

Post Secondary Colleges (Amendment) Bill 2025 to be gazetted Friday

A spokesman for the Education Bureau (EDB) said today (March 3) that the Post Secondary Colleges (Amendment) Bill 2025 will be published in the Gazette on Friday (March 7).

The spokesman said, "Education is the key to nurturing talent and building a strong nation. The Bill aims to facilitate the healthy and sustainable development of the self-financing post-secondary education sector as well as support its capacity expansion and quality enhancement, with a view to harnessing the self-financing sector's advantages in terms of its flexibility and diversity to cultivate talent for the country and Hong Kong, and make more proactive contributions towards Hong Kong's development into an international post-secondary education hub.

"Through amending the Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance (Cap. 320), the Bill reforms the regulatory regime for the self-financing post-secondary education sector to improve governance, ensuring the quality, transparency and accountability of self-financing institutions; removes barriers suitably to enhance efficiency and effectiveness; and forges a unified regulatory framework to promote coherence in quality assurance, governance, positioning and overall co-ordination."

Specifically, the Bill will enhance the registration requirements for institutions to strengthen the eligibility for registration and gatekeeping mechanism, with an aim of ensuring the quality of registered institutions. In particular, institutions are required to attain and maintain an institutional review status granted by the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications to demonstrate their competence in operating post-secondary programmes. At the same time, the Bill will provide for a set of fair and transparent procedures, including the imposition of conditions or restrictions on the registration of underperforming institutions, such that the EDB may support institutions to improve their operations in accordance with the mechanism. Through stringent quality assurance, the Government envisages that the recognition of self-financing post-secondary education would be enhanced locally and internationally, reinforcing the parallel development of the self-financing and publicly funded sectors.

Meanwhile, the Bill will rationalise the arrangements for self-financing institutions to award degrees by delegating the relevant approving authority from the Chief Executive in Council to the Secretary for Education, and also repeal certain provisions that are obsolete or overly prescriptive, with a view to more fully unleashing the advantageous flexibility of the self-financing sector to launch programmes and nurture talent that meets market needs.

In addition, the Bill will make consequential amendments to the Education Ordinance (Cap. 279), alongside with support measures to be

introduced by the EDB, to support and facilitate the migration to Cap. 320 of schools registered under Cap. 279 operating sub-degree programmes and self-financing arms of publicly funded institutions, thereby providing for a unified regulatory framework for all institutions operating local self-financing post-secondary education programmes at the degree and sub-degree levels.

The EDB has extensively consulted relevant stakeholders on the legislative amendment proposals, including the Committee on Self-financing Post-secondary Education, the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Education, and the self-financing post-secondary education sector. The views received have been incorporated into the Bill as appropriate. Stakeholders generally support the proposals.

The Bill will be introduced into the LegCo for First Reading and Second Reading on March 19. The Government will fully support the work of the LegCo in scrutinising the Bill and looks forward to the LegCo's support and passage of the Bill.