

From left to right, Mr Kevin Yeung, Dr Padraig Walsh, Mrs Carrie Lam, Dr Grant Klinkum, Dr Alex Chan

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (HKQF), which has played a pivotal role in promoting and supporting lifelong learning, and has enhanced the quality, professionalism and competitiveness of Hong Kong's workforce. In celebration of this milestone of the HKQF, the Education Bureau (EDB) of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) and the Qualifications Framework Secretariat jointly organised the **HKQF International Conference 2018**. Under the theme - 'QF

in the Next Decade: Quality, Progression and Recognition', the Conference aimed to explore global trends and issues on how to develop QF, promote dialogue among different places with advanced QF systems, and to examine the roles QF plays in modern vocational education and training (VET) systems.

### A Discovery of Elites

Held on 17th and 18th September, 2018 in the Central Government Offices, more than 20 eminent speakers from

New Zealand, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Malta, Indonesia and Malaysia, as well as local academics, industry leaders and senior government officials delivered keynote speeches and shared news at discussion forums and parallel sessions. The Conference was well received and attended by over 400 representatives from around the world including consulates, government officials, QF and quality assurance experts, academics and professionals in education and training sector.



Mrs Carrie Lam  
Chief Executive of the Government of HKSAR

### Government Support for HKQF

Mrs Carrie Lam, Chief Executive of the Government of the HKSAR, officiated at the Conference and gave the opening speech. She highlighted the critical importance for Hong Kong to nurture the young generation and equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills to realise their potential in a knowledge-based economy, in order to ensure that the territory stays ahead globally. The development of the HKQF is pivotal to maintaining quality in the local higher education sector as well as the promotion of vocational and professional education and training (VPET). For this reason, the Government has injected an additional \$1.2 billion into the QF Fund this year for the continued implementation of various initiatives.



Mr Kevin Yeung  
Secretary for Education

In his keynote speech on 'HKQF: Retrospect and Prospect', Mr Kevin Yeung, the Secretary for Education, said that over the last decade the EDB has built a solid infrastructure for a quality qualifications system that supports progression and fosters recognition. More and more organisations, institutions and employers recognise the importance of the HKQF and adopt it in their recruitment, training, promotion and student admission, he added.

He said that the EDB will promote the wider application of the HKQF to enhance recognition of qualifications in different industries and enable learners' pursuit of a wide array of quality-assured pathways for further studies and career development. The development of the HKQF will augment the Government's initiatives to step up promotion of VPET.

### Greater Bay Area – A Base for Building National QF

Ms Lei Ming, Deputy Director of the Department of Vocational and Adult Education at the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China (PRC) delivered a keynote speech on the construction of a national qualification framework (NQF). "In 2016, the National 13th Five-Year Plan proposed to establish a personal learning account and credit accumulation system to facilitate continuing education and lifetime learning platforms as well as bolster the NQF to promote the exchange and alignment of learning outcomes, vocational techniques and educational credits."

Lei also added that with reference to the 2035 national education plan, the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area will be a major hub to enhance the study and exploration of the overall NQF in the future.



Ms Lei Ming  
Deputy Director, Department of Vocational and Adult Education, Ministry of Education of PRC

### Facilitating Recognition of Qualifications Across Regions



From left to right, Mr Michael Horig, Dr Megawati Santoso, Dr Padraig Walsh, Dr Grant Klinkum, Mr Anthony Chan

With the advent of globalisation and the rapid development of national and transnational QFs, regional meta-frameworks have emerged as common reference frameworks that enable comparisons and greater understanding of qualifications across countries. During the forum - 'Emerging Trends of International QF Developments: Role of Regional QFs and National QFs in Linking Learning and Employment', Dr Grant Klinkum, Deputy Chief Executive for Quality Assurance at the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA), said that NZQA has launched a 'Micro-credentials' scheme to promote more courses provided by employers or training organisations in order to equip employees with emerging market skills.

Another speaker Dr Padraig Walsh, Chief Executive of Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), mentioned that their apprenticeship scheme has undergone revisions to cover a wider scope of programmes. Dr Megawati Santoso, Vice Chair of ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (AQR) Committee, emphasised that AQR facilitates qualifications recognition to support the mobility of learners and labour, and enhances opportunities for future collaboration among regions and countries in a larger economic arena. In addition, Mr Michael Horig, Head of Division, Strategic Planning of

German Academic Exchange Service, highlighted the support of SHARE Expert Working Group on strengthening regional co-operation and enhancing the development of NQF among ASEAN members.

### Pursuing Quality, Progression and Recognition in QF Development

Guest speakers and seasoned experts of QF authorities across different continents shared experiences in implementing their own QFs and the emergence of national, transnational or regional QFs. They discussed in the three parallel sessions issues related to the main themes of the Conference: Quality, Progression and Recognition.

In the session- 'QF for Quality: Good Practices in Quality Assurance', Professor Zita Mohd Fahmi, Former Deputy CEO, Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) shared the QA practices in Malaysia, while Dr Padraig Walsh from QQI introduced the practices in QA that focuses on linkages



Professor Zita Mohd Fahmi  
Former Deputy CEO, MQA



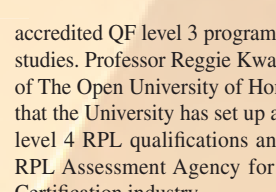
Dr Padraig Walsh  
Chief Executive, QQI



Mr Albert Chow  
Executive Director, HKCAAVQ



Professor Reggie Kwan  
Vice President (Academic), OUHK



Mr Martin Lam



Dr Grant Klinkum  
Deputy Chief Executive for Quality Assurance, NZQA



Professor Patrick Chau  
Chairperson, Board of Directors, HKITPC

Officer of the Social Welfare Department (SWD), outlined the application of QF in the elderly care service industry, including the requirement of Specification of Competency Standards for designing training programmes provided for staff of residential care homes, and establishing the vocational qualifications pathway, a clear progression ladder to attract more young people joining the industry.

and sequencing, from programme design, validation, to assessment strategy. "A cyclical external quality assurance is adopted to measure the extent to which higher education institutions are ensuring that programmes are levelled both ex ante and ex post at the appropriate level in the NQF," he added. Mr Albert Chow, Executive Director of the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ), introduced his organisation's Quality Management System which has been developed to cultivate a focus on delivering quality outcomes and also provide systematic and objective information to enhance overall internal quality.

In another parallel session 'QF for Progression: Articulation and Skills Upgrading', Ms Ann Lau, Director of Group Human Resources (Asia) of the A.S. Watson Group said that the corporation sponsors their employees to gain relevant QF qualifications through the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) scheme to recognise their past work experience and competencies without repetitious training. Mr Martin Lam, Technical Training Manager of the MTR Corporation Limited explained that the MTR Academy offers Diploma in Transport Studies which is an accredited QF level 3 programme as well as other advanced studies. Professor Reggie Kwan, Vice President (Academic) of The Open University of Hong Kong (OUHK) mentioned that the University has set up a mechanism to recognise QF level 4 RPL qualifications and has been appointed as the RPL Assessment Agency for the Testing, Inspection and Certification industry.



Ms Ann Lau  
Director of Group Human Resources (Asia), A.S. Watson Group



Mr Loukas Zahilas  
Head of Department for VET Systems and Institutions, CEDEFOP

### Nurturing Future Smart Talent with VPET

All countries and cities throughout the world are facing the challenge of improving the capacity of their workforce in response to the demands of a rapidly changing global environment. In Hong Kong, VPET covers programmes up to degree level with a high percentage of curricula consisting of specialised contents in vocational skills or professional knowledge.



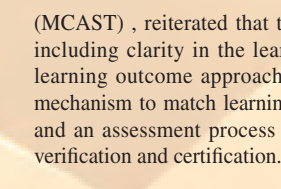
From left to right, Dr Padraig Walsh, Dr Megawati Santoso, Dr Grant Klinkum, Professor Zita Mohd Fahmi, Dr Eva Cheng



Dr Carrie Yau  
Executive Director, VTC



Dr Loukas Zahilas  
Head of Department for VET Systems and Institutions, CEDEFOP



Professor James Calleja  
CEO/Principal, MCAST

Dr Padraig Walsh from QQI, Dr Megawati Santoso from AQR, Dr Grant Klinkum from NZQA and Professor Zita Mohd Fahmi from MQA joined in a dialogue entitled "QF in the Changing Global Landscape". They all agreed that it's important to facilitate recognition of qualifications amongst nations and regions in order to increase the international mobility of talent and students.

Dr Carrie Yau, Executive Director of the Vocational Training Council (VTC), the largest VPET provider in Hong Kong, shed light on what the VTC has done to integrate education and employment while nurturing the requisite human capital needed to support the sustainable development of society.

From a local focus to the international arena, Dr Loukas Zahilas, Head of Department for VET Systems and Institutions at the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP), outlined the impact of QF on VET and future developments in Europe. He explained that the frameworks have improved transparency, importance of national education and qualification systems. Moreover, cross-sector stakeholder co-operation has been increasingly formalised whereas a broader range of qualifications including 'non-formal' sectors have been made visible.

Professor James Calleja, CEO/Principal of Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST), reiterated that the impact of QF can be verified from six perspectives, including clarity in the learning pathway, transparency in the learning process, a learning outcome approach with measurable credited targets, a quality assurance mechanism to match learning with working, a guaranteed roadmap for permeability, and an assessment process documented in transferable and transnational forms of verification and certification.

### Enhancing the Competitiveness of Local Workforce



From left to right, Mr Leung Yam Shing, Mr Jonathan Ng, Mr Barry Lo, Ms Edwina Lau, Ir Cheng Yeung Ming, Mr Steve Lai

In the light of their operational experience, local experts, including Ir Cheng Yeung Ming, Assistant Director of Marine Department, Ms Edwina Lau, Director of Hong Kong Police College, Mr Leung Yam Shing, Deputy Executive Director of VTC, Mr Barry Lo, General Manager, Bank-wide Operation Department of Bank of China (Hong Kong) Limited, and Mr Jonathan Ng, Executive Director of Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants shared their views about the role VPET will play in nurturing the human capital to support their business development.

Looking ahead in the next decade, the forum pointed out that professionalism, internationalisation and closer collaboration with the mainland China are the keys to advance the development of HKQF.

The HKQF International Conference concluded with closing remarks made by Mrs Ingrid Yeung, Permanent Secretary for Education. She was inspired by the experience-sharing by the experts from pioneering countries with a long history of QF. She added that it was encouraging to learn that more and more countries are going to introduce QF in the near future.