Guidance Notes

Application for

Programme Development Grant for development of courses based on Specification of Competency Standards/ Specification of Generic (Foundation) Competencies under the Qualifications Framework Fund

Introduction

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (the Government) launched the Qualifications Framework (QF) to promote lifelong learning with a view to enhancing the capability and competitiveness of our local workforce. The QF is a seven-level hierarchy covering qualifications in the academic, vocational and continuing education sectors.

2.   A robust quality assurance mechanism is in place to benchmark and safeguard the quality of learning programmes (programmes) under the QF, mainly through accreditation by the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ)[1].

3.   The Qualifications Register (QR), established by the Government, is the public face of QF. All qualifications and programmes registered in the QR are quality assured and recognised under the QF.

4.   The Education Bureau (EDB) established the QF Fund to provide a steady source of income to support the sustainable development and implementation of the QF.

5.   The Programme Development Grant for development of course(s) based on the Specification of Competency Standards[2] (SCS-based course(s))/ Specification of Generic (Foundation) Competencies[3] (SGC-based course(s)) (Development Grant) launched by EDB aims to provide incentive for providers to develop SCS-based/SGC-based course(s). Providers registered under the laws of Hong Kong are eligible to apply.

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[1]   The HKCAAVQ is responsible for the accreditation of learning programmes offered by non-self-accrediting institutions.

[2]   The Specification of Competency Standards (SCS) are developed by the Industry Training Advisory Committees for the respective industries. For details of the SCSs developed by industries, please refer to the QF website (www.hkqf.gov.hk).

[3]   The Specification of Generic (Foundation) Competencies (SGC) are introduced by EDB as a complement to the industry-specific SCSs. The competencies identified in the SGC are generic foundation skills required of employees, namely English, Chinese (including Putonghua), Information Technology and Numeracy, and are developed to meet workplace requirements. For more details of the SGC, please refer to the QF website (www.hkqf.gov.hk).

Scope and Level of Subsidy

6.   The Development Grant is available to providers in respect of their newly developed SCS-based/SGC-based course(s) which fulfill(s) the following criteria:

(a)   the course must be a new course developed in accordance with the prevailing Qualifications Guidelines [4] for SCS-based/SGC-based courses issued by EDB, which may be modified and updated from time to time;

(b)   the SCS-based/SGC-based course(s) must be successfully accredited by the relevant authority and registered in the QR; and

(c)   the SCS-based/SGC-based course(s) must be operated by the provider after successful accreditation.

7.   The level of the Development Grant is as follows:

SCS-based Courses	SGC-based Courses
$30,000 for a course with **12-35** QF credits	**$20,000** for a course with **6-17** QF credits
$50,000 for a course with **36** QF credits or above	**$40,000** for a course with **18** QF credits or above

Application Procedures

8.   Providers who wish to apply for the Development Grant should submit an application form (QFF-SCS/SGC) together with relevant supporting documents to EDB **no later than one year after the commencement of the course(s) concerned from 3 January 2017 onwards**. If the courses involved in an accreditation exercise under application commenced in different times, providers can make individual applications for each course to ensure that an application is submitted no later than one year after the commencement of the course concerned.

9.   Providers who apply for the Development Grant are required to provide information to prove the operation of the relevant SCS-based/SGC-based course(s). The supporting documents required are listed in the form (QFF-SCS/SGC).

10.   Starting from **1 February 2021**, applicants who are non-self-accrediting operators developing SCS-based or SGC-based courses can apply for **both** the Development Grant and the Accreditation Grant for the Self-financing Programmes [5] by filling in one application form (QFF-AG/DG) [6] and submitting the supporting documents once. Applicants who are self-accrediting operators or who wish to submit individual application for the Development Grant should continue to complete the application form (QFF-SCS/SGC).

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[4]   The Qualifications Guidelines for SCS-based/SGC-based courses can be found on the QF website.

[5]   Please refer to the Guidance Notes – Application for Accreditation Grant for Self-financing Programmes provided on the QF website (www.hkqf.gov.hk).

[6]   Available on the QF website (www.hkqf.gov.hk).

11.   The application form (QFF-SCS/SGC or QFF-AG/DG) and supporting documents should be sent to Further Education Division of the Education Bureau on 7/F, East Wing, Central Government Offices, 2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong.

12.   A flow chart on the application procedures is set out at ***Appendix*** for ease of reference.

Processing of Application

13.   Upon receipt of the application form and all relevant supporting documents from the applicant, EDB will process the application and may contact the applicant for clarification if necessary. Depending on the number of applications received and the number of accreditation exercises and/or SCS-based/SGC-based course(s) involved, payment is expected to be made to the successful applicant normally within four months from the date of receipt of all valid supporting documents with proper certification. To facilitate the processing of applications, applicants are advised to ensure that all valid supporting documents with proper certification are provided at the time of application.

Terms and Conditions

14.   The Government reserves all rights to modify the above procedures at anytime considered necessary or appropriate by the Secretary for Education.

15.   Providers who have received the Development Grant are required to indicate in all promotion and publicity materials that the accredited SCS-based/SGC-based course(s) are QF-recognised qualification(s). The QF logo [7] should also be shown. Providers are required to provide information on the operation of the relevant SCS-based/SGC-based course(s) upon request by EDB.

16.   Providers are also required to undertake that they will abide by other terms and conditions which may be imposed by the Secretary for Education on the relevant QF-recognised qualification(s) and programme(s) concerned.

17.   Since the Development Grant involves the use of public monies, applicants are obliged to ensure that the public monies disbursed to them are for the intended purposes in accordance with the provisions of the funding scheme. Wherever applicable, applicants should observe and comply with the Best Practice Checklist "Strengthening Integrity and Accountability – Government Funding Schemes Grantee's Guidebook" published by the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC). The Guidebook can be accessed through ICAC's website via http://www.icac.org.hk/filemanager/en/Content_1031/GranteeBPC.pdf

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[7]   For details on the use of the QF logo, please refer to the Guideline for the Use of QF Logo in the QR (http://www.hkqr.gov.hk/HKQRPRD/export/sites/default/.content/attachment/en/-EN-4_Advert-1_QF-Guidelines-for-the-Use-of-the-QF-Logo.pdf).
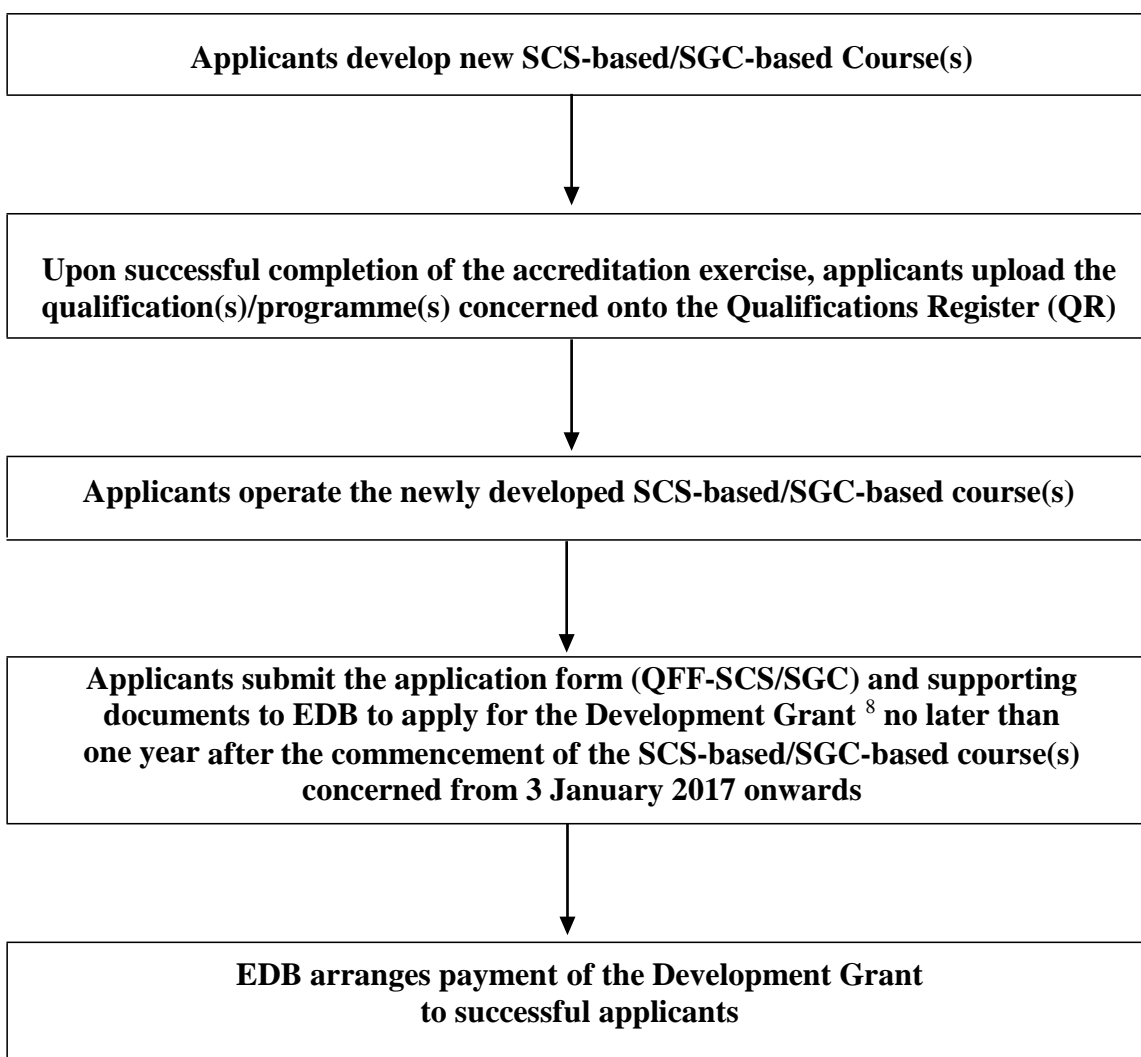
Enquiries

18.   Providers may address enquiries to Further Education Division, Education Bureau on 7/F, East Wing, Central Government Offices, 2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong (Telephone number : 3509 7425, Fax number : 2899 2967).

19.   The application form can be downloaded from the QF website (www.hkqf.gov.hk).

Education Bureau
February 2021

**Programme Development Grant for development of course(s) based on
Specification of Competency Standards (SCS)/
Specification of Generic (Foundation) Competencies (SGC)**

Application Procedures

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│     Applicants develop new SCS-based/SGC-based Course(s)          │
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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  Upon successful completion of the accreditation exercise,        │
│  applicants upload the qualification(s)/programme(s) concerned    │
│  onto the Qualifications Register (QR)                            │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  Applicants operate the newly developed SCS-based/SGC-based       │
│  course(s)                                                        │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  Applicants submit the application form (QFF-SCS/SGC) and         │
│  supporting documents to EDB to apply for the Development         │
│  Grant [8] no later than one year after the commencement of the   │
│  SCS-based/SGC-based course(s) concerned from 3 January 2017      │
│  onwards                                                          │
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│        EDB arranges payment of the Development Grant              │
│                  to successful applicants                         │
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[8]   Starting from **1 February 2021**, applicants who are non-self-accrediting operators developing SCS-based or SGC-based courses can apply for **both** the Accreditation Grant and the Programme Development Grant for development of courses based on SCS/SGC (the Development Grant) by filling in one application form (QFF-AG/DG) and submitting the supporting documents once. Applicants who are self-accrediting operators or who wish to submit individual application for the Development Grant should continue to complete the application form (QFF-SCS/SGC) for the purpose of applying for the Development Grant.