**Survey on Teaching Excellence**

**In teaching sub-degree, degree, and top-up degree students**

**in the self-financing post secondary sector in Hong Kong**

**Observations and Comments:**

**Domain: Business related subjects**

**Concepts and believes underpinning their teaching**

There are a total of 10 cases with 9 teachers from 9 different institutions while the last one is a ‘Full Time” teacher taught part time in more than one institutions.

2. A clear message convey by all the teachers under-review is that they see teaching not just a job, but a career. They have the passion to help students:

1. In developing positive target and value system for their adult life; the attitude of lifelong learning and the determination to achieve the set targets
2. In achieving a meaningful career with fulfillment and satisfaction

3. To this end, the all of them have a clear picture about what students should learn in their classes: apart from content knowledge, students should also learn:

1. The right attitude in learning and in their daily life
2. Values and ethics
3. People skills, which include self-management and interpersonal skills
4. Learning skills to enable lifelong learning

4. Through the contact with, and feedback from, their students, they gradually master a clear picture of the student groups of their different classes, their strengthens and weaknesses, psychological barriers, learning styles, etc and using different approaches to address their different learning needs: e.g. associated degree and top-up degree classes will have very different learning needs

5. In their teaching, they focus on student learning, i.e. whether students can learn what they expect them to learn through their teaching. As such, their teaching is not limited to chalk and talk but have a wide range of activities: project learning, group discussions, peer group learning, job attachments etc. They continuously solicit feedbacks from students, evaluate the effectiveness and review and revise from time to time

**Big picture of teaching**

6. On facilitating student learning, the strategies and approaches taken by the teachers under review can be grouped under the following categories:

1. **Re-build the confident of learning of students**
* Except a few top-up degree programmes, all the other programmes taught by these teachers are sub-degree programmes while a few have to teach Yin Jin programmes. They observed that these students had experienced ‘failure’ in their studies, i.e. could not achieve good results in public examinations for direct entry into first degree programmes. Most of them would have inferior feeling and doubt their own learning abilities: I am not of such calibrate; even I make effort, I won’t be able to achieve good results.
* They aware that the most important thing is to re-build their confident of learning through encouragement with examples, such as: ‘You are university students’ with the teacher’s own experiences while he taught universities in Canada and the United States; successful cases of past students; praise the achievements instead of scold the mistakes etc
1. **Help students to establish their targets for life (long term) and for their learning (short term)**
* Teachers’ observations and experiences are that many sub-degree students, in particular full time students, do not have any targets for their future life, irrespective about career development or their own life. It results in their do not have clear targets to achieve in their learning and thus not motivated. Teachers were trying different ways to help students in regaining their momentum of learning. Strategies include:
* Give examples of successful past students, including those admitted by universities locally or overseas; have successful career development and insisted on lifelong learning
* Let students have a clear picture on the expectations of teachers which not limited to content knowledge, but also their attitudes towards learning, morality (no photocopying of text books, punctuality etc) and proper behaviors (respect others, etc) which are all important aspects if they wish
* Spare the first lesson to help students planning the targets and pathway of studies in the coming three year; give a clear teaching schedule and requirements of each stage at the beginning of a programme (as head start in establishing short term targets)
* Set clear assessment requirements as targets for student to achieve, which would be able to earn admission to universities (so as to help students in establishing short term targets)

**Learning and teaching strategies**

7. For the teaching strategies, they all aware that it is important to build trust with students (establishing rapport) before you can make the students willing to follow your instruction. They all have believes that:

1. Education is a career that life influences life; setting good example is important for teachers
2. Love, care, passion, empathy and encouragement are more effective than scolding and threatening; teaching with heart and students will echo
3. They all recognize the importance of language, in particular English, to students, both for their learning and future career development in business sector. Apart from encouraging students to put more effort on English, they also grasp every opportunity to help students in improving their English standard: insist on using English during lessons (EMI)

**Methodologies adopted**

8. Methodologies mentioned in the interviews included:

1. It is effective to use examples that students will have the opportunities to come across in their daily life to explain difficult concepts and theories, e.g. using the operation of Cantonese Café to explain fixed and variable costs; annual budget speech to explain financial planning; vegetable is HK$6 for one catty and HK$10 for two catties at the wet market to explain consumer behavior etc
2. Students generally are impressed by the stories of teachers’ authentic experiences in the trade and industries
3. Let students have hands on experiences to learn from actual experiences, e.g. using MYOB (accounting software) for students to experiences the operation of a business; arrange visits and attachment for students to experiences authentic workplaces, etc
4. Invite guest speakers who are the current participants of the related trade and industries to help students understand the most up-to-day development of the trade
5. Using students’ fashionable language and technologies (facebooks, whats’ app etc) to communicate with them
6. Ask students to present their projects and be critiqued by classmates so as to facilitate learning through group dynamics
7. Pairing strong and weak students in group work and project team to encourage peer learning
8. After identified the level of competencies, both in knowledge and skills, design the learning activities according to the abilities of students that students can construct their knowledge through scaffolding

**Commonalities which might be the necessary conditions leading to teaching excellence**

9. These teachers are identified by their respective institutions as achieving teaching excellences in teaching the sub-degree, degree and top-up degree programmes. They have commonalities that:

1. They see teaching as a lifelong career and student growth and achievement will be the best reward to them
2. They all teach with hearts and demonstrate lifelong learning so as to set good examples for students. They believe that students will echo positively
3. They take a humanistic approach in their teaching: seeing every student as an individual and trying to help them in developing themselves, as a valuable person of the society, through the learning of the programmes they taught.
4. Most of them not just qualified academically, but also have rich experiences in related trade and industries. Their frontline experiences are invaluable asset in helping students to learn beyond book knowledge and to verify the concepts and theories of the curriculum through authentic examples
5. They let students know the demands of the programmes, assignments, presentations, tests, examinations etc, they taught well in advance; will coach students to reach the demands and never lower the demands to accommodate students
6. Apart from academic demands, they also have other demands to helps students to develop values and attitudes and learn people skills, such as no photocopying of text books, punctuality, meet the deadline, etc

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