

4 November 2014 (Tuesday)

Grooming talents to advance competitive edges Earn & Learn Pilot Scheme for Watch & Clock Industry

The Vocational Training Council (VTC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with The Federation of Hong Kong Watch Trades and Industries (FHKWTI) on 31 October to launch the Earn and Learn Pilot Scheme (Pilot Scheme) for Watch and Clock Industry. Aiming to attract young talents to join the watch and clock industry, the Pilot Scheme provides participants with an opportunity to ‘earn and learn’ and to pursue a well-defined progression pathway.

HKSAR Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development Gregory SO and VTC Chairman Dr Clement CHEN attended the signing ceremony and witnessed the new milestone collaboration between the VTC and the watch and clock industry. The MOU was signed by Chairman of FHKWTI Geoffrey Edward KAO and VTC Executive Director Carrie YAU.

Collaborated by the Government, the FHKWTI and the VTC, the Pilot Scheme is a brand new industry training programme supporting vocational education and youth employment. The VTC integrates structured classroom learning and on-the-job training and develop the Pilot Scheme offering participants to ‘earn and learn’ during their studies, enabling them to acquire knowledge and skills, as well as enjoying a steady income and allowances from the Government and employers. Upon completion of the 4-year training, trainees will be able to secure work with a stable income.

VTC Chairman Dr Clement CHEN said, “Referencing the models of vocational education in Germany and Switzerland, VTC in turn launched the Earn and Learn Pilot Scheme in the industries of electrical, printing and retail which have a keen demand for manpower. Integrating classroom learning and workplace training, the Pilot Scheme grooms young professionals to be well conversant with knowledge and practical skills. At the same time market demands and industry requirements will be met which is conducive to the sustainable development of our economy.”



Chairman of FHKWTI Geoffrey Edward KAO said, “The watch and clock industry is one of the fastest growing industries of Hong Kong over the last decade. The industry requires highly skilled professionals to promote its long term development. We hope that the Pilot Scheme will train up a new generation of quality people for the watch and clock industry to maintain its leading position in the world.”

Being one of the four largest industries of Hong Kong, the domain of the local watch and clock industry is not confined to the retail level. Hong Kong is one of the major watch and clock importers and exporters in the world with a volume exceeding HK\$15 billion annually. In view of the strong demand for maintenance and repair professionals of luxury watch and clock, the Earn and Pilot Scheme for Watch and Clock Industry is a timely solution catering for the industry demand.

The Earn and Pilot Scheme for Watch and Clock Industry is phased in two parts: trainees will first study a 4-month foundation programme to be followed by a 44-month on-the-job training offered by the employer alongside enrolling on a part-time study programme under sponsorship of the employer. During the training period, a participant will receive a total subsidy of \$30,800 from the employer. At the ensuing employment period, the participant will receive a monthly salary, topped by an additional average monthly allowance of \$2,000 from the Government. Upon completion of training, a participant who stays in employment will receive a monthly salary of not less than \$10,500. Participants can also pursue further studies to acquire higher academic qualifications for career development.

In support of the Government’s drive to strengthen vocational education and youth employment as espoused in the Policy Address and Budget Speech, the Earn and Learn Pilot Scheme integrates systematic classroom learning and workplace training, as well as clear progression pathways to articulate and advance. The Scheme offers Diploma in Vocational Education, Foundation Diploma and Higher Diploma programmes to Secondary 3 to Secondary 6 school leavers, covering the industries of printing, electrical and mechanical engineering, construction, automobile and retail. The training mode is adapted to meet industry requirements.

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), International Culinary Institute (ICI), Hospitality Industry Training and Development Centre (HITDC), Chinese Cuisine Training Institute (CCTI), Maritime Services Training Institute (MSTI), Youth College, Pro-Act by VTC, Integrated Vocational Development Centre (IVDC) and Shine Skills Centre.

VTC Web site: www.vtc.edu.hk

Photo Captions:



Photo 1: VTC Executive Director Carrie YAU (first on right, front row) and Chairman of The Federation of Hong Kong Watch Trades and Industries Geoffrey Edward KAO (first on

left, front row) signed the MOU of the Earn & Learn Pilot Scheme for Watch & Clock Industry, and HKSAR Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development Gregory SO (fourth from left, back row), Deputy Secretary for Education Brian LO (third from right, back row), VTC Chairman Dr Clement CHEN (fourth from right, back row), FHKWTI Permanent Honorary President Samson SUN (third from left, back row) and former Chairman of VTC Metals Training Board Moses LEUNG (second from right, back row) witnessed the milestone collaboration



Photo 2: The Earn & Learn Pilot Scheme for Watch & Clock Industry receives the staunch support of industry with a number of luxury watch & clock brands joining

