

SOCIAL WORKERS REGISTRATION BOARD

Notes of the 70th Meeting of the Committee on Qualification Assessment and Registration

Date: 23 August 2018
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Venue: Conference Room, 26/F Eastern Commercial Centre, 83 Nam On Street, Shau Kei Wan, Hong Kong.
Present: Mr. SHIU Ka-chun (Convenor)
Dr. CHU Cheong-hay
Mr. IP Kim Ching
Mr. KWAN Wing-shing, Vincent
Dr. KWOK Ngai-kuen, Alvin
Dr. LEUNG Chuen-suen
Mr. LUN Chi-wai
Apology: Ms. LAW Yee-ming
Ms. LUK Ka-mei
Secretary: Mr. LEE Wing-po, Eric, Registrar and
Ms. FAN Lai-yee, Veronica, Assistant Registrar

1. Dr. Alvin Kwok declared that he had left (anonymous) on 24 April 2017 and prior to the meeting, he had sought the Convenor's approval to receive the meeting notes and the document in relation to (anonymous). Subsequently, he found his name on the document and at the meeting he sought the Convenor's instruction whether he should abstain from the discussion. The Convenor indicated that with reference to the Board's protocol, it should be decided by the member himself if he should declare possible conflict of interests or abstain from deliberation.

Confirmation of the notes of the last meetings

2. The notes of the last two meetings were confirmed without amendment.

Matters arising from the previous meetings

Business information deleted

3. Business information deleted

(Dr. Chu and Mr. Ip arrived at this juncture.)

4. Business information deleted.
5. This agenda item would be discussed together with "Review of PCS".

Evaluation report of Professional Consultants

6. Business information deleted

Progress Reports

Business information deleted

7. Business information deleted

Application for registration as RSW (category 2)

8. The Secretary walked through the relevant provisions i.e. qualification for registration under section 17(2) and the interpretation of “social work post” under section 2.

Business information deleted

9. Business information deleted

Business information deleted

10. Business information deleted

Review of the PCS

11. A member expressed that he was uncomfortable, disappointed and was with regret about the Board’s decision to have amended para. 5.7(b) under Document C and D of PCS2014 and put into effect immediately without going through discussion at the Committee, despite the fact that the Board was rightful to make the final decision of the matter. In the past one year, the Committee had spent much time and effort to discuss how to refine the PCS and he was worried if the Committee’s recommendations would be overthrown by the Board at the end.

(Mr. Kwan arrived at this juncture.)

12. The Convenor explained that the Board handled the matter of anonymous with special and exceptional consideration and it had to straighten out the matter in a reasonable way. He expressed that the member’s comments would be recorded and passed onto the Board.

13. The Secretary invited the Committee to decide whether to adopt the draft Section 6 on the Appeal Mechanism as it would be making significant changes to the existing one. Under the proposal, the qualification recognition exercise would be conducted by AT and decided by the Committee whether to grant the recognition or not. If TI disagreed on the decision, it could apply for appeal and the Board would then conduct a hearing for the appeal to hear oral submission.

14. Members’ opinions were summed up as below:

- (a) The delegation of power to the Committee to grant recognition was not in the exclusion list under section 12(2) of the Ordinance.
 - (b) The proposal was simple in implementation.
 - (c) There were worries on whether the Appeal Panel members could make an informed decision when neither of them was Board member nor had understanding about the Board's expectations on the quality of social work programmes. The other views were that the Appeal Mechanism was consistent with the legal proceedings in courts or appeal mechanism of other professions. The composition of Appeal Panel included local academic, member familiar with public administration and other professional who was familiar with qualification recognition.
 - (d) If the existing appeal mechanism was to be kept, it was necessary to define the scope of the Appeal Panel for only handling appeal against procedures but not decision and further refinements on the composition of Appeal Panel were required.
 - (e) There was support to the proposal to make the Board as the gate-keeper.
 - (f) The composition of Appeal Panel should not be with Board Members in order to demonstrate its impartiality and creditability.
 - (g) The Secretary supplemented that under the proposal, the AT would submit the Interim Report to the Committee for consideration and the Final Report would be issued by the Committee. The Board would handle application for appeal and the quorum of decision was six members in which any Committee members would be excused. It was very unlikely that the Committee members would be more than nine making the Board's decision invalid. It was also unlikely to allow the formation of special team on behalf of the Board to conduct the appeal hearing.
 - (h) The Convenor put it in voting with only one member voted for the proposal.
 - (i) The Committee discussed how to refine the existing compositions and the scope of Appeal Panel with reference to the existing rules. It was agreed that the Appeals Panel should consist of 5 members from the following three categories:
 - (i) not less than 2 who are of the Social Work education sector in Hong Kong;
 - (ii) not more than 2 who is of a caring profession in Hong Kong, including but not limited to medical doctors, nurses, therapists and psychologist; and
 - (iii) not more than 2 who is with profound experience in public administration .
 - (j) Regarding the scope of the appeal, the Board office would conduct a research of the appeal mechanism of other professions.
15. In a recent social work qualification recognition assessment exercise, the concerned TI provided limited number of electives for students. The Committee considered that it was not

necessary to set the minimum number of electives because it was a common understanding that the number of electives should be more than one. If not, the AT or Committee should raise the concern to the TI.

16. The Committee agreed to simplify para. 4.1.5(e)(iv) and delete (v).
17. Regarding para.4.3.4, the Committee expressed that some part-time teaching staff did not have designated working desks but were provided with a shared room, that no qualifier would be required in that regard.
18. Heading of para. 4.4 would be changed to Governance and Academic Standard.
19. In para. 5.5.1, under the current practice, the TI paid full cost upon receipt of the Final Report. It was suggested to request the TI to pay by installments. After discussion, it was agreed that TI was to pay the first installment in 30% before the commencement of the review and the balance settled upon receipt of the Final Report. The payment was non-refundable. It was also suggested to request the TI to sign an agreement before the commencement of the exercise.

Date of next meeting

20. The next meeting will be held on 6 November 2018, Thursday at 7:30 pm.
21. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 pm.

29 August 2018