

Project on Development of Vocational Qualifications Pathway for Security Services Industry

Information Note

Background

Since the official launch of Qualifications Framework (QF) in Hong Kong in 2008, a total of 22 Industry Training Advisory Committees (ITACs) have been set up for respective industries or sectors, covering over 50% of the total workforce in Hong Kong. QF is industry-led, and each ITAC is tasked with the implementation of QF in respective industry with a view to addressing the manpower development, continuous skills upgrading and training needs of the industry concerned.

2. The Security Services ITAC, set up since 2013, has achieved some milestones in the development of QF infrastructure, including production of Specification of Competency Standards (SCS)¹, production of several sets of SCS-based training packages, and the launch of SCS-based courses by training providers as well as companies. Security Services ITAC would like to apply QF more widely and practicably to the industry in the context of employment and progression so that industry practitioners may leverage on QF-recognised qualifications for career and learning progression. In this context, Security Services ITAC decided to develop Vocational Qualifications Pathway (VQP)² for the industry.

What is Vocational Qualifications Pathway (VQP)?

3. In the context of HKQF, a VQP for a sector represents a matrix of occupations of different functional areas and associated qualifications for respective occupations, linked up to one another through articulation arrangements. For each occupation or job type identified on the pathway, the competence requirements for individual practitioners to effectively perform the tasks in an occupation are expressed in an occupational profile. The competence requirements in an occupational profile can be mapped against the relevant Units of Competency (UoCs) from the respective SCS to form a UoC cluster.

¹ Please refer to QF website <https://www.hkqf.gov.hk/security/en/scs/introduction/index.html> for the SCS of Security Services industry.

² A pathway implies a route with direction, from a starting point to a destination. It also implies the continuous, sequential movement that could be vertical, horizontal, or diagonal, from novice to expert status, for individual practitioners to move up the defined pathway. The pathway allows learners to move into and through qualification levels with full or partial recognition for the qualifications and/or learning outcomes they already have. A VQP will therefore be populated with vocational qualifications so that the focus is on learning in a vocational sense, and which differentiates them from academic qualifications.

The performance requirements of a UoC cluster can be easily converted into learning outcomes for packaging into meaningful ‘vocational qualifications’³ to facilitate learners or practitioners to acquire the skills sets required to perform the job well. Moreover, such occupation-based vocational qualifications, regardless of whether they are acquired through a learning programme or other means, the holder of which will be certified to have attained the necessary outcome standards required to competently perform in the destined occupation in the workplace.

4. This Project aims to develop the VQPs for the Security Services industry, identify the competence requirements and standards in respect of the common occupations or job types in the form of the UoC clusters, map out vocational qualifications for corresponding occupations and the linkages among the qualifications, develop any certification or assessment mechanism(s) needed and promulgate the qualification specifications to facilitate the development and delivery of the associated learning programmes leading to the qualifications identified. It is expected that a clearly-defined and transparent VQP will be established to enable existing employees to better understand and effectively use the progression pathway for learning and career advancement, to help attract new recruits to join the sector, and ultimately to support lifelong learning and to enhance the capability and competitiveness of the Security Services workforce.

Scope of the Project

5. Service provider is required to develop VQPs for the common occupations in the Security Services industry and their associated occupational profiles⁴ in Hong Kong, expressed in the form of UoC clusters drawn from the Security Services SCS, as building blocks for developing qualification specifications for selected occupations on the VQP. Such vocational qualifications, when developed, will enable learners or practitioners to eventually obtain the necessary competences that meet the competence requirements of their sought-after occupations in the industry.

Deliverables of the Project

³ Vocational qualifications are work-related qualifications. They are designed to enable the learner to acquire knowledge and skills required to perform a particular job. A vocational qualification gives the learner a proof that he/she is adequately trained for a particular workplace once the programme is completed.

⁴ An occupational profile sets out the key skill areas and levels of skills required to enter an occupation and successfully perform tasks in that occupation. Occupational profiles are usually developed through a job analysis following a systematic procedure for gathering, documenting, and analyzing information about the content, context, and requirements of a job. It demonstrates that there is a clear relationship between the tasks performed on the job and the competencies, knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors required to perform the tasks. The occupational profile forms the unit of analysis for the development of the curriculum components as well as the assessment specifications for a qualification.

6. The Service Provider being awarded the service contract will submit a final report of the Project including the following deliverables:

- (a) To draw up a structural diagram showing the overarching Vocational Qualifications Pathway for Security Services industry, covering the specific pathway(s) for all major functional areas of the industry.
- (b) In the context of the VQP portrayed in (a) above, to identify key occupations with cited job titles in consultation with the Security Services ITAC and to map out the occupational profiles, skill sets and competency requirements of the identified job titles in the form of UoCs drawn from Security Services SCS and the 'qualifications' required for industry practitioners to perform the job up to workplace requirements;
- (c) To conduct mapping of the UoCs with the competence requirements of the **at least Five** identified occupations, and taking into account the licensing and/or regulatory requirements (if any), recommend the development of any new occupation-based vocational qualifications and the associated qualification specification, for new and existing practitioners to acquire the requisite competences to effectively perform in the occupations on the pathway(s);
- (d) Based on (c) above, to examine the need for developing a mechanism (e.g. vocational assessment, certification, validation, etc) to award the vocational qualification(s) identified in the Project and to specify the means through which individuals can acquire such qualification(s);
- (e) To consult employers and relevant stakeholders in the Security Services industry throughout the process of developing the VQP and, upon completion, to promulgate the VQP among the industry stakeholders for wide adoption and/or recognition of the qualifications identified and developed;
- (f) To submit a final report of the Project, including all the suggestions and experiences gained from (a) to (e) above, and an implementation plan on how to take forward the VQP for the Security Services industry in a sustainable manner.

7. The Service Provider shall submit progress reports to the QFS at regular intervals and upon request during the course of the Project. The Service Provider shall work under the direction of the QFS, the Security Services ITAC or any working group specified by the Security Services ITAC.

Tendering Process for the Project on Development of Vocational Qualifications Pathway for Security Services Industry

8. The VQP for Security Services industry is to be developed by interested service providers who possess:

- (a) in-depth knowledge and understanding of QF and extensive experiences in vocational qualifications development and/or delivery;
- (b) expertise and experience in manpower and training development relevant to the Security Services industry;
- (c) strong networks with major stakeholders in the Security Services industry, including employers' and employees' organisations; professional, regulatory and quality assurance bodies; education and training providers; and relevant assessment bodies and agencies; and
- (d) proven track record of consultancy services in similar projects, manpower development and training field.

9. The Qualifications Framework Secretariat (QFS) is the executive arm of the Education Bureau to implement QF. The development of VQP for Security Services industry is by way of tendering. To provide secretariat support to Security Services ITAC, the QFS will first of all openly invite potential service providers to indicate their interest in tendering for developing VQP by returning the **Expression of Interest (EoI)** form which is available at the QF website (www.hkqf.hk). The QFS would invite those service providers submitting their EoI to attend a briefing session on the details of VQP development before they submit a proposal with price quotation for developing VQP.