![Qualifications Framework 資歷架構 logo]

UNESCO
2016 Education Research Institutes Network in Asia-Pacific (ERI-Net) Annual Meeting

A Case Study on the Development and Implementation of Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (HKQF)

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HKSAR

Feb 2016

Outline of Presentation
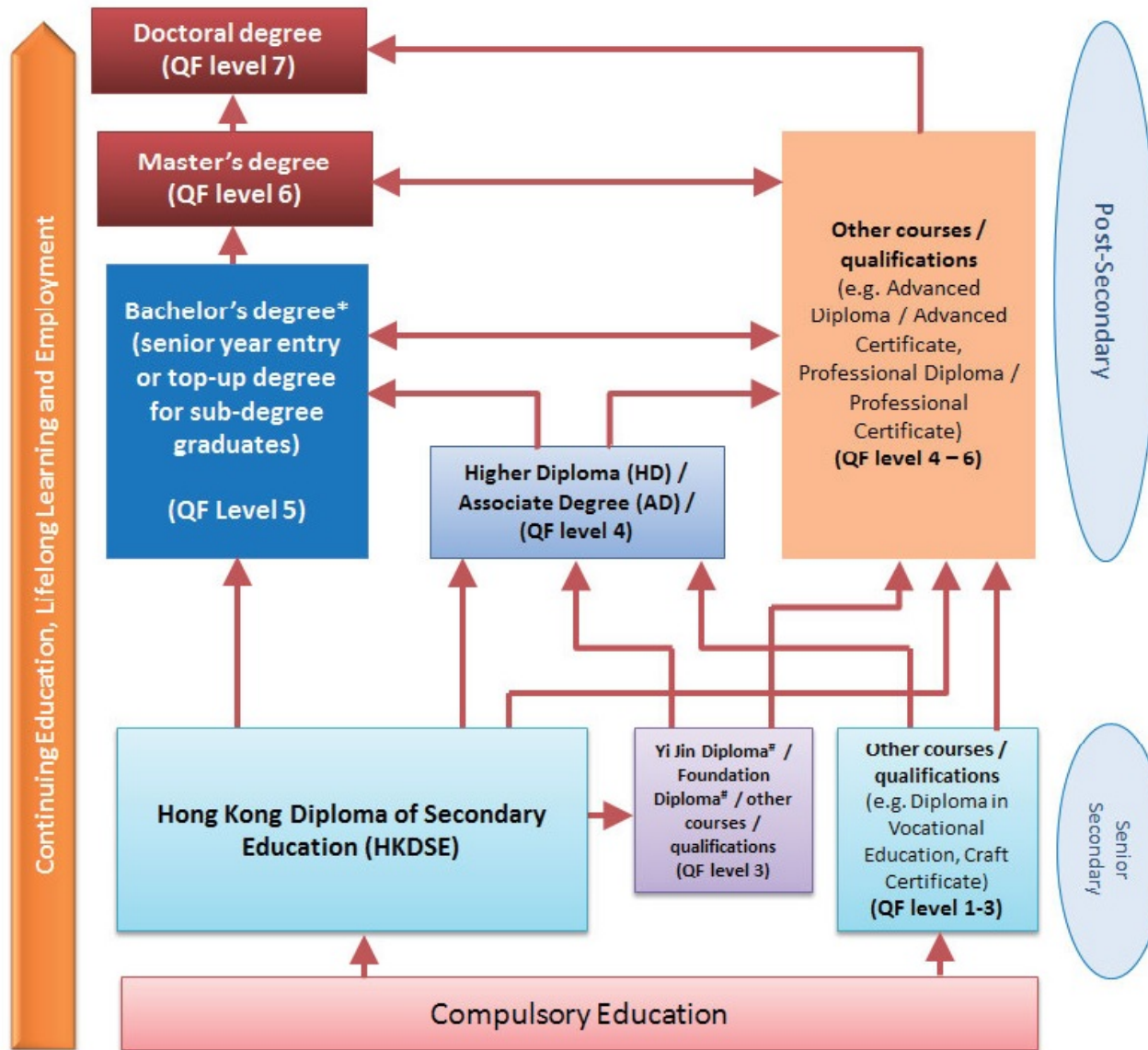
Part I :   Recap on HKQF

Part II :   Experience Sharing on Lessons

            Learnt

Part III : Challenges Ahead

PART I : RECAP ON HKQF

The HK Education System

HKQF – A Unitary Framework

Academic Sector

QF Levels

Vocational/Continuing Education Sectors

Academic Sector	QF Levels
Doctorate Degree	Level 7
Master Degree	Level 6
Bachelor Degree	Level 5
Associate Degree / Higher Diploma	Level 4
Secondary 7 / HKDSE / Diploma	Level 3
Secondary 5 / Certificate	Level 2
Secondary 3 / Certificate	Level 1

To be further developed under QF

e.g. articulated learning pathways

The objective of setting up HKQF

- Launched in 2008, HKQF is a policy initiative of the **Education Bureau (EDB)** of the HKSAR Government

- The **Qualifications Framework Secretariat (QFS)** is an executive arm of EDB to implement QF in Hong Kong

- The objective is to establish an effective platform to support **lifelong learning**, with a view to enhancing **capability, professionalism and competitiveness** of the local workforce

Quality Assurance underpinning HKQF

- A new piece of legislation, namely the **Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications Ordinance, Cap. 592** came into full operation in May 2008 which provides legal backing to HKQF by means of a robust QA mechanism

- **Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ)** is empowered as the "**Accreditation Authority**" and "**QR Authority**" under the aforesaid Ordinance

- All qualifications/programmes recognised under QF have to be quality assured by HKCAAVQ and uploaded onto the **Qualifications Register (QR)**

- Other quality assurance bodies include :

  - ➢ **Quality Assurance Council** (QAC) for self-accrediting universities

  - ➢ **Joint Quality Review Committee** (JQRC) – sub-degree programmes offered by the extension arms of self-accrediting universities

Public face of HKQF - Qualifications Register (QR)

- Web-based Qualifications Register which is **free** for public access

- Over **7,500** programmes / qualifications registered on QR

- Covering qualifications of the **academic**, **vocational** and **continuing education** sectors

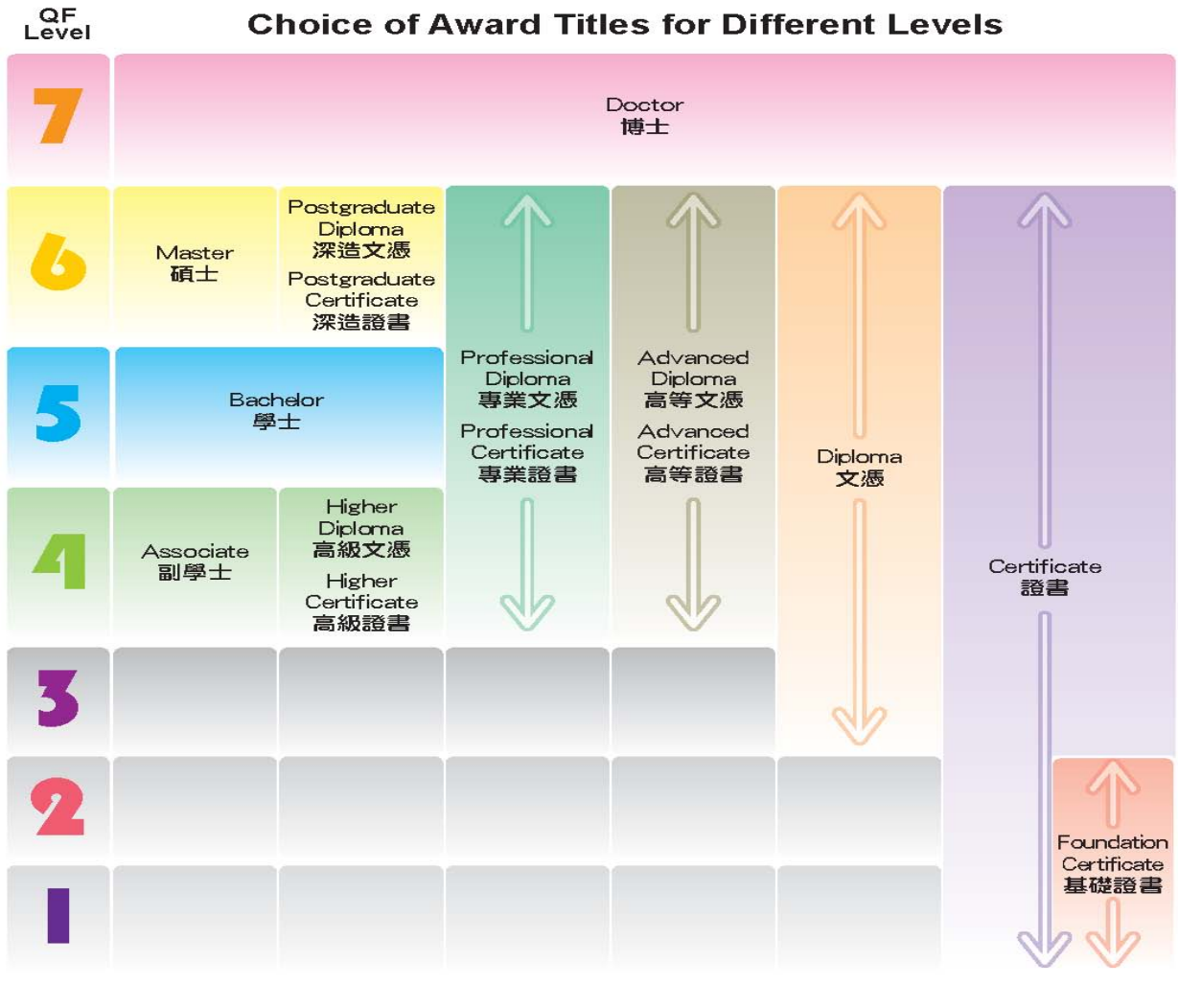- **Non-local qualifications** as well

www.hkqr.gov.hk

Award Titles Scheme (ATS)

Choice of Award Titles for Different Levels

QF Level						
7	Doctor 博士					
6	Master 碩士	Postgraduate Diploma 深造文憑 / Postgraduate Certificate 深造證書	Professional Diploma 專業文憑 / Professional Certificate 專業證書	Advanced Diploma 高等文憑 / Advanced Certificate 高等證書	Diploma 文憑	Certificate 證書
5	Bachelor 學士					
4	Associate 副學士	Higher Diploma 高級文憑 / Higher Certificate 高級證書				
3						
2						Foundation Certificate 基礎證書
1						

15 standard award titles

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QF credit and CAT

- 1 QF credit = **10 notional learning hours**

- **Notional learning hours** refer to amount of time an average learner expected to take to complete all the learning and achieve the **learning outcomes** upon assessment

- Including **all modes of learning** (e.g. attendance in class, self-study, on-line learning, practical learning, assessment, etc.)

- The Education Bureau announced the launch of **CAT Policy and Principles** in July 2014 (www.hkqf.gov.hk/CAT)

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QF for the Vocational Sector

- QF for the vocational sector should be **industry-led**

- ITAC will be set up on industry basis when a specific industry or sector has reached **consensus** for joining QF

- ITACs are composed of representatives from **major stakeholders**, including relevant trade associations, workers' unions, employers, employees, professional bodies, regulatory body and Government departments concerned

- ITACs are tasked to produce the **Specifications of Competency Standards** (SCS) for respective industries, develop a suitable **Recognition of Prior Learning** (RPL) mechanism and to promote QF and QF-related products and services to the industry stakeholders

Industry Training Advisory Committees (ITACs)

Watch & Clock

Catering

Automotive

Property Management

Electrical & Mechanical Services

Printing & Publishing

Fashion

Information & Communications Technology

Jewellery

Human Resource Management

Employees

Employers

Professional Bodies

Beauty and Hairdressing

Security Services

Elderly Care Service

ITACs/CITAC

Manufacturing Technology (Tooling, Metals & Plastics)

Logistics

Banking

Insurance

Retail

Testing, Inspection & Certification

Import & Export

Development of Competency standards

- **Specification of Competency Standards (SCS)** sets out the skills, knowledge and outcome standards required of employees under various functional areas of any industry or a sector

- SCS is made up of **Units of Competency (UoCs)** that are competency-based with threshold standards; each UoC is designated a QF level and an indicative credit size

- Apart from SCS, **Specification of Generic (Foundation) Competences (SGC)**, covering 4 strands of subject from Level 1 to Level 4 : **English**, **Chinese**, **Numeracy** and **IT** have also been produced and are made available for public consumption

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) mechanism

- The RPL mechanism gives formal recognition to the **knowledge**, **skill** and **experience** previously acquired by practitioners in the workplace, repeated training is avoided

- RPL has been implemented in **14 industries. Over 15,000** applications and **27,000** clusters of competencies have been processed

- RPL is conducted by appointed **Assessment Agency** nominated by respective ITACs and approved by the Secretary for Education upon accreditation by HKCAAVQ

Statement of Attainment

International Networking
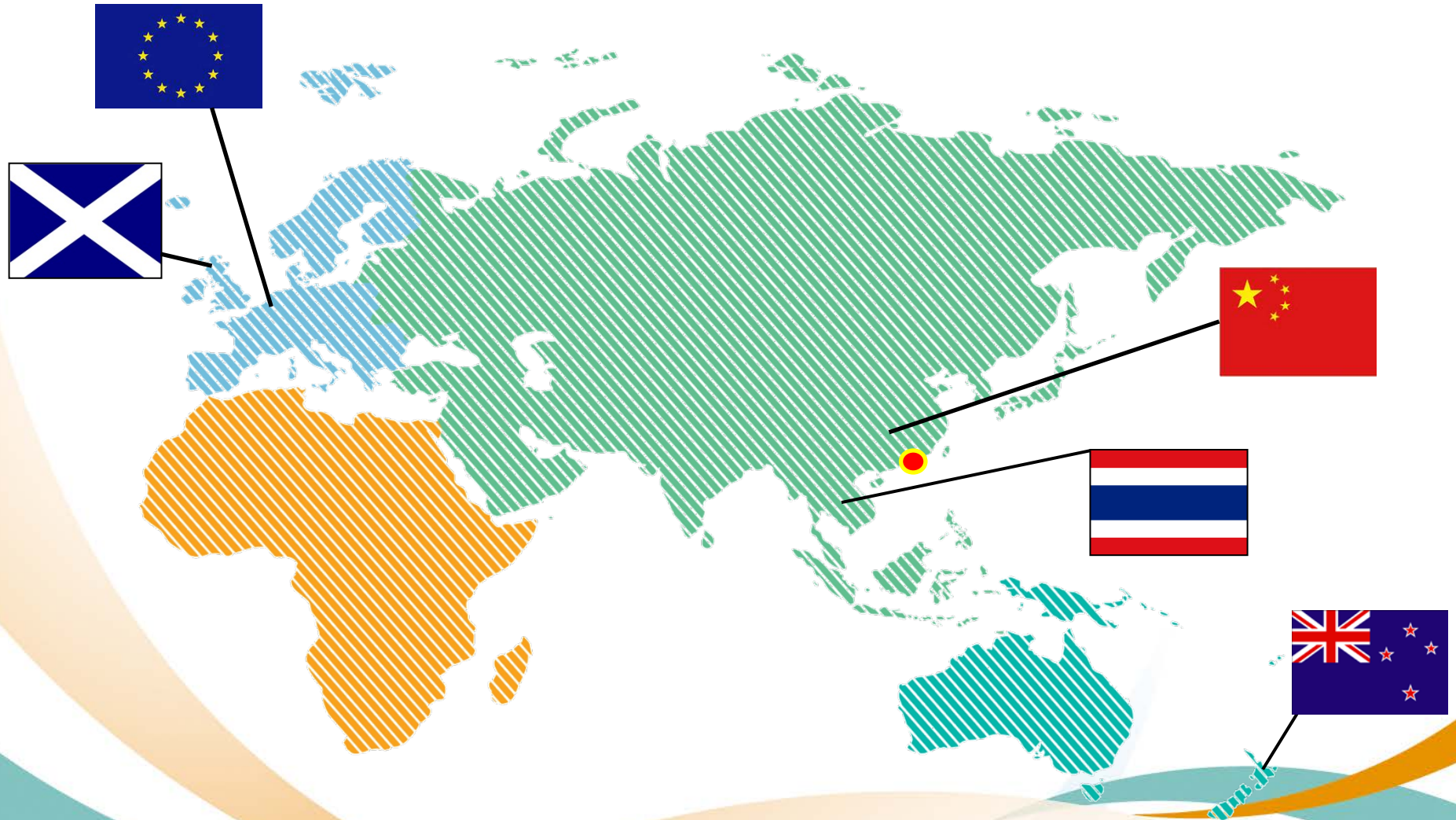
Collaboration with Mainland and Overseas Qualifications Authorities

Parties	Collaboration details
Guangdong Occupational Skill Testing Authority (OSTA) of China	Signed a Letter of Intent to explore the possibility of benchmarking competency standards with the relevant National Occupational Standards of China (May 2011)
Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Partnership (SCQFP)	Signed a MOU on the development of QF (March 2012)
New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA)	Signed a Collaboration Arrangement to enhance collaboration on QF (March 2014)
European Qualifications Framework Advisory Group (EQF AG)	Completed a comparability study on HKQF and European Qualifications Framework (EQF) (December 2014)
Thailand Professional Qualifications Institute (TPQI)	Signed a MOU to facilitate the exchange of views on QF development (July 2015)

PART II: EXPERIENCE SHARING ON LESSONS LEARNT

Lessons Learnt

I. Structure of HKQF and its infrastructural Set-up :

- A **Unitary** framework covering academic, vocational and continuing education sectors

- A **7-level hierarchy** that fits into the existing educational system

- A set of **Generic Level Descriptors (GLD)** with common and consistent standards

- A **Voluntary** system

Lessons Learnt

II. A robust Quality Assurance (QA) mechanism underpinning HKQF :

- a dedicated new piece of legislation, namely the *Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications Ordinance, Cap. 592* which provides legal backup to QF implementation

- a dedicated QA authority, namely Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) has been empowered to become the **Accreditation Authority** and the **Qualifications Register Authority**

- The HKCAAVQ provides a transparent process for programme accreditation by way of a 4-stage accreditation process for inclusion of QF-recognised programmes on the **Qualifications Register (QR)**

Lessons Learnt

III. Stakeholders Engagement :

- Setting up ITACs on industry basis is proven effective in engaging **major stakeholders** to take part in QF implementation

- **Industry-wide consultation** in the drafting of SCS, RPL, CAT and other promotional events
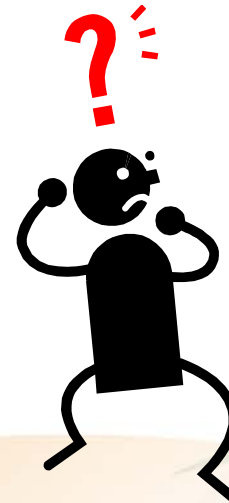
Lessons Learnt

IV. Consensus from Stakeholders :

- Participation and support from large enterprises or **employers' associations** and **workers' unions** in ITACs is very important as they are always the drivers for adopting the QF deliverables

- **Concerns from trade unions** : Is QF a new work permit? Is it a licensing system?

A licensing scheme ?

Compulsory for all ?

Only formal learning ?

Lessons Learnt

V. Commitment from the HKSAR Government :

- Setting up of the QFS with **recurrent funding** for the operation of the QFS

- Annual funding of **$10 million** for all ITACs to launch new initiatives and to promote QF at industry level

- A **$1 billion QF Fund** to provide investment returns to sustain the development of HKQF

PART III: CHALLENGES AHEAD

Challenges Ahead

- The inclusion or alignment of other forms of qualifications, e.g. **Professional Qualifications** and school qualifications in HKQF

- The closer linkage of HKQF with the **labour market**

- The promulgation of **Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT)** arrangements to facilitate programme articulation between the vocational and professional education & training **(VPET)** and the higher education **(HE)** sector

Challenges Ahead

- The expansion of the RPL mechanism to cover **non-formal and informal learning (NFIL)**

- The closer **collaboration and referencing** with other QF systems overseas

- **Evaluation, review and refinement** of the infrastructural set-up of HKQF e.g. GLD, SCS development, RPL etc.

- **Public image** and branding of HKQF