

# Quality Assurance Council releases Audit Report on sub-degree operations of University of Hong Kong

The following is issued on behalf of the University Grants Committee:

The Quality Assurance Council (QAC) today (February 26) released the Audit Report on the sub-degree operations of the University of Hong Kong (HKU).

The Audit Report presents the findings on the quality of learning at the sub-degree providing units of HKU. The Chairman of the QAC, Mr Lincoln Leong, said, "The QAC is pleased that the Audit Panel concludes that given the volume and range of the sub-degree programmes on offer, there are excellent policies, processes and procedures in place to guide their development, approval, monitoring and review stages. In this Audit Report, the University of Hong Kong School of Professional and Continuing Education (HKU SPACE) has been congratulated on the detailed informative documentation that guides all aspects of management and quality assurance regarding these programmes."

The QAC is pleased with the quality of educational provision at the sub-degree operations of HKU. The University's efforts in a range of areas are commended as positive features in the Audit Report. These include HKU SPACE's comprehensive and well-documented governance and management policies and procedures, as well as its comprehensive and effective quality assurance processes that include a meticulous approach to programme approval and reviews which draws on external input.

The full report (with HKU's Institutional Response attached) has been uploaded to the website of the University Grants Committee (UGC) ([www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/qac/about/term/publications/report.html](http://www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/qac/about/term/publications/report.html)).

HKU has agreed to submit a progress report within 18 months on its follow-up actions.

## Background of the quality audit on sub-degree operations of HKU

The quality audit on the sub-degree operations of HKU was undertaken by an Audit Panel appointed by the QAC. The Audit Panel was chaired by Emeritus Professor Rudi Lidl, and members included Professor Timothy Clark, Emeritus Professor Paul White, Dr Eva Wong and Professor Eric Yu. The Panel reviewed the Institutional Submission, which was prepared by HKU following a period of self-study, and visited HKU from March 20 to 22, 2018, to meet with its staff and students. It also met with a number of external stakeholders, such as local employers and graduates of HKU sub-degree programmes.

## Background of the QAC and its auditing activities

The QAC was established in April 2007 as a semi-autonomous non-statutory body under the aegis of the UGC. The UGC is committed to safeguarding and promoting the quality of the UGC-funded universities and their activities. In view of the institutional expansion of university activities and a growing public interest in quality issues, the QAC was established to assist the UGC in providing third-party oversight of the quality of the universities' educational provision. The QAC assists the UGC in assuring the quality of all programmes at the levels of sub-degree, first degree and above (however funded) offered in UGC-funded universities. The QAC fulfils this task primarily by undertaking periodic quality audits of the universities.

Auditing is an external quality assurance process that involves independent peer review by senior academics in the higher education sector. Its principal aims are to confirm that existing arrangements for quality assurance are fit for purpose, that the quality of provision is comparable to international best practices, that universities are committed to continuously improving the quality of their academic programmes, and that students are well taught and well supported so that they are able to achieve the expected academic standards.

Prior to 2016, the QAC's audit activities covered only first degree programmes and above. The first and second QAC audit cycles were completed in 2011 and 2016 respectively. In 2016, the UGC assumed the role of the overseeing body of the quality audits on the sub-degree operations of UGC-funded universities, with the involvement of QAC as the audit operator. The audit visits to universities in this cycle were conducted from late 2017 to early 2019.

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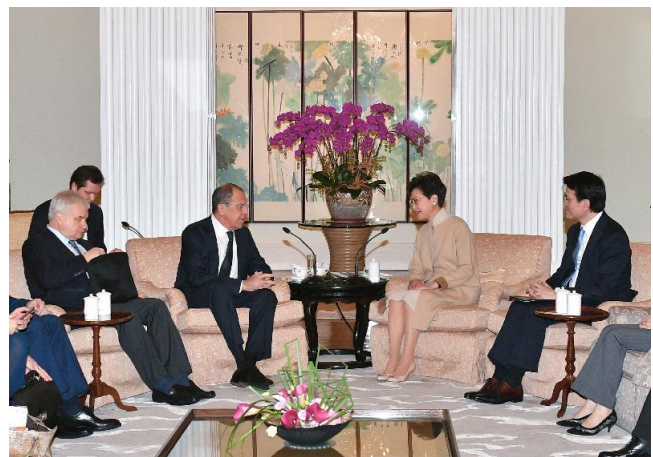
## [CE meets Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia \(with photos/video\)](#)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Mr Sergey Lavrov, at Government House this morning (February 26). The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, also attended the meeting.

Welcoming Mr Lavrov's first visit to Hong Kong, Mrs Lam briefed him on Hong Kong's latest developments, including the Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area promulgated by the country recently. She said that this key development strategy of the country will bring immense opportunities to Hong Kong, adding that the city will play a key role in the initiative, especially in the development of an international

innovation and technology (I&T) hub in the Greater Bay Area with the advantages of Hong Kong.

Mrs Lam pointed out that Hong Kong and Russia have made good progress in co-operation in various areas in recent years. She said that the total merchandise trade between Hong Kong and Russia amounted to around HK\$35.8 billion last year, up more than 20 per cent compared with that of 2017, and that it was also encouraging to see a remarkable increase in the number of Russian visitors to Hong Kong, demonstrating the increasingly close ties between the two places. Mrs Lam said the Comprehensive Agreement for the Avoidance of Double Taxation between the two sides came into force in 2016 and has bolstered their economic and trade connections, and added that she looks forward to an early agreement on promotion and protection of investment between both sides to boost the investment flow. She said that Hong Kong plans to establish a Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (HKETO) in Moscow and that she was pleased to learn that the Russian Government has responded positively towards the proposal. She said she believes that the HKETO will take co-operation between the two places in economic affairs and trade, I&T and youth exchanges to a new level.



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## [SCMA to visit Beijing](#)

The Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Patrick Nip, will depart for Beijing in the afternoon on February 28 (Thursday) to accompany the Chief Executive in attending the second plenary meeting of the Leading Group for the Development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area on March 1. He will also join part of the Chief Executive's visit programme in Beijing, including attending a ceremony to mark the donation by Ng Teng Fong Charitable Foundation to the Palace Museum, as well as calling on central ministries.

Mr Nip will return to Hong Kong in the afternoon on March 5. During his absence, the Under Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Andy Chan, will be the Acting Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs.

## SLW visits Sha Tin District (with photos)

The Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong, today (February 26) visited Sha Tin District, where he took a closer look at child care services and met with District Council members. The Under Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Caspar Tsui, also joined the visit.

Dr Law first went to the Sha Tin District Council (STDC) to exchange views with the Chairman, Mr Ho Hau-cheung, and other STDC members on labour and welfare issues as well as matters of local concern.

Accompanied by the District Officer (Sha Tin), Miss Amy Chan, and the District Social Welfare Officer (Sha Tin), Mrs Gloria Lee, Dr Law then visited the Hong Kong Single Parents Association Jockey Club Neighbourhood Support Centre. Apart from operating the Neighbourhood Support Child Care Project under the Social Welfare Department, the centre provides support to parents of newborn babies, including information on baby care, parenting and emotional counselling, with funding from a charitable organisation.

Dr Law pointed out that the Government will continue to adopt a multi-pronged strategy to enhance child care services to support families by the planning of child care centres (CCCs), improving the manning ratio, increasing the subsidy for CCC services and providing more flexible services.



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## **Effective Exchange Rate Index**

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Tuesday, February 26, 2019 is 103 (same as yesterday's index).