahk.hkuspace.hku.hk/uat/> (Login name: qegs\_cgk; Password: hkuspace2009). The contents in both Chinese and English would be posted whenever they were available according to the project timeline.

## Conclusions

The project has been going very well as planned.

Milestones Completed (25 May 2009 – 24 Nov 2009)	Percentage of completion
Formation of Project Team: Recruitment of one full-time Research Associate, one full-time Research Assistant, and one half-time Programmer.	100% completed
Collection of programmes information offered by the self-financing post-secondary sector in Hong Kong.	100% completed
Classification of programmes information offered by the self-financing post-secondary sector in Hong Kong.	100% completed
Updating norms of the career psychological test instrument, entitled Online Programme Preference Assessment Instrument in Hong Kong.	100% completed
Analysis of different programme requirements based on programme leaders' assessments	100% completed

Approximately 17% of the overall project has been completed successfully as planned.