Education Bureau

Self-financing Post-secondary Education Fund

Quality Enhancement Support Scheme

Guidelines on

Application and Management of Projects

September 2024

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Guidelines on Application and Management of Projects

1.   Objective

1.1   To promote quality enhancement of the self-financing post-secondary sector, the Quality Enhancement Support Scheme (QESS or the Scheme) is set up under the Self-financing Post-secondary Education Fund (SPEF) to support worthwhile non-works projects or initiatives that help enhance the quality of teaching and learning for students and teachers and the sector as a whole.

2.   Nature of Funding

2.1   The funding support is allocated to the applications selected on the basis of competitive bids and merits. Applications will not be approved automatically even if the total required funding support is less than the total annual expenditure in each round of applications. The Sub-committee on Support Measures ("the Sub-committee") of the Committee on Self-financing Post-secondary Education (CSPE) is not obliged to select any applications.

2.2   The funding supports non-works projects. Procurement of equipment may be funded if they are essential for the implementation of the project. The applicant will be responsible for the recurrent expenses, if any, of the proposed project(s).

2.3   The proposed project should not accept funding (in part or in full) from other government sources. Application for partial funding is allowed if the applicant has secured funding from non-government sources.

3.   Eligibility

3.1   Non-profit-making education institutions offering full-time locally-accredited self-financing sub-degree or bachelor's degree (including top-up degree) programmes or other related bodies such as federations of these education institutions and quality assurance agencies are eligible to apply the theme-based and open-ended projects. For industrial attachment projects, only non-profit-making education institutions offering full-time locally-accredited self-financing sub-degree or bachelor's degree (including top-up degree) programmes are eligible to apply.

3.2   For the purpose of paragraph 3.1 above, a non-profit-making institution / organisation means:

(a)   it is an approved charitable institution or trust of a public character exempt from tax under Section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance; and

(b)(i)   it is incorporated under the Companies Ordinance and its Memorandum and Articles of Association contain all the standard clauses and articles required for the operation of a post-secondary course in a college / institution; or

(b)(ii)   it is incorporated or established under other ordinances and the Secretary for Education (SED) is satisfied, having regard to its constitution, that it is fit to be considered for the grant under the Scheme.

3.3   For the purpose of paragraph 3.1 above, as a general reference, for face-to-face teaching programmes, "full-time" study should normally have a curriculum of not less than 450 contact hours per year. For non-face-to-face teaching programmes, "full-time" study should normally have a curriculum of not less than 1 350 study hours.

3.4 For the purpose of paragraph 3.1 above, accredited programmes are those that have successfully undergone accreditation. In the case of programmes offered by self-accrediting institutions, these programmes must undergo their own internal quality assurance mechanism as applied to their regular publicly-funded programmes. For non-self-accrediting institutions, their post-secondary programmes should be validated by a quality assurance agency recognised by the SED, i.e. the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications.

4. Types of Theme-based Projects to be Funded

4.1 *Theme-based projects*

Eligible institutions / organisations are allowed to come up with their own themes for project submissions under this category as long as the proposals are collaborative in nature, i.e. proposed and undertaken by more than one eligible institution / organisation[1]. These joint institutions' projects should foster closer collaboration among different institutions for cost-effectiveness and to benefit the sector as widely as possible. The theme-based applications also allow the sector to develop projects which are larger in scale and could help promote the sustainable and healthy development of the sector.

5. Types of Open-ended Projects to be Funded

5.1 *Open-ended projects*

For each round of application, applicants can submit applications within the following scopes:

(a) **Improvement to the overall learning experience and language proficiency of students**

➢ organising project-based learning activities to develop students' global perspective or sense of global citizenship, or to nurture

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[1] Starting from 2023/24 round of application, different self-financing arms or operating units of a publicly-funded institution are counted as one eligible institution / organisation for the purpose of submitting application under the Scheme.

entrepreneurial or innovative spirit;

➢ providing service learning to develop students' whole-person skills and sense of citizenship;

➢ promoting industry / employer participation in curriculum development and placement arrangements;

➢ establishing a common e-learning or e-library platform for sharing of teaching and learning resources among institutions;

➢ developing and providing language courses in Chinese, English, Putonghua or other languages; and

➢ setting up a language resource centre to facilitate self-access learning and organise language learning or cultural exchange activities.

(b) Development and improvement of teaching methodology and practices, including development of assessment strategies

➢ providing teacher training to develop their professionalism and teaching effectiveness;

➢ encouraging institutions to adopt new teaching technologies and interactive instructional approaches;

➢ organising teaching effectiveness workshops; and

➢ developing effective instructional kits, databases for different disciplines, or different assessment models, such as using the outcome-based approach to evaluate student performance against objectives and standards of the concerned courses.

(c) Strengthening and improvement of quality assurance and related measures

➢ exploring quality assurance problems faced by institutions and suggesting good practices, or establishing or improving mechanisms / tools / procedures for internal programme review;

➢ organising project-based learning activities and teaching resources

exhibition to share outcomes of project implementation;

➢ establishing teaching development centre to provide institutional support on professional development and exploration of innovative pedagogical approaches;

➢ establishing or improving mechanisms or assessment tools / procedures to conduct programme-based surveys / assessments on market relevance and demand (such as manpower projection, opinions of prospective students and employers, articulation or career pathways, etc.) before launching new or enhanced academic programmes; and

➢ establishing or improving mechanisms or procedures to conduct assessment or market survey to facilitate planning and strategic positioning of institutions in the higher education sector, as well as to identify areas of academic specialisations for future development (e.g. setting up planning office to conduct academic and strategic planning through data collection and analysis, benchmarking studies, etc.).

(d) Enhancing student support and career guidance services including support for non-Chinese speaking students and students with special educational needs

➢ promoting emotional wellness and integrated education through quality classroom teaching and counselling programme, small group counselling, in-depth professional assessment and intensive individualised support for students with severe learning or adjustment difficulties (e.g. drawing up an individual education plan);

➢ providing students with academic advising, personal counselling, articulation / career planning and life management services through counsellors in the student services centre or online counselling services;

➢ developing articulation and career information website; organising

talks, seminars and exhibitions to facilitate the employability of graduates and enhance the recognition of their qualifications; and

➢ developing an integrated school portal to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in communication.

5.2 Any other worthwhile projects that are in alignment with the objective of QESS will also be considered.

6. Types of Industrial Attachment Projects to be Funded

6.1 The category of Industrial Attachment projects was launched in 2016 to source more internship opportunities for students and / or to enhance relevant institutional support to students. Since the 2019/20 round of application, this category has been expanded on a pilot basis to also support projects to be undertaken outside Hong Kong, which will be in place until the 2024/25 round of application. Applicants can submit applications within the following scopes:

(a) Incorporating quality assured work-based learning and assessment in programme curriculums through close partnership with industries (e.g. developing learning assessment packages in consultation with employers, conducting workshops on workplace assessment for employers (but not subsidising employers for WLA), launching web-based assessment systems to support workplace assessment, augmenting post-work experience with debriefs and workshops for students to share and compare, etc.);

(b) Sourcing of more industrial attachment opportunities (e.g. internship, job placement, etc.) within and / or outside Hong Kong**,** and / or enhancement of relevant institutional support to students (e.g. through pre-attachment briefing, follow-up / interviews with students / employers during the attachment, post-attachment follow-up actions including evaluation with employers, and review and experience sharing among students, etc.); and

(c) Organisation of visits or short-term training / courses conducted within and / or outside Hong Kong for students (e.g. touring of industrial facilities in companies, attending taster courses / practical sessions in collaboration with corporate academies, etc.). The visits or short-term training / courses should be directly relevant to industrial attachment.

6.2 For projects to be undertaken outside Hong Kong, applicants should take into account various factors including the safety of the destination, personal safety of students, etc., in organising the activities. In respect of safety, institutions should take heed of travel advice given by government bureaux and departments and the latest outbound travel alerts.

Student allowance

6.3 For industrial attachment opportunities within or outside Hong Kong, the grant should not be used as salary to students.

6.4 For industrial attachment opportunities (e.g. internship, job placement, etc.) and visits / training / courses conducted within Hong Kong, the grant should not be used as allowance to students / participants or travelling expenses incurred by students / participants.

6.5 For industrial attachment opportunities (e.g. internship, job placement, etc.) and visits / training / courses conducted outside Hong Kong, the project grant may be used as allowance to students or used by grantees on behalf of students for direct cost on (i) airfare, train fare and / or other transportation fees to and from the destination region (one return trip only); (ii) local transportation fees at the destination region; (iii) accommodation fees; (iv) living expenses; and (v) other miscellaneous expenses (e.g. insurance, medical expenses, etc.). Each student could receive a maximum of $10,000 allowance in each project.

6.6 Applicants may decide on the number and duration of industrial attachment

opportunities / visits / training / courses provided that the grant on student allowance for each institution in a project does not exceed $800,000 per year on average. Applicants should provide details of the proposed industrial attachment opportunities / visits / training / courses in their application, for example, number of student quota, participant selection mechanism, hosting employers and their industries, duration and content of the industrial attachment opportunities / visits / training / courses, breakdown on direct student cost, etc.

6.7   Students who have previously received assistance from other scholarships or support schemes funded by the Government, e.g. Pilot Mainland Experience Scheme, Matching Grant Scheme, Talent Development Scheme, Subsidy on Exchange for Post-secondary Students, etc., are also eligible for allowance of industrial attachment project.

6.8   For the same industrial attachment opportunity / visit / training / course, students receiving allowance from industrial attachment project may receive subsidies / scholarships / awards / sponsorship, etc. from other sources (including both government and non-government sources) to cover expenses. Grantees should exercise care and caution in ensuring that other subsidies / scholarships / awards / sponsorship, etc. received by students should come from decent and appropriate sources.

6.9   In accordance with paragraph 2.3 above, the proposed project should not accept funding (in part or in full) from other government sources. For industrial attachment projects, assistance received by students from other scholarships or support schemes funded by the Government is not restricted under paragraph 2.3.

6.10   Grantees should accord priority of receiving student allowance from industrial attachment project to students who have not received any assistance from other scholarships or support schemes funded by the Government.

6.11   Grantees are required to provide a list of students receiving allowance for each industrial attachment opportunity / visit / training / course conducted outside Hong Kong in the submission of the corresponding progress report or final evaluation report as per paragraph 18.2, with breakdown by level of allowance and subsidies / scholarships / awards / sponsorship, etc. from other sources to cover expenses in connection with the same industrial attachment opportunity / visit / training / course, etc. In this connection, grantees should comply with the relevant provisions of Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap. 486), including seeking consent from students or other relevant parties on provision of personal data for the purpose of implementation of the QESS projects.

Manpower cost

6.12   The project grant may be used for hiring staff to source more industrial attachment opportunities and / or to enhance relevant institutional support to students (e.g. through pre-attachment briefing, follow-up / interviews with students / employers during the attachment, post-attachment follow-up actions including evaluation with employers and review and experience sharing among students, etc.).

6.13   For organisation of visits or short-term training / courses directly relevant to industrial attachment, the project grant may be used for hiring staff to plan the visits or short-term training / courses, establish connections with potential institutions and industry organisations, and provide administrative and logistics support to the visits or short-term training / courses.

6.14   Except for manpower cost on salary (including employer's contribution to the Mandatory Provident Fund), the project grant should not be used as other subsidy, allowance or travelling expenses, etc. for staff.

Payment to industry mentors and employers and outsourced service providers

6.15   For undertaking internship, job placement, etc. by students, the grant should not be used as payment or coaching fee to industry mentors or employers, or on-the-job training provided by employers.

6.16   The grant should not be used as non-itemised fees to industry mentors, employers, outsourced service providers, etc. for providing industrial attachment opportunities or organising visits or short-term training / courses directly relevant to industrial attachment. Applicants should provide detailed budget with itemised breakdown in particular for service packages (e.g. trainers' fee, procurement of course materials, etc.) and list out the respective payees, and / or provide documentary proof (e.g. quotation) of the concerned fee for the deliberation by the Sub-committee.

Comprehensive Travel Insurance

6.17   Group comprehensive travel insurance should be purchased for all students and staff, if any, for participating in activities conducted outside Hong Kong, which should include coverage on, but not limited to, medical expenses, emergency rescue service and personal accident, etc. Applicants may include the group insurance cost of students in the budget with provision of documentary proof (e.g. quotation) on the budgeted amount in the proposal for the project. Institutions should remind students and staff, if any, that the group insurance policy may include basic coverage only and that students may purchase additional individual comprehensive travel insurance subject to their own needs. The individual insurance cost of students may be covered by the funding in form of student allowance (paragraph 6.5 is relevant).

Selection Mechanism

6.18   The principles of openness, fairness and competitiveness should be adopted during the selection of companies / industry mentors / employers for providing industrial attachment opportunities, visits or short-term training / courses, and during the shortlisting / selection of students for participating in the industrial

attachment / activities.

7. Number of Applications

7.1 (a) *Theme-based projects*

Each applicant may submit or be involved in a maximum of **two** applications under each round of application but there is no limit on the number of ongoing theme-based projects at any one time.

(b) *Open-ended projects*

Each applicant may submit or be involved in a maximum of **two** applications under each round of application. An applicant should not normally have more than four ongoing open-ended projects at any one time.

(c) *Industrial attachment projects*

Application for industrial attachment project can be submitted by individual institution or by joint application. Each institution may submit or be involved in only one application (whether it is individual or joint) under each round of application. Institutions' applications and awarded projects under industrial attachment do not count towards the quota for theme-based and open-ended projects and applications.

7.2 If an applicant is submitting more than one application (excluding joint application from more than one institution / organisation), the applicant should indicate the order of priority of its proposed projects submitted for funding.

8. Amount of Grant and Funding Period

8.1 (a) *Theme-based projects*

Successful projects may each be granted with up to **$30 million** for each academic year for up to **three years**.

The Sub-committee would consider and deliberate the total expenditure and implementation plan, including the timetable and monitoring mechanism, when the application was submitted. Should a successful project require more than a total grant of $30 million, the Sub-committee may give approval to reserve the total funding required for the whole project. However, the grantee may commit the expenditure up to the limit of $30 million only. Endorsement must be received from the Secretariat of the Sub-committee ("the Secretariat") **at each subsequent year** for additional commitment based on the progress of the implementation of the project of the previous year.

(b) *Open-ended projects*

Successful individual projects may each be granted with up to **$2.4 million** while sector-wide and joint projects [2] may be granted with up to **$4.8 million** for the period of not more than three years.

(c) *Industrial attachment projects*

The grant on student allowance for each institution in a project should not exceed $800,000 per year on average. There is no specific limit to the level of grant for other budget items of industrial attachment projects. The Sub-committee would consider and deliberate the total expenditure and implementation plan, including the timetable and monitoring mechanism, when the application was submitted. Successful projects may be funded for up to three years.

8.2   The number of projects approved for each round of application depends on the investment return of the SPEF and the deliberation by the Sub-committee. There is no fixed number of projects to be funded each year.

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[2]   "Joint Projects" refers to projects co-organised by two or more eligible self-financing institutions or related bodies such as federations of these education institutions and quality assurance agencies.

8.3   Successful projects may receive full or partial funding. A partial grant may be recommended if inappropriate or extravagant items are budgeted in the project proposal.

9.   Application Procedures

9.1   Application to the QESS is by invitation on an annual basis or at intervals determined by the CSPE / Sub-committee. When the new round of the Scheme is launched, we shall invite eligible institutions / organisations to submit proposals.

9.2   Online submission of application form is available in QESS Management System in the Information Framework for the Self-financing Post-secondary Education Sector (https://feddcs.cspe.edu.hk/). In submitting the application form, the following documents should be uploaded:

(a)   copies of the applicant's relevant registration document (e.g. school / post-secondary college / company registration);

(b)   proofs of registration as a non-profit-making organisation under Section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap. 112); and

(c)   supplementary information in support of the application, if any.

Applicants may approach the Secretariat for login details to the QESS Management System. Submission by hard copy will not be considered unless with prior consent from the Education Bureau.

9.3   Application Form A is for individual projects and Form B is for joint projects. All three project categories could be conducted in the form of joint project, while only open-ended and industrial attachment projects could be conducted in the form of individual project.

9.4   All sections of the application forms must be completed and where necessary,

supporting documents should be provided. The applicant may be asked to provide further information to facilitate consideration of the application.

9.5   One application form should be completed for each project. Each and every application will be processed individually.

9.6   All relevant institutions / organisations involved in a joint project are regarded as applicants. There should be a Principal Applicant assigned for the proposed project and responsible for creating Application Form B in its capacity. Both the Principal Applicant and applicant institutions / organisations should state clearly in the application form their respective roles and responsibilities in the proposed joint project and will be bound by all the terms and conditions set out in the Guidelines on Application and Management of Projects.

10.   Assessment of Projects

10.1   The Sub-committee will assess the QESS applications and make recommendations for funding approval by the Permanent Secretary for Education (PS(Ed)) as the Trustee of the SPEF.

10.2   The Secretariat will conduct preliminary screening of all applications and seek clarification or supplementary information from the applicant, if necessary.

10.3   To facilitate the assessment work of the Sub-committee, applicant(s) may be required to present the project proposal(s) for the Sub-committee's consideration.

11. Assessment Criteria

11.1   The following assessment criteria will be used to assess the merits of theme-based, open-ended and industrial attachment applications:

Assessment Criteria	Theme-based Project	Open-ended Project	Industrial Attachment Project
(a) Benefits	➢ whether the proposed project can benefit the post-secondary education sector as widely as possible; ➢ whether the proposed project can benefit a significant number of beneficiaries to enhance teaching / learning quality; and ➢ whether the impacts / benefits can be sustained in a longer term.		➢ whether the proposal can benefit a reasonable number of students (such as the number of new internship places and / or the number of existing internship places to receive enhanced support) to enhance their employability; and ➢ whether the impacts / benefits of the proposal can sustain after the project period.

Assessment Criteria	Theme-based Project	Open-ended Project	Industrial Attachment Project
(b) Viability and deliverables	➢ whether the proposed project is both technically and financially viable, and its schedule of implementation is well-planned and practicable; ➢ whether the applicant has provided a satisfactory track record and / or evidence to show that it has the technical and / or management capability and experience to successfully carry out and complete the proposed project; ➢ whether the project budget is prudent, realistic and cost-effective, and the major expenditure items are reasonable; and ➢ whether the applicant has provided supporting documentary proof to demonstrate its commitment in collaborating with industry partners with relevant professional knowledge.		
(c) Institution commitment and self-evaluation mechanism	➢ whether the applicant has demonstrated strong commitment such as making its own financial contributions and / or with high degree of staff's / principal's involvement to ensure the project implementation or sustainability; and ➢ whether the project has clearly described a mechanism and criteria for self-evaluation to facilitate monitoring of progress and assessing the attainment of project objectives.		

Assessment Criteria	Theme-based Project	Open-ended Project	Industrial Attachment Project
(d) Sharing of outcomes	➢ whether the outcome and result of the project can be widely shared with or used by the whole sector; ➢ whether a publicity plan, including means to implement such plan and materials to be produced, and a dissemination plan to enhance sharing of information / deliverables in the sector / public is described; and ➢ whether other institutions of the self-financing sector have shown interest for the project outcomes / deliverables to be shared.		Not applicable
(e) Innovativeness	➢ whether the project provides a new solution or covers areas which have not been adopted in other projects.		Not applicable

12. Notification of Results

12.1 All applications will be considered and selected by the Sub-committee. Funding approval from the PS(Ed), as the Trustee of the SPEF, is required.

12.2 Once the funding is approved by the PS(Ed), the Secretariat will inform the applicant(s) in writing of the amount of the grant as well as the terms and conditions. The applicant(s) should not consider its / their application(s) successful without a written notification from the Secretariat to this effect.

12.3   With reasons, the Education Bureau may withdraw any approvals already granted, and the institutions / organisations receiving the grant are not entitled to any compensation.

13.   Release of Funds

13.1   Successful applicants are required to sign a Project Agreement with the Education Bureau, which will set out in detail the terms and conditions of the grant. For joint project, the Principal Applicant shall sign the Project Agreement as the grantee of the project. The application form(s) signed will form part of the Project Agreement.

13.2   Funding support is normally given as a grant covering the entire project period, to be disbursed by stages according to the implementation schedule setting out the key milestones and the funding requirements as proposed by the applicant(s) and agreed by the Education Bureau. Funds will normally be disbursed in the following manner:

(a)   On receipt of the confirmation of acceptance of the grant by the applicant(s), a portion (subject to a cap of 60% unless otherwise justified) of the grant will be released up front to the designated bank account provided. The actual amount of the upfront payment will be in accordance with the agreed implementation schedule.

(b)   Subsequent payment(s) will be released in accordance with the project's implementation schedule, subject to the evidence submitted by the grantee showing that the key milestone(s) of the previous stage has / have been attained. Submission of such evidence should be made when the grantee submits progress reports on project implementation (see paragraphs 18.2 to 18.3 for details).

(c)   For all projects, the final 10% of the grant will be withheld and only be

released upon the submission of the final evaluation report and the final audited statement of accounts, and subject to the acceptance of such by the Education Bureau.

(d) The Education Bureau reserves the right to withhold any further payment, adjust the amount of the grant approved, terminate the grant and / or seek partial or full repayment of the moneys released if the project is observed to be no longer viable; or is seen to have substantial deviation from the original plan; or if a large amount of fund remains unspent in the project account.

13.3   Unless the grantee has obtained prior written consent from the Education Bureau, no emoluments shall be paid out of the grant to any person working on or otherwise involved in the project who is or becomes rewarded by the grantee or any third party on a full-time basis.

13.4   Only expenditure directly incurred for the project during the funding period can be charged to the Scheme and unaccountable, non-itemised general administrative expenses, expenditure items without direct benefits to teaching and learning (e.g. goodie bag, refreshment) are not permitted. Additional costs incurred by the institution(s) / organisation(s) concerned due to the implementation of QESS projects may be charged to the Scheme:

(a) For manpower cost, only salary (including employer's contribution to the Mandatory Provident Fund) of the additional manpower directly deployed to the project will be funded. Fringe benefits of staff (e.g. education allowance, housing allowance, etc.) should not be included in or charged to the project. In the case that the manpower for the project involves the institution / organisation's existing staff, the project budget should only include additional payment made to the staff concerned. Such request for additional payment should be proposed in the application, in which the applicant(s) should indicate clearly how many man hours will be dedicated

in the proposed project by the staff concerned and the remuneration to be paid to the staff for the stipulated man hours by the QESS project. The auditor of the project is required to check documentary proofs on payments made to individual staff.

(b) For equipment, only the cost of procuring or leasing of additional equipment for implementing the project can be charged to the grant. Equipment proposed to be purchased must be essential to or specifically required by the project. To fully utilise the grant, the applicant(s) is / are encouraged to use its / their existing equipment or to lease the additional equipment required.

(c) For other expenses, an amount up to 3% of the total grant may be budgeted as project contingency.

13.5   The applicant(s) may include in the budget the fees to be charged by auditor(s) to conduct audit on the project's account. In general, an amount of not more than 1.5% of the total grant, or $150,000, whichever is less, is allowed.

13.6   Any overrun of the original budget for whatever reasons or deficits arising from the project shall be borne by the grantee with its own resources. Except under special circumstances and with full justifications, application for supplementary funding from the Scheme to make up the shortfall will not be considered.

13.7   Prior written approval from the Education Bureau must be sought for any major changes to the approved project. This may include change to the project scope or duration, deferral of completion date, or substantial variation (of more than 10% of the grant) between different expenditure items in the project budget.

13.8   If the grantee fails to commence and implement the approved project within six

months after approval of the grant without any reasonable explanation, the Education Bureau reserves the right to terminate the grant and seek full repayment of the moneys already released.

14.   Tendering, Procurement and Employment of Additional Staff

14.1   The grantee should exercise utmost prudence in procuring equipment, goods or services in relation to the project, and ensure that the procurement procedures are conducted on an open and competitive basis, and from those suppliers who are not their associates or associated persons, in order to ensure openness, fairness and value for money.

14.2   All quotations and tendering documents in relation to the project should be kept for inspection by the Education Bureau for at least seven years after the completion or termination of the project.

14.3   For additional staff to be employed for the project, the principles of openness, fairness and competitiveness should be strictly observed during the recruitment process and the employment terms should comply with the relevant legislation and regulations of Hong Kong.

14.4   Including but not limited to procurement and recruitment, the grantee should prevent any possible conflict of interest.

14.5   All applicants are reminded to observe the Prevention of Bribery Ordinance (Cap. 201). Successful applicant should advise its consultants, contractors, employees and agents involved in the project that they are not allowed to offer or solicit or accept from any person any money, gifts or advantages as defined in the Ordinance or lavish entertainment in relation to the project. The Hong Kong Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) has also provided a practical set of guidelines (i.e. Best Practice Checklist) for procurement and employment of project staff. Soft copies can be downloaded from the ICAC

website (http://cpas.icac.hk/EN/Info/Lib_List?cate_id=3&id=142).

15. Books of Accounts and Records

15.1 The grantee should maintain separate proper books of accounts and records for the project. The books of accounts and records of the project will need to be kept for inspection for at least seven years after the completion or termination of the project. If necessary, the grantee should also allow the ICAC to inspect the books and documents, examine the management and control measures in relation to the funded project for corruption prevention review.

15.2 For joint project, the Principal Applicant will be responsible for maintaining and keeping the relevant documents and records stated in paragraph 15.1 and submitting all the reports as required (see paragraph 18.2 for details).

16. Project Bank Account and Interest

16.1 The grantee should keep a separate Hong Kong Dollar account (or a separate account code) with a bank licensed in Hong Kong solely and exclusively for processing all receipts and payments of the project. Payments from that account should be made by the authorised representative(s) of the institution(s) / organisation(s) that receive(s) the approved funding. Any unspent balance of the grant should be kept at all times in that account.

16.2 All interest income generated from the project bank account mentioned in paragraph 16.1 above should be ploughed back to the project. Under no circumstances should the interest earned be applied for other uses outside the project, and no negative interest should be charged to the project.

17. Project Income and Residual Funds

17.1 Income, if any, generated from the project, irrespective of whether it has been declared in the project proposal, should stay with the project and be ploughed back to support continuation of the project.

17.2   Funds granted by the Scheme unspent upon completion or termination of the project shall be returned to the Education Bureau within one month after acceptance of the final reports by the Education Bureau, or be disposed of in such manner as directed by the Education Bureau.

18.   Project Monitoring and Reports

18.1   The grantee shall provide any necessary information required by the Education Bureau for the purpose of project monitoring.

18.2   The grantee will be required to submit the following reports on the project:

(a)   progress report(s), including progress of project implementation and attainment of milestones and deliverables, to be submitted as specified in the Project Agreement;

(b)   a final evaluation report, including outcomes and deliverables, self-evaluation of project effectiveness, etc., to be submitted within three months following completion or termination of the project; and

(c)   a finalised financial report, including income and expenditure statement and auditor's report, to be submitted within three months following completion or termination of the project (see paragraphs 19.1 and 19.2 for details).

18.3   Where applicable, the progress report in paragraph 18.2 should show evidence of key milestones achieved during the reporting period.

18.4   If the grantee fails to submit reports in accordance with paragraphs 6.11, 18.2 and 18.3 above, or submit reports containing insufficient, incomplete or false information, the Education Bureau reserves the right to terminate the grant and

seek full or partial repayment of the moneys already granted for the project from the grantee.

18.5   If the grantee fails to submit reports in accordance with paragraphs 6.11, 18.2 and 18.3 above as scheduled, a written reminder (two weeks for progress report and one month for final evaluation report and finalised financial report) will be issued to the grantee. If the grantee fails to submit the required reports two weeks after the issue of reminder, a warning letter may be issued to the grantee. Such warning will be used as a reference in the evaluation of the grantee's performance and future application for QESS projects.

18.6   Members of the Sub-committee and the Secretariat may conduct visits to the funded institutions / organisations to check the progress and achievement of the project. The grantee will need to make presentations to report the progress upon request by the Secretariat. If such visits or presentations are to be arranged, the Secretariat may liaise directly with the institution / organisation concerned.

18.7   Any kinds of unsatisfactory performance, such as frequent change of budget and delay of report submission, will affect the applicant's future chance of getting funding support. The management of the institution / organisation will also be informed of such issue.

19.   Audited Statement of Accounts

19.1   The grantee is required to submit a finalised financial report when the project is completed or terminated.   The report must contain the Income and Expenditure Statement, Balance Sheet, Notes to the Account and the Auditor's Report. All such accounts must have been audited by an independent certified public accountant.

19.2   The finalised financial report should be submitted within three months

following the completion or termination of the project. If the grantee fails to submit the finalised financial report within the prescribed period, the Education Bureau reserves the right to terminate the grant and seek full or partial repayment of the moneys already granted for the project from the grantee.

20. Early Termination of Project

20.1 Prior written approval from the Education Bureau is required for early termination of the project for any reason before the end of the approved funding period.

21. Sharing of Deliverables for Completed Projects

21.1 Grantees are required to participate actively in the promotion, publicity and dissemination activities in respect of the projects organised or facilitated by the Secretariat. If necessary, the Secretariat may invite the grantees of selected completed projects to participate in seminar(s), workshop(s), etc. to present their project results for sharing purpose.

21.2 The grantee should disseminate the project outcomes / deliverables to others as widely as possible. Project findings, reports and deliverables (where appropriate) would be uploaded onto the Education Bureau's and related websites for sharing and public access.

22. Publicity and Acknowledgement

22.1 Grantees should provide the Secretariat with publicity materials for uploading onto the Education Bureau's and related websites upon request by the Secretariat. Acknowledgement of QESS support should appear on all equipment, facilities, publicity / media events and materials related to a QESS-funded project, as well as in publications arising from the project.

22.2 The following disclaimer should be included in any publications and media events / materials related to a QESS-funded project:

"Any opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material / event (or by members of the project team) do not reflect the views of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, the Education Bureau, any member in the Committee on Self-financing Post-secondary Education (CSPE) and its Sub-committee on Support Measures, and the Secretariat of the CSPE and its Sub-committee on Support Measures."

23. Use of Information and Data of the Project

23.1 The CSPE and the Sub-committee, and their Secretariat have the right to make use of or disclose information provided in the application (as well as related information) as necessary for the purposes of assessing the proposal, reporting progress to the relevant authorities, conducting research, and sharing with other parties concerned. Project findings, reports and deliverables (where appropriate) would also be uploaded onto the Education Bureau's and related websites for sharing and public access.

24. Notes on Personal Data

24.1 The personal data collected from the application for the purpose of applying for the grant will be used by the Education Bureau to process the application and for any other directly related purpose. The provision of personal data by the applicant is voluntary.

24.2 The applicant has the right of access and correction with respect to the personal data provided, in line with the relevant provisions of the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap. 486). The applicant has the right to obtain a copy of the personal data provided in the application, and to request for correction of the personal data provided.

25. Copyright and Intellectual Property

25.1 Copyright or intellectual property right resulted from the funded projects rest with the HKSAR Government who has the right of access and use if required.

26.   **Enquiries**

26.1   Enquiries about the application and related matters should be addressed to:

    Address: Secretariat, CSPE Sub-committee on Support Measures

                      30/F, E-Trade Plaza, 24 Lee Chung Street, Chai Wan, Hong

                      Kong

    E-mail: self_fin_edu_fund@edb.gov.hk

    Telephone: 3468 2283