

Project Information

Project Title (in English)

The Impact of the New “334” Academic Structure on the Self-financed Sub-degree Programme Units (SSPUs) – Meeting the Challenges through Professional Exchange

Project Title (in Chinese)

**探討「三三四」新學制對
自資副學位課程的影響 –
透過專業交流迎接挑戰**

A. Project Summary

(please provide an executive summary of the project proposal in no more than 500 words).

This project, proposed by Joint Quality Review Committee (JQRC), *aims* at providing fruitful support and guidance to the **Self-financed Sub-degree Programme Providers / Units (SSPUs)** in the implementation of the New “334” Academic Structure, through research and consultation, and the launching of professional exchange and development activities, so as to facilitate their transition and promote teaching and learning quality.

The *rationale* of the project is that the implementation of “334” would necessitate significant changes upon the academic structure (e.g. the curriculum structure and framework, teaching and learning strategies, modes of assessment and articulation with degree studies, etc) at the sub-degree level. Hence there is an immediate need for staff and teachers in the **Self-financed Sub-degree (SFSD)** institutions to prepare for the change through sharing and exchange within the next one to two years. JQRC considers that the launch of professional development and sharing activities for the Self-financed *sub-degree sector* (offering Associate Degrees and Higher Diplomas) can serve as a complement to other professional development activities hosted by tertiary institutions, and can cater to the needs of the SSPUs and promote the quality of SFSD programmes during the transition.

The *methodology* employed in this project consists mainly of two phases. The *first phase* will be the conduct of a background research by JQRC (through desk-top research, questionnaires and / or interviews) to study into the current practices and “334”-related issues in the SFSD Programmes; whereas the *second phase* will include the launch of workshops, subject-based seminars, experience-sharing forums and a symposium for different targets groups of SSPUs.

Regarding the *deliverables*, these professional exchange activities will benefit teaching and learning in the *whole sub-degree and the degree sector*, and also enhance the smooth transition to the 3-3-4 system at the macro-level. The project will be *managed* and monitored by the JQRC Board of Directors which will set up a Working Group to plan and implement the project. JQRC will *evaluate* the project effectiveness on an on-going basis and follow-up on the key issues during the second cycle of the Institutional Reviews for the *sustainable development* of the SFSD sector. The estimated *duration* of the project is 24 months.

It should be emphasized that not only is **JQRC** well positioned to facilitate the transition to the 3-3-4 system, but it also has a duty to play this significant role. JQRC is set up by the Heads of Universities Committee to oversee the quality assurance of the self-financed sub-degree programme units, and its Board of Directors is drawn from the Institution Proper of the eight UGC-funded Institutions. Thus JQRC has a crucial role to play in ensuring the articulation between the sub-degree and the degree level. The Board of Directors will oversee this Project to ensure that a smooth transition will be in place.

(Please see Appendix for a brief introduction on JQRC)

B. Project Objectives

(please identify the needs of the target recipients and explain how the project aims to address the needs).

The purpose of the project is to provide insights and support to the Self-financed Sub-degree Programme Providers/ Units (SSPUs) in the implementation of the New “334” Academic Structure through research and consultation, and the launching of seminars and experience sharing sessions.

The implementation of “3-3-4” implies a drastic change which would impact upon both the academic structure at the degree and the sub-degree level. At the sub-degree level (Associate Degrees and Higher Diplomas), the change to a 4-year degree has the following impact:

- As there will no longer be Form 5 graduates, admission to the AD/ HD programmes would be from Form 6
- There is thus a need for changes to the existing structure and curriculum of AD/HD programmes (which currently admit Form 5 graduates to a 3-year programme, and Form 7 graduates to a 2-year programme)
- The larger pool of Form 6 graduates (in comparison to Form 7 graduates) means a different type of student background and this has impact on teaching and learning
- How the new AD/HD programmes articulate to the new Degree system in terms of curriculum match, has to be resolved

All these changes are directly related to the entrance requirements, programme objectives, content, curriculum focus (e.g. generic skills or vocational skills) and articulation of the Associate Degree (AD) and Higher Diploma (HD) programmes with the senior years of the Degree. The proposed project therefore has the objectives of:

- (a) Facilitating senior management and staff of the self-financed sub-degree institutions (SSPUs) to understand and prepare for the changes, challenges and impact of the new academic structure upon teaching and learning in Self-financed Sub-degree programmes;
- (b) Assisting staff in SSPUs to prepare for the transition and **ensure effective teaching and learning strategies and appropriate curriculum and assessment methods for the new SFSD programmes;**
- (c) **Assisting the degree sector** to understand the impact of 3-3-4 upon the SFSD sector **and to prepare better for the intake of SFSD graduates** under the new system;
- (d) Promoting the quality of teaching and ensuring the quality of the student learning experience under the new academic system, thereby facilitating a smooth transition for sub-degree students to enter the workforce or pursue further study;
- (e) Enhancing the professional development and peer learning culture among staff of the SSPUs through professional exchange activities;
- (f) Encouraging the SSPUs to establish peer support networks in the long run so as to extend the culture of partnership after the completion of the project.

C. Outcomes and Deliverables of Project

(please include the expected number of target beneficiaries and explain how they will benefit from the project).

- A series of seminars and sharing sessions related to the transition of “334” with special focus on the SFSD providers and their staff will be conducted, involving other major stakeholders, for the purposes of experience sharing, learning, and staff development. Some of the workshops will aim to bridge the sub-degree and the degree sector. These will contribute towards teaching and learning in ***both the sub-degree and the degree level***, and at the macro-level, facilitate the smooth transition to the 3-3-4 system.
- A side product of the project is the result of the desk-top research on the local (and overseas) situation of self-financed sub-degrees. The information will be released as background papers for participants in forums and workshops, as appropriate. The other product is the compilation of papers and notes from the forums and symposium, and these will be shared among SSPUs and interested parties after the events.

D. Implementation Details

(I) ***Background Study into current practices and issues in the Self-financed Sub-degree Programmes***

In preparation for the workshops, seminars and sharing sessions, which will be the main part of the Project, JQRC will conduct background research in the first phase to obtain more information on the following:

- (a) ***A Review of the current offer of SFSD programmes*** (e.g. the number and type of programmes, the range of entry requirements and duration/ contact hours, the range of subject disciplines, range of articulation rates and year of articulation) - through desk-top research (literature review).
- (b) ***A review of the positioning of sub-degree programmes/ articulation routes in other countries*** - through desk-top research (literature review).
- (c) ***Study on the existing situations of SSPUs and preparation for “334”***
In order to prepare well for the launching of workshops and seminars, and to ***identify accurately the information needs and developmental needs*** of stakeholders, questionnaires and / or face to face interviews will be conducted with senior management and / or teaching staff to understand the current stage of preparation of the SSPUs for the 3-3-4 system, problems and worries they encountered, and the opportunities identified.

(II) Launch of a series of seminars and sharing sessions

5 major types of workshops / forums to be conducted :

(a) Preparatory Seminar(s) for senior management of SSPUs

Seminar(s) will be conducted for the senior management of the Self-financed Sub-degree (SFSD) sector, for initial sharing and understanding the impact of the 3-3-4 system upon SFSD, including the new entrance requirements for AD and HD programmes and articulation route into Degrees. Appropriate personnel from the Government and from the Degree sector will be invited to these seminars.

(b) Seminars for subject-based exchange

A series of subject-based seminars (according to the main subject areas offered in AD/HD programmes) to be organized for *programme leaders* and other staff, to share experiences in their review/ planning of programmes in specific subject areas. Participation will be invited from *academics from degree programmes/ professionals* in the subject area where possible. They will share ideas on admission issues, curriculum and assessment, employability, articulation and knowledge transfer, etc.

(c) Experience-sharing Forums for leaders and senior staff of SSPUs

These forums aim to provide opportunity for exchange and discussion among the leaders and senior staff of SSPUs who will plan the future development of their programmes. At different forums, different types of stakeholders may also be involved, such as academics from universities, secondary school principals and teachers, organizers of feeder programmes (eg. Yi Jin), and students.

(d) Experience-sharing sessions among staff of SSPUs

In order to promote understanding of the 3-3-4 and its impact, and to promote the professional sharing culture, a series of sharing sessions will be held for the front-line staff of SSPUs. The sessions may be led by *SSPUs' leaders and senior managers*, to disseminate information about the 3-3-4 change, and to solicit ideas and solutions from front-line staff for smooth transition, as well as develop their professional capacity and learning culture. There will be a focus on *outcome-based teaching and learning* in the planning of new curriculum, the *differentiation between AD and HD* and the implications of this for learning and for graduates' attributes. Sharing of views, experiences and good practices during preparation will be encouraged.

(e) Symposium for major stakeholders

This will be a forum with wide participation for a summative sharing of views on the implementation of 3-3-4 and preparation of the SFSD sector, drawing upon the discussions and exchange conducted in the seminars and workshops. Speakers will be invited from government, quality assurance bodies, SSPUs, professions, employers, and overseas institutions. The overseas speaker(s) may share experience in particular about the articulation between sub-degrees and a 4-year degree.

- * Implementation will involve research input from Project staff, as well as from an Advisor who has expert knowledge of both the local self-financed sub-degree sector and the degree sector. The Advisor will also provide input in the organization of symposium / seminars by identifying suitable topics and personnel to be involved.

E. Implementation Schedule <i>(Please extend this table if necessary.)</i>		
Estimated start date of project:		<u>09/2009</u>
Action <i>(please indicate key milestones)</i>	Timeframe	Cashflow Requirement
(i) Planning and research of the Project (ii) Launch of seminar for Heads and senior staff of SSPUs and the degree sector (1 session)	Sep 2009 – Feb 2010	\$387,800
(iii) Launch of seminars / forums for Heads and senior staff of SSPUs and the degree sector (3 sessions)	Mar – Aug 2010	\$408,400
(iv) Launch of a series of sharing sessions for front-line staff (4 sessions)	Sep 2010 – Feb 2011	\$430,400
(v) Launch of a Symposium for major stakeholders of SSPUs	Mar – Aug 2011	\$458,400

Estimated completion date of project: 08/2011

F. Project Budget			
Projected Expenditure <i>(Please provide detailed breakdown under each item)</i>	Amount in HK\$		
	Year 1	Year 2	Total
a. Manpower (new appointments)			
i) Appointment of Research Officer	\$ 270,000	\$ 270,000	
ii) Appointment of Research Assistant	\$ 106,800	\$ 106,800	\$1,293,600
iii) Project Manager– Part-time	\$ 270,000	\$ 270,000	
b. Equipment / Facilities			
- One Laptop computer	\$15,000	----	\$17,400
- One portable printer	\$2,400		
c. Services			
- Honorarium to Advisor (on yearly basis)	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$40,000
d. General Expenses			
	1. Cost of Forums and Seminars for heads / senior staff (4 sessions)	1. Cost of Sharing Sessions: (4 sessions)	\$275,000
	▪ Honorarium for speakers (applicable to some sessions) and renting of venue, miscellaneous expenses \$80,000	▪ Speaker fees (if applicable), renting of halls, catering, transportation, etc. \$80,000	
		2. Cost of symposium:	
		▪ Cost of 1 overseas expert: (Speaker fees, air tickets, accommodations etc.) \$50,000	
		▪ Honorarium for Local Professionals \$5,000	
		▪ Renting of venue, catering, transportation, etc. \$60,000	
e. Others (e.g. auditor's fee)	Direct costs: e.g. Mailing, printing, recruitment fees: \$20,000	Direct costs: e.g. Mailing, banner, printing: \$15,000	\$35,000
	Contingency: \$12,000	Contingency: \$12,000	\$24,000
Total Expenditure :	\$ 796,200	\$ 888,800	\$1,685,000

Projected Income	Amount in HK\$		
	Year 1	Year 2	Total
a. (e.g. fees received)			
b.			
c.			
Total Income :			

Sources of Funding

- a. Amount of grant sought under this application: HK\$1,685,000
- b. Other sources of funding (*this may include donations, contributions from the applicant/its parent organization, etc. Please give the name(s) of the sponsor(s), the amount of funding, and indicate whether the funding has been secured.*):
 - (i) _____
 - (ii) _____
 - (iii) _____

G. Monitoring and Self-evaluation Mechanism

The Project will be managed and monitored by the JQRC Board of Directors which will set up a Working Group to plan and implement the Project. Evaluation of effectiveness will be conducted throughout the implementation process and after the launch of seminars and sharing sessions (e.g. through questionnaires). The self-evaluation mechanism will follow the feedback loop of “Planning-Implementation-Evaluation” (P-I-E) and slight modification may be required at any stage for continuous improvement of the project.

H. Management Support and Key Personnel Involved

Project Director

Dr. KS So, Deputy Chairman of JQRC since 2005, and Registrar of The Hong Kong Institute of Education.

Dr. So has chaired Institutional Reviews of JQRC, and is a member of the Expert Group on Good Practices responsible for compiling the Handbook on Good Practices. Dr. So has also conducted extensive research in education and teacher education.

Deputy Project Directors

- 1) **Professor TS Chan**, Chairman of JQRC and Associate Vice President (Academic Quality Assurance) of Lingnan University.

Professor Chan has been Chairman since 2006 and has led the Institutional Reviews conducted by JQRC. He has also been a member of the Steering Group for the Review of Post-Secondary Education in Hong Kong.

- 2) **Professor KT Hau**, Director of JQRC and Chair, Department of Educational Psychology of The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Professor Hau has extensive teaching and research experience in teacher education. He is also currently Chairman of the University Extension Board overseeing the self-financed sub-degree programme units at The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Management Support

The Executive Director of JQRC, **Ms WS Wong** will assist to monitor the implementation of the project and provide ongoing professional support.

I. Special Justifications if the Grant Sought Exceeds \$2 million

III Other information

1 Project Sustainability *(If applicable, please describe how the recurrent expenditure involved will be met after completion of the proposed project)*

Upon the completion of the project, JQRC will follow up on the key issues identified (e.g. major difficulties and preparation of SSPUs for “334”) during the second cycle of JQRC Institutional Reviews. The sharing of good practices and the peer learning and support culture will continue in JQRC’s reviews.

2 Preparatory work done *(If any)*

JQRC has conducted a general review of the new “334” academic structure, with special focus on its possible impact to the self-financed sub-degree programmes (AD/ HD). An overall picture of the relationship between “334” and the SFSD Programmes Units has also been obtained from the Institutional Reviews conducted by JQRC.

3 Past experience in organizing projects of similar or relevant nature and achievements *(If any)*

JQRC has been working closely with the Education Bureau (EDB) in the Tripartite Liaison Committee established by the Bureau (comprising representatives from EDB, JQRC, and the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ)) to promote cooperation in the enhancement of quality in the SFSD sector.

JQRC has also been tasked with the production of a Handbook on Good Practices in the SFSD Sector in collaboration with the Bureau and relevant parties, for promoting good practices and sharing experience in quality assurance in both the University Grant Committees (UGC) institutions and private institutions.

In addition, the Director of the JQRC, Ms WS Wong has been invited by the Education Bureau to conduct talks on quality assurance for the SFSD sector at various seminars organized by the Bureau, and more recently was invited by the School of Continuing Education, HKBU, to give a presentation on quality assurance and the implications of the 3-3-4 changes on the SFSD sector.