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Calculation of the number of hours of professional development activities of teaching staff

Law No. 3/2012 - the law of "System Framework for Private School Teaching Staff of Non-tertiary Education" (hereinafter referred to as the "Private School Framework") is formulated in line with the need of future development of Macao education. Meanwhile, the law provides a comprehensive security system in terms of teaching staff's work, teaching hours, rank promotion, remuneration and benefits, professional development, etc. Hence, it is of paramount significance for strengthening the building of the teaching team and enhancing the quality of non-tertiary education in Macao.

Provisions concerning professional development of teaching staff in the "Private School Framework"

In an era of rapid development and ever-changing social transformations and demands, just as other professionals, teaching staff must improve professional standards in terms of professional knowledge, administration, teaching and tutoring skills in a constant and systematic manner, as well as planning for their personal sustained professional development, so as to effectively deal with the multifarious challenges in education work. As clearly defined in Chapter 9 of the "Private School Framework", the education authority (the DSEJ) and schools should provide the necessary conditions and resources for professional development of teaching staff, and teaching staff should plan for their own sustained professional development. The related articles adequately reflect that pursuing professional development is both the right and obligation of teaching staff.

Education is different from the general labour work. Aside from professional training, it also requires continuous learning and research in a wide range of areas of expertise, in order to consistently improve the professional performance and standard. As a teaching staff is appointed, he/she starts to explore the way forward constantly, and after experiencing the inheriting, consolidation, proficiency and innovation of the professional knowledge and teaching skills, the teaching staff starts to conclude his/her own teaching philosophy and implement his/her own personalised teaching, thereby achieving fruitful results in teaching and research.

The "Private School Framework" provides that the Teaching Staff Professional Committee (hereinafter referred to as the "Committee") sets the "professional criteria" and the "verification criteria for the number of hours of professional development activities" of teaching staff. These stipulations aim to provide guidelines for teaching staff in planning their own continuous professional development, encouraging them to pursue lifelong learning and design a personalised professional development plan in harmony with the development of Macao, the school and their own personal development.

Calculation method of the number of hours of professional development activities of teaching staff

Pursuant to the "Promotion" in Article 15, Chapter 4 of the "Private School Framework", rank promotions from Level 1 to Level 6 are governed by three requirements, namely, the Length of Service, Working Performance Evaluation, and Professional Development. The last being one of the requirements for promotion of teaching staff, a certain number of hours of professional development activities is required for each rank promotion. For example, for teaching staff in level 6 to be promoted to level 5, it is required that at least 90 hours of professional development activities have to be completed during the 3-year service period in Level 6; for promotion from Level 2 to Level 1, teachers are required to have completed at least 210 hours of professional development activities during the seven years of serving period in Level 2. With these requirements fulfilled, and also meeting relevant requirements of the Length of Service and Working Performance Evaluation, then the teaching staffs meet the conditions to be promoted.

Teaching staffs need continuous professional development. Different teachers will have different professional development characteristics. Therefore, professional development activities can be carried out in such diverse modes as participating in training, self-learning, research and practice, etc., and in flexible ways. According to provisions in relation to the Teaching Staff Professional Committee in Article 48, Chapter 10 of the "Private School Framework", the Committee will set "the criteria for verifying the number of hours of professional development activities of teaching staff". Article 46, Chapter 9 defines that "In accordance with the criteria set by the Teaching Staff Professional Committee, schools are responsible to verify and calculate the number of hours of professional development activities of teaching staff, and notify the DSEJ for registration." Therefore with such verification criteria soon to be enforced, school leaders and teaching staff can verify and judge under the same criteria if a teaching staff intending for promotion meets the requirements, while school leaders and teaching staff can also plan their own professional development activities in accordance with the relevant "verification criteria".

The DSEJ plans to launch implementation measures relating to professional development activities of teaching staff

At present we can roughly divide the professional development activities of teaching staff into three categories: 1) training activities organised by the DSEJ for teaching staff; 2) school-based training planned by the school; 3) training activities participated by teaching staff on their own. In order to optimise the current registration system, the DSEJ plans to re-construct a registration system to record related data and training hours in accordance with the three categories of training. Aside from the training activities organised by the DSEJ, the new registration system will also enable schools to verify, submit and register the data and number of hours of professional development activities of the other two categories of training (i.e. school-based training and self-planned training) of teaching staff in accordance with the "verification criteria". The re-constructed registration system will not only store data and the number of hours of professional development activities of teaching staff, but also allow the education authority, school leaders and teaching staff to effectively examine, audit and analyze the achievement of professional development of the concerned teaching staff members.

Professional development is doubtlessly very important for all teaching staff. Nevertheless, when planning their professional careers, teaching staff should bear in mind that the quality of professional development activities is more important than the quantity. Regardless of the format of training activities (DSEJ, school-based or self-training), teachers should attach utmost importance to their personal improvement of professional knowledge and skill enhancement, rather than just accumulating hours, so as to ultimately attain improvement in education quality as well as improvement in students' learning and quality.

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