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VTC plans to introduce Pilot Training & Support Scheme with clear progression pathways in support of youth employment

The Vocational Training Council (VTC) welcomes the 2014 Policy Address raising initiatives on attracting talent for industries and trades with a keen demand for labour. Once the Government resources for the initiatives are allocated, the VTC plans to introduce the Pilot Training & Support Scheme (the “Pilot Scheme”) which offers vocational education and training by integrating structured apprenticeship training programmes with clear career progression pathways. Under the Pilot Scheme, the Government and participating industries will offer the apprentices an allowance and a guaranteed salary, such that the young people can earn a steady income while equipping themselves with knowledge and skills to pursue a promising career.

The Pilot Scheme will cover trades and industries encountering labour shortage. The VTC had consulted the views of its Committee on Apprenticeship and Trade Testing and Electrical & Mechanical Services Training Board on the Pilot Scheme and support from the industry was received. The Electrical & Mechanical Services industry is planned to be the first to join the Pilot Scheme.

Clement CHEN, VTC Chairman, said, “Technical manpower from different trades brings about comfort and convenience that people are used to enjoy in a metropolis. Operations which are closely related to our daily lives, say from the maintenance of lifts and air-conditioning service to electrical installation, transportation and infrastructures, all rely on the support of technical talent. Nurturing technical expertise, vocational education and training plays a pivotal role in developing our society. By integrating education and employment, young people are enabled to bring their talent into full play in various sectors. We can draw reference from the experience of vocational education in Germany, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Vocational education has helped trained up technical manpower for all walks of life. It is indeed a key element in driving economic growth, raising the quality of our workforce and boosting youth employment.

“The Pilot Training & Support Scheme is an initiative blessed with concerted support from various parties. Young people can learn and gain experience and allowance during the training period, and receive a guaranteed income upon completion of training. The industries can attract new blood to ease their labour shortage, as well as raising the quality of our workforce in Hong Kong. The support from trades and industries is indispensable to the success of the Pilot Scheme. Apart from offering allowance and coaching, improving the working environment and remuneration by the industry, enhancing its image can also help retaining quality talent,” added Clement CHEN.



Targeting post-secondary 3 to 6 school leavers and eligible adult learners, the Pilot Scheme will benefit 2,000 apprentices. Phased in two parts, the modes of training will be specially designed to cater for the needs of specific trades and industries. The applicants will study foundation programmes in the first phase. Following that, the applicants will be released to attend part-time training programmes when they receive on-the-job training. During the training period, an apprentice will receive a total subsidy of \$30,800 from the employer, aiming to encourage learning during tenure. At the ensuing employment period, the apprentice will receive a monthly salary, topped by an additional average monthly allowance of \$2,000 from the Government. Upon completion of training, an apprentice who stays in employment will receive a monthly salary of not less than \$10,500. Apprentices can also pursue further studies to acquire higher academic qualifications for career development.

The VTC will assist in job-matching, follow up the training progress of the apprentices and render support to the participating organisations. In the future, the VTC will continue to discuss with more trades and industries for extending the Pilot Scheme.

Established in 1982, the Vocational Training Council (VTC) is the largest vocational education, training and professional development group in Hong Kong with some 250,000 students and trainees each year. The mission of VTC is to provide a valued choice to school leavers and working people to acquire the values, knowledge and skills for lifelong learning and enhanced employability, and also to provide valued supports to industries for their manpower development. VTC has 13 member institutions including the Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong (THEi), the Institute of Professional Education And Knowledge (PEAK), the School for Higher and Professional Education (SHAPE), the Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education (IVE), the Hong Kong Design Institute (HKDI), Pro-Act by VTC, Hospitality Industry Training and Development Centre (HITDC), Chinese Cuisine Training Institute (CCTI), Maritime Services Training Institute (MSTI), Youth College, Integrated Vocational Development Centre (IVDC), Yeo Chei Man Senior Secondary School and Shine Skills Centre.

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