

LCQ19: Apprenticeship Ordinance

Following is a question by the Hon Ho Kai-ming and a written reply by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong, in the Legislative Council today (November 13):

Question:

Under the Apprenticeship Ordinance (Cap 47) (the Ordinance), an employer who employs a young person (i.e. a person of or over the age of 14 years and under the age of 19 years) in a trade designated under the Ordinance (45 trades in total) must enter into a valid contract of apprenticeship with the young person (unless the young person has completed an apprenticeship, and is in possession of a certificate of completion, in that trade), and send the contract to the Director of Apprenticeship to apply for registration. Employers may also apply for voluntary registration of contracts of apprenticeship involving non-designated trades or employees aged 19 or above. The Office of the Director of Apprenticeship of the Vocational Training Council is the statutory unit which enforces the Ordinance. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) Of the total number of apprentices employed in the 45 designated trades under registered contracts of apprenticeship, together with a breakdown by trade, in each of the past three years;

(2) Of the number of contracts of apprenticeship in respect of which employers applied for voluntary registration in each of the past three years; among them, the respective numbers of cases approved and rejected as well as the percentages, together with a breakdown by trade; and

(3) Whether it knows the number of Apprenticeship Officers of each rank in the Office of the Director of Apprenticeship, and the average number of cases handled by each officer?

Reply:

President,

Under the Apprenticeship Ordinance (Cap 47), young persons aged 14 or above may join the Apprenticeship Scheme to receive relevant on-the-job training and vocational education. A young person who is aged 14 or above but below 19 and engaged in a designated trade under the Ordinance, must enter into an apprenticeship contract with the employer and register the contract with the Director of Apprenticeship (i.e. the Executive Director of the Vocational Training Council). Apprentices who are aged 19 or above and engaged in a designated trade, or apprentices who are engaged in a non-designated trade, may voluntarily register their apprenticeship contracts with the Director of Apprenticeship. Currently, there are 45 designated trades and more than 50 non-designated trades.

My reply to the Member's question is as follows:

(1) The numbers of registered apprentices engaged in the designated trades under the Ordinance as at the end of the past three financial years are set out by trade at Annex I.

(2) The numbers of apprentices whose contracts are voluntarily registered in accordance with the Ordinance as at the end of the past three financial years are set out by trade at Annex II. During the same period, there was no rejected case of voluntary registration of apprenticeship contracts.

(3) According to the figures as at March 31, 2019, the Office of the Director of Apprenticeship of the Vocational Training Council arranged a total of six Apprenticeship Officers and 27 Assistant Apprenticeship Officers to handle the cases of and provide support to 4 936 apprentices. On average, each officer is responsible for 150 cases of apprentices.