

29 DEC 2017

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18 December 2017

President  
The Hong Kong Institute of Landscape Architects  
P.O. Box 20561  
Johnston Road Post Office  
Wan Chai  
Hong Kong  
(Attn.: Tak Y. WONG)

Dear Mr. Wong,

Thank you for your letter of 20 November 2017 to the Secretary for Development. I am authorised to reply to you on his behalf.

We fully agree with you the importance of quality assurance of tree management work and the need to build up the overall professional knowledge and standards together with the industry. The Greening, Landscape and Tree Management Section (GLTMS) of the Development Bureau has been promoting a quality-led approach in the management of our urban tree assets through positive capacity building of the horticultural, arboriculture and landscape industries.

The GLTMS has been working closely with the Arboriculture and Horticulture Industry Training Advisory Committee (A&H ITAC), which was set up in October 2016, to develop the Specification of Competency Standards (SCS) and the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) mechanism for the industry. The SCS will set out the primary standards for the horticultural, arboricultural, and landscape industries, and become the required standards in government contracts. It will also provide the basis for education and training providers to design programs that best suit the needs of the industry to meet the standards requirements. Practitioners may make reference to the SCS to better equip themselves for different positions in the industries.

We are now working with training institutions to incorporate practical urban arboricultural experience in their curriculum in anticipation of the SCS. This will form the basis of developing measures to uplift the industry standards and to ensure quality assurance, such as industry self-regulation or recognition requirements.

We note the HKILA Accredited Arboricultural Practitioners (AAP) Scheme, and the value it has brought to the industry. We are confident these values will be considered as part of the SCS exercise and that the relevant members of the HKILA will be duly consulted in the process.

Thank you again for your interest in raising competency of practitioners. Should you wish to discuss the above matters further, we would gladly arrange a meeting to further discuss.

Yours sincerely,



(Deborah Kuh)  
for Secretary for Development