

Cultivating talent and enhancing recognition for the testing & certification industry

Testing and certification are of paramount importance, not only helping business to comply with regulatory requirements, but also enhancing consumers' confidence, thereby maintaining Hong Kong's competitive edge and professional image in the global market.

The testing and certification (T&C) industry plays an important role in our daily life. For example, food products are tested to determine its heavy metal content while electronic appliances are sent to testing laboratories for analysis of energy efficiency performance.

According to the latest statistics in 2015, 17,590 people are engaged in testing, inspection and certification services in Hong Kong. The industry has won wide recognition among manufacturers and buyers across the world.

Grooming talent

To meet the growing needs of the industry, The Open University of Hong Kong (OUHK) offers a 4-year full-time degree programme – BEng (Hons) in Testing and Certification.

“As a self-financing institution, OUHK has more flexibility in the types of courses it could offer,” says Professor Ho Kin-chung, Dean of OUHK's School of Science & Technology. “In view of the lack of tertiary education programmes on T&C in Hong Kong, we were the first to introduce in 2011 a T&C distance-learning programme. In 2013, we launched the 4-year full-time degree programme which subsequently received an overwhelming response, notching up the second highest admission score in OUHK in the past two years.”

Covering various disciplines from construction materials, electrical and

electronics, chemical and microbiological testing, to calibration and quality assurance, the unique programme helps students gain comprehensive knowledge and practical training on T&C, preparing them to embark on a career in the industry.



Prof. Ho Kin-chung, Dean of OUHK's School of Science & Technology (right) and Dr George Lau, Programme Leader and Associate Professor of Testing and Certification of OUHK, believe the 4-year full-time programme could help students gain comprehensive knowledge and practical training on testing and certification

“Apart from job training and placements, opportunities are available for students to attend seminars featuring distinguished professors and

professionals from overseas,” Dr George Lau, Programme Leader and Associate Professor of Testing and Certification of OUHK, highlighted. “The demand for T&C professionals is so high that most of our graduates can readily find jobs in related areas, such as testing laboratories, quality assurance companies and certification companies.”

“The concepts of certification are more complex than testing,” Prof. Ho added. “Therefore we will focus on training in certification in the future, and provide opportunities for further studies in this field.”

Enhancing recognition for T&C practitioners

Recruiting and retaining talent are crucial for the development of the local T&C industry. The Hong Kong Association for Testing, Inspection and Certification (HKTIC) launched the Professional Certification Scheme for Testing Personnel (PCSTP) in 2011 in order to set benchmarks for expertise and technical knowledge, and build a good reputation for the industry.

“Affirming an individual's professional competence in a particular testing field to employers, customers and the public at large, the Scheme covers Certified Testing Professional (CTP) and Certified Testing Technician (CTT). To date, a total of 363 people, of which 246 are CTP and 117 are CTT,



“Many members of HKTIC consider CTP and CTT as their preferred qualifications in recruitment,” says Harry Yeung, Chairman of HKTIC

have received the recognition,” Harry Yeung, Chairman of HKTIC, explained.

To be qualified as CTP and CTT, potential candidates must satisfy the minimum academic qualifications and years of work experience as required by the Scheme respectively. Evaluation will also be made to the applicants' technical competency either through an examination or approved courses. CTP's candidates are also required to pass a professional interview. All certified personnel must obtain their re-certification every 3 years by submitting their records of Continuing Professional Development.

“Many T&C organisations consider CTP and CTT as their preferred qualifications in recruitment,” says Mr Yeung. “We are working to align them with other established international schemes for mutual recognition.”

The Scheme has recently expanded to include students and graduates as members in an effort to facilitate an early understanding of the T&C industry among young talent.