



Education Bureau
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region



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Speech at the QF Conference on “Global Mobility – Making it Happen”

(2:15 pm, 18 March 2013)

QF Conference on “Global Mobility – Making it Happen”

Welcoming Address by SED

Sir Andrew [Cubie] [Chairman of SCQFP], the Hon [Martin] Liao [Chairman of HKCAAVQ], distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon. I am very honoured to be here today to address a distinguished audience of academics, educationalists, course providers, quality assurance experts, industry practitioners as well as representatives from professional associations – an audience which shares a common interest in the development of qualifications framework (or QF in short). First of all, let me extend my warmest welcome to you all, especially those who have travelled thousands of miles to Hong Kong from different parts of the world.

2. The theme of this Conference – “Global Mobility – Making it Happen” rightly highlights the increasing significance of international networking in the development and implementation of QF. The world is more globalised and interconnected than ever. Although we are confronted with a diverse range of complex issues in this ever-changing world, we see a lot of commonalities in our challenges and hence ample opportunities for collaboration beyond geographical boundaries.

3. This international Conference marks the first of its kind in Hong Kong. We are most delighted to have more than ten QF and quality assurance experts coming from not only Hong Kong, but also Australia, Mainland China, Malaysia, South Africa and the United Kingdom, who will speak to us these two days to share their enlightening ideas and views on the development of QF globally. This Conference also signifies the collaborative efforts in furtherance of the Memorandum of Understanding that we signed with the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Partnership this time last year. I sincerely wish to thank our Scottish partner for their joint efforts with us in staging this Conference. I would also like to thank the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications, our close strategic friend in the implementation of QF here, for being a partner organisation for this event.

4. In Hong Kong, we have seen the importance of continuing education and lifelong learning so as to increase the competitiveness of our workforce in the long run. We developed and launched our Hong Kong QF in May 2008, which serves as a platform to provide learners with a clear articulation ladder and multiple progression pathways for further studies and career advancement. What we have been trying to achieve is to develop a lifelong and diversified learning culture for Hong Kong. Over the past years, we have concentrated our efforts and resources on fostering our QF fundamental building blocks such as a seven-level QF hierarchy, the setting up of Industry Advisory Training Committees (or ITACs in short), the drawing up of Specifications of Competency Standards and progression pathways in each industry and the implementation of Recognition of Prior Learning mechanism, etc. More recently, we have formulated an Award Titles Scheme and the QF credit system. Looking ahead, the Hong Kong QF will play a pivotal role in integrating education, training and employment seamlessly.

5. As vocational and academic qualifications are equally important for personal development, the Financial Secretary has recently proposed in his Budget speech to allocate \$10 million per year to support ITACs to launch new initiatives under the Hong Kong QF to further enhance the knowledge and skills of workers in the industries, and their competitiveness in the labour market. The Government will be working closely not only with ITACs but also education and training providers and quality assurance agencies to implement the initiatives.

6. It is worth noting that we cannot develop our own QF independent of international practices and experience. We have been stepping beyond our boundaries to establish ties with QF and quality assurance authorities in different places, so as to enhance mutual understanding, trust and recognition. Apart from the Memorandum of Understanding that we have signed with the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Partnership, a Letter of Intent

with the Guangdong Occupational Skill Testing Authority was signed in May 2011 to explore the feasibility of cooperation and the possibility of benchmarking competency standards developed under the Hong Kong QF with the relevant National Occupational Standards of the Mainland China. The ultimate objective is to facilitate learners' mobility and articulation around the world. Let us join hands in turning this objective into reality. I am sure that this two-day Conference will provide us with insights on how to take this forward.

7. In closing, may I wish all participants a fruitful and rewarding event, and all visitors a pleasant stay in this Asia's world city. Thank you.

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