

Commission on Poverty (CoP)

Services Offered by the Vocational Training Council (VTC)

Purpose

To outline the range of services offered by the VTC and the initiatives being planned to support the Government's efforts in alleviating poverty.

Overview

2. The VTC is the largest vocational education and training institution in Hong Kong. It offers a wide range of pre-employment vocational education and training programmes for students leaving the mainstream education system at Secondary 3, Secondary 5 and Secondary 7 levels, and also for the non-engaged youth (NEY), to equip them for employment and further studies, if they so choose. It also offers part time programmes for working adults for upgrading their skills and knowledge.

3. The VTC's courses and services are delivered mainly through :

- (a) The nine campuses of the Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education (IVE) (see Annex)
- (b) the 18 Training and Development Centres (see Annex)
- (c) the Apprenticeship Unit in Pokfulam, Kowloon Bay and Kwai Chung
- (d) the VTC Youth College at So Uk Estate
- (e) the VTC Yeo Chei Man Senior Secondary School at Tseung Kwan O
- (f) the three Skills Centres for people with disabilities (in Kwun Tong, Tuen Mun and Pokfulam)

(a) The IVE

4. The IVE mainly offers full time and part time fee-charging vocational education courses in nine academic disciplines, leading to the award of qualifications from Certificates, Foundation Diploma, Diploma to Higher Diploma :

- Applied Science;
- Business Administration;
- Child Education and Community Services;
- Information Technology;
- Construction;
- Design, Printing, Textiles and Clothing;

- Electrical and Electronic Engineering;
- Hotel, Service and Tourism Studies;
- Mechanical, Manufacturing and Industrial Engineering.

Total student population in the IVE in the academic year 2004/05 is about 50,000 (31,000 full time students and 19,000 part time students).

(b) The 18 Training and Development Centres

5. The 18 training and development centres mainly offer full time and part time industry specific training programmes for a wide range of people, from Secondary 3 school-leavers to experienced working adults at graduate level. Most of the full time programmes (leading to qualifications of Technician Foundation Certificate (TFC) or Basic Craft Certificate (BCC)) are pre-employment courses the curricula of which is heavily practice oriented that meets the needs of industry. Tuition fees charged are very low. On completion of the courses, most graduates take up employment in the respective trades, and some become apprentices and receive further training on the job, while continuing their studies on a part time basis in the VTC. These centres currently offer some 8,900 pre-employment training places and 43,400 skills upgrading training places in 2004/05. Starting from 2004, some of the training centres also offer Vocational Development Programme (VDP) for the non-engaged youth (NEY) (see paragraph 7 below).

(c) The Apprenticeship Unit

6. The VTC offers a free apprentice placement service to employers and young people seeking training opportunities in industry under the statutory Apprenticeship Scheme. Through apprentice training, young people are trained to become competent skilled workers in their trades. The young apprentices receive structured on-the-job training and complementary vocational education courses under the supervision of the Inspectors of Apprentices who provide them with counsel and advice. There are currently some 3000 apprentices under this scheme. The VTC is reviewing and revamping the arrangements under the Scheme to make it more flexible and extend it to more trades.

(d) The Vocational Development Programme (VDP) and the VTC Youth College

7. Since 2004/05, the VTC has, in collaboration with NGOs, piloted a Vocational Development Programme (VDP) for the NEYs aged 14 to 24 with education attainment at S3 or below. It comprises short taster courses at entry-level to arouse the NEY's interest and motivation to pursue education and training for employment or further studies. There are three schemes as follows--

(1) Teen's Programme (Teen 才再現)

The programme includes 240 hours of vocational, generic, and life skill training. Counselling support is provided throughout the programme. Upon completion of the programme, the trainees may apply for other VTC courses leading to vocational

qualifications e.g. Certificate in Vocational Studies, Basic Craft Certificate, Foundation Diploma, and the new Diploma of Vocational Studies to be introduced as from September 2005.

(2) Modern Apprenticeship Scheme (現代學徒計劃)

Under this scheme, trainees receive a 180-hour basic training course prior to placement into a 9-month on-the-job training programmes in a selected trade. Trainees are given intensive counseling to help them find their vocational interest and to assess their aptitude before enrolment. They are sponsored to attend relevant courses under the Government's Skills Upgrading Scheme during the on-the-job training period. The trades available for training in the initial phase include hairdressing, beauty-care, Chinese catering and tourist guide.

(3) Mainland Training Programme (青年內地培訓計劃)

Under this programme, trainees receive foundation training in the VTC's Technician Foundation Certificate (TFC) or Basic Craft Certificate (BCC) courses, as well as key skills training before proceeding to a 6-month training programme in the factories in Mainland China. Throughout the training period in the Mainland, the progress of the trainees is monitored closely by Counsellors and Inspectors of Apprentices.

8. A VTC Youth College was set up at the So Uk Estate in 2004 to provide a "home base" for the vocational education and training programmes for the NEYs, and in particular the VDP in the following areas —

- Beauty and Image: beauty care including hair, skin, nail and slimming
- Event Organizations: advertisement, signage, sound and video effects
- Living and Environment: gardening and landscaping
- Information Technology: Web Design, Video Production and Computer Animation
- Physical Education: Sports and Activity Coaching Support

9. The Youth College also offers other VTC programmes leading to vocational qualifications, e.g. Certificate in Vocational Studies, Foundation Diploma (and the new Diploma of Vocational Studies to be introduced as from September 2005). These provide NEYs who wish to get back to studies with a progression pathway. 2000 student modules of VDP are provided in 2004/05. Subject to the availability of funds, the services in this area may be increased to 4000 in 2005/06.

(e) The VTC Yeo Chei Man Senior Secondary School at Tseung Kwan O

10. The VTC has set up a senior secondary school since 2004 to provide S3 leavers with a more diversified senior secondary curriculum. Students are given a dual progression pathway as they may choose either to take the HKCEE or to

progress to IVE courses by way of the results of the internal school examination. There are 360 places in 2004/05 and these will be increased to 700 in 2005/06.

(f) The Skills Centres for the Training of the Disabled

11. The VTC operates three Skills Centres to provide free vocational training to people with disabilities aged 15 and above to enhance their employment prospects and facilitate their integration into the workplace and society. About 700 planned places are offered.

(g) Other services for the less privileged

(i) Skills Upgrading Scheme

12. Both the IVE campuses and the training centres also offer courses under the Government's Skills Upgrading Scheme for elementary workers, which provide focused trade specific skills training to enhance their competitiveness and employability in the labour market. 70% of the training cost is subsidized and trainees in financial need may apply for course fee remission.

(ii) Vocational Training and Trade Tests for the Ethnic Minorities

13. In response to the request from the Hong Kong Workers Union, the VTC has organised skills training and trade tests for the Nepalese workers to enable them to obtain Intermediate Trade Test certification in electrical practice, welding, air conditioning and pipe work. Courses in restaurant and bar-tendering service, and accommodation service, which are conducted in English, have been held to help the Nepalese workers enhance their employability in the hotel industry. Subject to availability of funds, more vocational training courses in other trades may be organised to meet the demand of the minority communities.

Assistance and Services to Students and Trainees

(a) Student financial assistance

14. Students and trainees in the VTC who are in financial need may apply for student financial assistance under Government schemes or under the VTC fee remission schemes. There are also numerous scholarships, awards and bursaries for students.

(b) Placement services

15. The VTC graduates enjoy good employment prospects. Overall the employment rate for IVE graduates in 2004 is about 89%, and the employment rate for the graduates in the training centres is about 83%. Workplace attachment for students/trainees are arranged to facilitate smooth transition of students/trainees from study to work. Students/trainees are prepared for a career both in Hong Kong as well as in the Mainland. Seminars on the employment opportunities in

the Mainland, visits and attachment to industrial establishments in the Pearl River Delta are arranged. Students are provided with career advisory and placement services.

New Initiatives being planned to help the less privileged

16. Having regard to the VTC's expertise areas, a number of programmes could be rolled out for the less privileged to equip them with employable skills.--

- the non-engaged youth (NEY)
- the new immigrants
- the unemployed adults
- the ethnic minority groups
- the disabled and persons with learning difficulties

17. The training of employable skills (vocational skills, language skills and key skills) will have to be undertaken hand in hand with efforts to change mindset and instill motivation, and supported by counseling and advisory service. The VTC's experience in the successful pilot of the Vocational Development Programme (VDP) launched for the NEYs since 2004/05 will be very relevant.

VDP for the NEYs

18. So far, the VTC has run VDP for the NEYs in its So Uk Youth College and a number of Training Centres and these will be strengthened in the coming years. It is understood that distance and the high transportation cost are cited as the factors deterring the residents in the New Territories (NT) from taking up training opportunities and even employment outside their districts. Where resources permit, more youth colleges could be set up at different locations to provide VDP for the NEYs in the neighbouring areas. As a start, and to focus on the very serious NEY problems in the NT North and West, Council has already approved capital funding from its reserve for new facilities to be installed in the IVE(Tuen Mun) campus to support VDP for the NEYs in Yuen Long and Tin Shui Wai areas. Pilot programmes commencing June 2005 will include sports, computer production and assembly, hair design fundamental, professional beauty care and dancing performance. Subject to a successful pilot, courses in other disciplines can also be introduced at a later stage. Three other sites suitable for the setting up of youth colleges are the three VTC Training Centre Complexes in Kwai Chung, Kowloon Bay and Pokfulam.

Programmes for the unemployed, underemployed and the new immigrants

19. Consideration is being given to setting up small training and activities centres in individual districts e.g. in Tin Shui Wai/Yuen Long and Sai Kung, etc , to offer the following services –

- training of employable skills;

- career advisory service, and
- placement service.

20. Areas of training should include vocational skills, language skills (e.g. vocational English and vocational Putonghua) and key skills. In the case of the new immigrants, counseling and advisory service to help them better integrate into the community will also be needed. The VTC has accumulated considerable experience in the offering of courses under the Skills Upgrading Scheme, many of which can be adapted for training the unemployed or upgrading the skills of the underemployed, including the new immigrants, e.g. retailing, logistics, basic E&M practice, building maintenance, property management, catering and hospitality services etc. Short career preparation courses, seminars and related activities can also be organized for the unemployed. The VTC can also leverage on its extensive network with the various industry sectors and the strength of its placement service for its students to develop similar services for these less privileged groups.

Programmes for the ethnic minorities

21. The programmes set out in paragraphs 16 to 18 may also be adapted for the ethnic minority groups. This will, however, involve additional costs for rewriting the curriculum and teaching and learning materials into English and the engagement of English speaking instructors.

Programmes for persons with disabilities or learning difficulties

22. The VTC currently operates three Skills Centres in Kwun Tong, Tuen Mun and Pokfulam for the training of people with disabilities for open employment. The VTC is working closely with the Health and Welfare and Food Bureau to examine areas where the services in the Skills Centres may be further expanded.

Vocational Training Council
29 April 2005

List of IVE Campuses and Training and Development Centres

A. IVE Campuses

- (i) IVE (Chai Wan)
- (ii) IVE (Haking Wong)
- (iii) IVE (Lee Wai Lee)
- (iv) IVE (Sha Tin)
- (v) IVE (Kwai Chung)
- (vi) IVE (Kwun Tong)
- (vii) IVE (Tsing Yi)
- (viii) IVE (Morrison Hill)
- (ix) IVE (Tuen Mun)

B. List of Training and Development Centres

- (i) Automobile Industry Training Centre
- (ii) Chinese Cuisine Training Institute
- (iii) Continuing Professional Development Centre
- (iv) Electrical Industry Training Centre
- (v) Electronics Industry Training Centre
- (vi) Financial Services Development Centre
- (vii) Gas Industry Training Centre
- (viii) Hospitality Industry Training and Development Centre
- (ix) Import/Export and Wholesale Trades Training Centre
- (x) Information Technology Training and Development Centre
- (xi) Jewellery Industry Training Centre
- (xii) Machine Shop and Metal Working Industry Training Centre
- (xiii) Management Development Centre of Hong Kong
- (xiv) Plastics and Tooling Technology Development Centre
- (xv) Printing Industry Training Centre
- (xvi) Retail Trade Training Centre
- (xvii) Textile Industry Training Centre
- (xviii) Welding Training Centre