

Speech
Speech by SFST at Vocational Training Council Graduation Ceremony
(English only)

Wednesday, December 14, 2016

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Professor K C Chan, at the Vocational Training Council (VTC) Graduation Ceremony today (December 14):

Chairman Dr Clement Chen (Chairman of the VTC), Executive Director Dr Carrie Yau (Executive Director of the VTC), parents, guests and graduates,

Good afternoon.

It gives me great pleasure to be here today, to share your joy, smiles and probably selfies at the VTC Graduation Ceremony. This is indeed a big day for you graduates, you parents and teachers. It's my honour to be with you here and my warmest congratulations to you all.

This is an important day for you and, as a natural course on any commencement day, it's a day to applaud your successes, to reflect on your accomplishments, and to think about your future.

There's no question the conferment today is one of the many successes that you are after. There's no question too your accomplishments to date have earned you the respect of your fellow classmates, teachers, parents and families. You should be very proud of it.

While celebrating the start of a new chapter in your life, for sure you will not forget to express gratitude to your parents who have been standing by you no matter what; and to your teachers who have nurtured your knowledge and skills, and instilled in you a passion for learning.

Since its establishment a few decades from now, the VTC has been offering a full range of pre-employment and in-service programmes, a new world of opportunities as described to learners of all ages and abilities. For our graduates today, I congratulate you not only on the learning opportunities that were given, the passion that has been instilled, but even more so, on you

finding the aspiration and goals to pursue further.

I was a business dean before joining the Government and had also spent quite a number of years teaching in the United States before Hong Kong. My encounters with students tell me it is always no easy task for them to identify their strengths, to get to know all learning opportunities, to go after them, and to decide on a career for further development.

So I feel happy that you have made up your minds and have chosen a very good course to study. I encourage you to make every effort to excel in your choice. As you are probably aware, the labour market in Hong Kong has remained in a state of full employment. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in the third quarter of this year stayed low at 3.4 per cent, with employment earnings improving continuously. So there are a wealth of opportunities waiting for you, and in Hong Kong we also have a full range of further education opportunities for you to pursue advanced learning. And I have every confidence that your efforts will pay off.

Today, you're armed with one of the most important tools needed to forge your path ahead. I am not talking about the diploma itself - it's about what you've learned along the way and what you do with the education you've gotten in your journey to graduation today. That's what really counts.

I'm pretty sure you won't naively expect smooth sailing in the life journey ahead of you. Disappointments, mistakes and even failures all come in a package of growing wise and successful. So, be prepared for them and stay strong and committed.

Thank you.

Ends