

Study on Effective Strategies to Facilitate School-to-work Transition of Young Persons with Disabilities in Hong Kong

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Background, objectives and methodology

To explore the experiences of the school-to-work transition of young persons with disabilities (PWDs), the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) commissioned a research team at City University of Hong Kong to conduct a research project entitled “Study on Effective Strategies to Facilitate School-to-work Transition of Young Persons with Disabilities in Hong Kong”.

1. Specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- (a) To give an overview of the local and overseas policies and approaches adopted to facilitate PWDs’ access to post-secondary education and school-to-work transition, as well as their outcomes of post-secondary education (e.g., rates of completion) and the labour market outcomes (e.g., duration of employment, wage, training and promotion opportunities);
- (b) To gauge the views from young PWDs and their parents, teachers/school administrators, and employers concerning education and employment of these young PWDs;
- (c) To examine the educational and occupational aspirations of young PWDs and the strategies they adopt to achieve their academic and career goals and the effectiveness of these strategies;
- (d) To investigate the experiences of young PWDs in transitioning to post-secondary education and to the labour market;
- (e) To identify the mechanisms facilitating successful transitions as well as the obstacles inhibiting these transitions;
- (f) To evaluate the effectiveness of subsidies, allowances, and related employment support services provided by Government departments/bureaux and other stakeholders in facilitating the labour market integration of young PWDs; and
- (g) To make concrete policy recommendations on institutional support to facilitate young PWDs’ transition to post-secondary education and to the labour market.

2. A mixed method was adopted for the study. The study included four parts: (a) Literature review, (b) In-depth interviews with young PWDs, (c) Focus group interviews with other key stakeholders, and (d) Surveys with young PWDs and other key stakeholders.

The main round of in-depth interviews with young PWDs was conducted mainly from January to October 2020. Ten more interviews were conducted in September and October 2021. Focus group interviews with other key stakeholders were conducted from January to October 2020. Questionnaire surveys were conducted from April 2021 to October 2021. Respondents completed self-administered questionnaires on paper or by online forms.

***Sample Size of In-depth Interviews and
Focus Group Interviews***

Sample Size of Surveys

| | Number of interviews/Sessions | Sample size |
|--|--|------------------------|
| Young PWDs | 40 in-depth interviews | 40 |
| Teachers/Instructors | 2 Focus groups | 12 |
| Parents/Carers | 2 Focus groups | 15 |
| Social workers/ Counsellors/Social service practitioners | 3 Focus groups | 23 |
| Employers | 2 Focus groups | 9 |
| Employees | 2 Focus groups | 14 |

| | Sample size |
|---|--------------------|
| Young PWDs | 673 |
| Teachers/ Instructors | 155 |
| Parents/Carers | 193 |
| Social workers/ Counsellors/ Social service practitioners | 111 |
| Employers | 161 |
| Employees | 128 |

3. Four major pathways were discussed in the study: (a) from secondary education to post-secondary education (Pathways 1a and 1b transitions), (b) from secondary education to work (Pathway 2 transition), and (c) from post-secondary education to work (Pathway 3 transition).

4. Micro (usually refers to individuals), mezzo (institutional and organisational), and macro (Government and its relevant legal system and policies) levels of analysis were used in the study.

2. Key findings from individual in-depth and focus group interviews

Pathway 1: From secondary education to post-secondary education

The process of young PWDs' transition from secondary education to post-secondary education

1. Apart from their interests, career aspirations, and prospects after graduation, some young PWDs strategically selected study areas that they could handle despite having impairments. Some tried to strike a balance between the perceived usefulness and difficulty of the training or learning courses.
2. Although further study decisions were made by young PWDs' parents/carers in some cases, most of them made these decisions primarily on their own.

Hindering factors in transition from secondary education to post-secondary education

3. Difficulty in concentration, inconveniences encountered in the learning process, difficulties in interacting with peers at schools, issues with disability disclosure, and schools' rigid arrangements were identified as unfavourable factors which contributed to their difficulty in getting a place or adapting well to post-secondary education.
4. Similar observations were also reported by other key stakeholders (teachers/instructors, social workers/counsellors/social service practitioners, and parents/carers) in focus group interviews, echoing that the learning process was often frustrating for young PWDs. Likewise, according to these stakeholders, students with disabilities encountered interpersonal difficulties during the learning process.

5. Young PWDs who successfully secured a place in post-secondary institutions, especially young PWDs who attended special schools prior to post-secondary education, found that post-secondary institutions were new environments where intensive support was no longer available.
6. There were some doubts about the success of integrated education in Hong Kong, which hindered a successful transition from secondary education to post-secondary education. Teachers/instructors and social workers/counsellors/social service practitioners reported that some students with lower capabilities might be better off in special schools, yet they were placed in mainstream schools, sabotaging their transition from secondary education to post-secondary education.

Facilitating factors in the transition from secondary education to post-secondary education

7. Young PWDs reported that adequate use of assistive technologies could help them overcome the limitations stemming from their disability, flexible arrangements in learning and assessment could help unleash their full potential.

Young PWDs' views on the impacts and relevance of educational attainment

8. Young PWDs reported diverse opinions about the usefulness of academic qualifications for their career readiness and showed various levels of educational aspirations. Those without post-secondary educational qualifications considered their path towards obtaining decent work was rather bleak if they had a low educational attainment. But some of them suggested that educational qualifications only helped them to a certain degree.

Pathways 2 and 3: From secondary education or post-secondary education to work

The process of young PWDs' transition from secondary education or post-secondary education to work

9. Many young PWDs reported that they wanted to find a job after they completed secondary and/or post-secondary education. But the motivation for seeking a job varied from person to person. Some of them considered entering the labour market simply because they were unable to pursue further studies.
10. Many interviewees aspired to have a stable job. Nevertheless, they tended to have no concrete career plans. It seems that there have been relatively pessimistic career aspirations among them, and some even demonstrated an "I don't care" attitude.
11. The experiences of young PWDs who encountered difficulties in job-seeking not only frustrated them but also discouraged them from realising their aspirations.

Hindering factors in the transition from secondary education or post-secondary education to work

12. Young PWDs, no matter with and without post-secondary educational attainment, encountered significant obstacles in transitioning from school to work, showing that there was a chasm between school and work for them.

13. Many young PWDs believed that they were unlikely to be considered as suitable candidates in the eyes of employers, due to their disabilities. If they were hired, they would require more time to adapt to the work environment.
14. Low self-confidence had a significant negative impact on young PWDs, especially persons with invisible disabilities, such as mental and emotional impairments and attention deficit hyperactivity disorders.
15. Limited job options, lack of barrier-free access facilities, and lack of acceptance of PWDs were also identified, showing that social labelling, discrimination, and lack of understanding of PWDs may still exist. The negative attitude of employers towards hiring PWDs was also a barrier perceived by parents/carers for their child(ren) to get a job.
16. Teachers/instructors, social workers/counsellors/social service practitioners, and parents/carers in the focus group interviews reported the negative attitude of employers towards hiring PWDs. Some participants emphasised that employers tended to be more willing to hire persons with visible disabilities rather than those with invisible ones, because hiring those with visible disabilities was conducive to showing socially responsible human resource practices.
17. The findings seem to suggest that higher educational attainment did not necessarily lead to a successful transition to the labour market. Although career support services are provided by universities, young PWDs thought that such services did not address effectively their special needs.
18. Although the parents/carers of some young PWDs provided substantial support, overprotection may become a significant barrier to young PWDs' career development.

Facilitating factors in the transition from secondary education or post-secondary education to work

19. By young PWDs' own accounts, flexible work arrangements provided by employers were considered an important facilitating factor in their school-to-work transition.
20. Career support provided by social workers/counsellors/social service practitioners was perceived by young PWDs as a source of support in their school-to-work transition. Internship opportunities provided by universities were considered helpful for transitioning to work.
21. Parents/carers of some young PWDs were considered an important source of emotional support.
22. Support from peers was perceived by young PWDs as another important facilitating factor which they provided both useful information and emotional support to them.
23. Assistance offered by colleagues was also perceived by young PWDs as an important facilitating factor for their enhanced adaptability in the workplace. They valued their colleagues' understanding and awareness of their special needs.

Other key themes

Experiences of school-to-work transition of highly educated young PWDs

24. Young PWDs who attended special schools faced more challenges at universities as intensive support was no longer available. It was reported that inconveniences were caused by inadequate accommodation of the universities.
25. Higher educational attainment did not necessarily lead to labour market success of young PWDs. Highly educated PWDs tended to have a higher level of career aspirations. However, many employers still focused on their disabilities rather than their abilities. Referrals of job positions may not be suitable for highly educated PWDs.

Experiences of school-to-work transition of young persons with visible disabilities and invisible disabilities

26. Owing to the side effect(s) of medication, difficulty in concentration was a common problem for some young persons with invisible disabilities. Young persons with depression, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, autism spectrum disorder and psychosis often encountered interpersonal difficulties with peers without disabilities. Low self-confidence further aggravated the negative effect on these invisible disabilities in dealing with interpersonal issues.

Young PWDs with experiences of long-term unemployment

27. Young PWDs with experience of long-term unemployment tended to have a lower level of educational attainment. Apart from limitations stemming from their impairments, their low level of educational attainment made it even harder for them to enter the labour market.
28. They were more vulnerable and more affected by economic downturns. They relied heavily on NGOs to make job referrals for them.

Comments from young PWDs and participants in the in-depth/ focus group interviews on current policies (All pathways)

29. Young PWDs in the in-depth interviews and participants in the focus group interviews questioned the effectiveness of integrated education and suggested that more resources should be allocated for improving integrated education.
30. Despite having the Disability Discrimination Ordinance (DDO) in place to prevent disability discrimination, some young PWDs and social workers/counsellors/social service practitioners questioned its effectiveness, based on their own experiences and observations.

3. Key findings from surveys with young PWDs

Regression analyses identifying the facilitating and hindering factors affecting young PWDs' experiences of Pathways 1a, 1b, 2 and 3 transitions were conducted. In addition, disability discrimination at schools and that in the workplace experienced by young PWDs in different pathways of school-to-work transition were also examined.

Pathway 1a transition: young PWDs in secondary schooling

Confidence for secondary schooling of young PWDs

1. Young PWDs in secondary schooling considered “perceived legal support (education)” as the facilitating factor, which indicated an increase in legal protection stipulated under the DDO did enhance their confidence for secondary schooling.

Difficulty in secondary schooling of young PWDs

2. Young PWDs in secondary schooling considered the support from teachers/instructors as the facilitating factor, which indicated an increase in teachers’/instructors’ support did alleviate their difficulty in secondary schooling.
3. They also considered the education related legal support as the most significant hindering factor, which indicated they considered the legal protection stipulated under the DDO was a double-edged sword, which would unintentionally aggravate their difficulty in schooling when the level of legal protection increased. In addition, they also considered self-stigma (the second most significant hindering factor) and severity of disability (the third most significant hindering factor) did aggravate their difficulty in schooling.

Pathway 1a to 1b transitions: young PWDs’ preparedness for the transition from secondary education to post-secondary education

Career Decision Self-Efficacy (CDSE) (preparing for further study) of young PWDs in secondary schooling

4. Young PWDs in secondary schooling considered the support from peers (i.e., the most important facilitating factor), support from teachers/instructors (the second most important facilitating factor), and support from schools (the third most important facilitating factor) did enhance their perceived ability to make educational and vocational decisions when preparing for further study.

Pathway 1a to 2 transitions: young PWDs’ preparedness for the transition from secondary education to work

Career Decision Self-Efficacy (CDSE) (about to enter the labour market) of young PWDs in secondary schooling

5. Young PWDs in secondary schooling considered the support from peers (the most important facilitating factor), support from teachers/instructors (the second most important facilitating factor), and support from schools (the third most important facilitating factor) did enhance their perceived ability to make educational and vocational decisions when they were about to enter the labour market.

Job Search Self-Efficacy (JSSE) of young PWDs in secondary schooling

6. Young PWDs in secondary schooling considered the support from peers (the most important facilitating factor), support from schools (the second most important facilitating

factor), and support from teachers/instructors (the third most important facilitating factor) did enhance their preparedness for job seeking.

7. They considered severity of disability as the hindering factor, which hindered their preparedness for job seeking.

Pathway 1b transition: young PWDs in post-secondary schooling

Confidence for post-secondary schooling of young PWDs

8. Young PWDs in post-secondary schooling considered the support from teachers/instructors (the most important facilitating factor), the education related legal support stipulated under the DDO (the second most important facilitating factor), and support from schools (the third most important facilitating factor) did enhance their confidence for post-secondary schooling.

Difficulty in post-secondary schooling of young PWDs

9. Young PWDs in post-secondary schooling considered severity of disability (the most significant hindering factor), self-stigma (the second most significant hindering factor), and the education related legal support stipulated under the DDO (the third most significant hindering factor) did aggravate their difficulty in schooling.
10. They considered the legal protection stipulated under the DDO was a double-edged sword, which would unintentionally stigmatise them when the level of legal protection increased.

Pathway 1b to 3 transitions: young PWDs' preparedness for the transition from post-secondary education to work

Career Decision Self-Efficacy (CDSE) (about to enter the labour market) of young PWDs in post-secondary schooling

11. Young PWDs in post-secondary schooling considered the support from teachers/instructors (the most important facilitating factor), support from schools (the second most important facilitating factor), support from peers (the third most important facilitating factor), and support from social organisations (the fourth most important facilitating factor) did enhance their perceived ability to make educational and vocational decisions when they were about to enter the labour market.
12. In addition, they considered self-stigma as the fifth most important facilitating factor. Young PWDs with a more negative perception of their disability identity tended to make a job choice with respect to their disability situation. Similar situation was also observed when they made further studies decisions.
13. They considered employment related legal support stipulated under the DDO as the hindering factor. It indicated they considered the legal protection stipulated under the DDO was a double-edged sword, which would unintentionally hinder their ability to make educational and vocational decisions when the level of legal protection increased.

Job Search Self-Efficacy (JSSE) of young PWDs in post-secondary schooling

14. Young PWDs in post-secondary schooling considered support from schools (the most important facilitating factor), support from peers (the second most important facilitating factor), support from social organisations (the third most important facilitating factor), and support from parents/carers (the fourth most important facilitating factor) did enhance their preparedness for job seeking.
15. They considered severity of disability (the most significant hindering factor) and employment related support stipulated under the DDO did aggravate their difficulty in job seeking.
16. Regarding the employment related support stipulated under the DDO, they considered the legal protection stipulated under the DDO a double-edged sword, which would unintentionally hinder their preparedness for job seeking when the level of legal protection increased.

Pathway 2 transition: young PWDs transition from secondary education to work

Employment values of young PWDs completed secondary education and in the labour market

17. Young PWDs who completed secondary education and in the labour market considered the support from schools (the most important facilitating factor) did enhance their perceived employment values.
18. Those with visible disabilities also perceived more positive employment values. The needs of young persons with visible disabilities are easier to be noticed than are those with invisible disabilities, and thus receipt of prompt support which is conducive to their perception of employment values.
19. They considered severity of disability as the hindering factor, which indicated young PWDs with a more severe level of disability perceived lower employment values.

Fears of employment of young PWDs completed secondary education and in the labour market

20. Young PWDs who completed secondary education and in the labour market considered self-stigma the most significant hindering factor, which indicated young PWDs with a more negative perception of their disability identity perceived more fears of employment.
21. Those with visible disabilities also perceived less fears of employment. The needs of young persons with visible disabilities are easier to be noticed than are those with invisible disabilities, and thus receipt of prompt support which helps alleviate the fears of employment perceived by them.

Pathway 3 transition: young PWDs transition from post-secondary education to work

Fears of employment of young PWDs completed post-secondary education and in the labour market

22. Young PWDs who completed post-secondary education and in the labour market consider self-stigma as the hindering factor. It indicated young PWDs with a more negative perception of their disability identity perceived more fears of employment.

Disability discrimination encountered by young PWDs at schools

23. Overall, young PWDs may face disability discrimination at schools. Only 12.6% of them reported refusal of admissions to primary or secondary school because of their disabilities. Nevertheless, 36.4% reported that their teachers had failed to understand their learning difficulties caused by their disabilities. Also, 36.1% reported they had been teased or rejected by classmates because of their disabilities.
24. Young PWDs in post-secondary education settings were more likely to experience disability discrimination at schools than were those in secondary education settings. Of the young PWDs in post-secondary education settings, 44.8% reported that their teachers had failed to understand or had difficulty in understanding the learning difficulties caused by their disabilities, and 46.4% were teased or rejected by classmates in school because of their disabilities.

Disability discrimination encountered by young PWDs completed secondary education in the labour market

25. Disability discrimination may also be experienced by young PWDs in the workplace. Only 18.9% of respondents who completed secondary education and in the labour market considered they had not been promoted due to disabilities. Nonetheless, it seems that more young PWDs experienced disability discrimination after entering the workplace. 33.3% considered that their employers had misunderstood their disabilities and assigned tasks that were too simple for them. Also, 32.1% considered their employers had ignored their disabilities and assigned tasks that were too difficult for them.
26. Young persons with visible disabilities were more likely to experience disability discrimination in the workplace than were those with invisible disabilities. Of the young persons with visible disabilities, 39.6% had been teased or rejected by colleagues because of their disabilities.

Disability discrimination encountered by young PWDs completed post-secondary education in the labour market

27. Only 19.2% of those who completed post-secondary education and in the labour market considered their employment agreements had not taken their disabilities into consideration. But again, more young PWDs experienced disability discrimination after entering the workplace. There were 34.8% who considered their employers had ignored their disabilities and assigned tasks that were too difficult for them. In addition, 31.3% considered their employers had misunderstood their disabilities and assigned tasks that were too simple for them.
28. Young persons with visible disabilities were more likely to experience disability discrimination in the workplace than those with invisible disabilities. Of the young persons with visible disabilities, 33.3% had been refused to provide with work adjustments, and 51.9% considered they had not been promoted because of their disabilities.

4. Key findings from surveys with other key stakeholders

Employers' concerns about hiring persons with disabilities

1. Overall, most employers expressed willingness to hire PWDs, especially PWDs with post-secondary qualifications. Also, 86.3% of employers considered for the same job requirements, employees with disabilities should receive the same remuneration as do employees without disabilities. Among the employers, 85.1% were willing to hire persons with disabilities with post-secondary qualifications.
2. However, more than half (55.3%) were concerned about the cost of barrier-free facilities/accommodation. Likewise, more than half (52.2%) feared costs associated with additional training required for employees with disabilities and not being able to discipline employees with disabilities because of potential lawsuits.

Employees' concerns about hiring persons with disabilities

3. Overall, more than 80% of the employees expressed that they were willing to work with persons with disabilities. Employees from large enterprises showed a higher level of willingness to work with PWDs than were those from small and medium enterprises.
4. Most of the employees (84.4%) considered that, during the interview process, PWDs should disclose the details of their disability that might affect performing job-related tasks. 72.7% of the employees believed that it was more difficult for employers to terminate the employment of employee(s) with disabilities than were employee(s) without disabilities, given unsatisfactory job performance.
5. Employees from large enterprises were more likely to show awareness of the use of language when communicating with colleagues with disabilities to avoid offending them than were those from small and medium enterprises.

Parents'/Carers' perspectives

6. Parents/Carers considered the legal protection stipulated under the DDO a double-edged sword, which would enhance young PWDs' confidence for schooling but their negative perceptions of the DDO would make them consider the DDO aggravating young PWDs' difficulty in schooling.
7. They considered support from peers was crucial for alleviating the difficulty in schooling encountered by young PWDs in schooling. They considered young PWDs in special education settings encountered less difficulty in schooling.
8. They considered young PWDs with a more negative perception of their disability identity perceived more fears of employment.

Teachers' /Instructors' perspectives

9. Teachers/instructors considered the legal protection stipulated under the DDO a double-edged sword, which would enhance young PWDs' confidence for schooling but their negative perceptions of the DDO would make them consider the DDO aggravating young PWDs' difficulty in schooling.

10. They considered teaching and learning arrangements at schools was crucial for enhancing young PWDs' confidence for schooling.
11. They considered an increase in employment support from social organisations did enhance young PWDs' perceived employment values.
12. They considered young PWDs with a more negative perception of their disability identity perceived more fears of employment.

Social workers'/Counsellors'/Social service practitioners' perspectives

13. Social workers/Counsellors/Social service practitioners considered the legal protection stipulated under the DDO a double-edged sword, which would enhance young PWDs' confidence for schooling but their negative perceptions of the DDO would make them consider the DDO aggravating young PWDs' difficulty in schooling.
14. They considered young PWDs with a more negative perception of their disability identity perceived more difficulty in schooling.
15. They considered an increase in employment support from social organisations did enhance young PWDs' perceived employment values.
16. They considered young PWDs with more negative perception of their disability identity perceived more fears of employment. They also considered that support from schools and social organisations aggravate the fears of employment perceived by young PWDs.

5. Recommendations

Three policy directions with eight relevant strategies were proposed.

Policy Direction 1: Shifting from welfare- to rights-based paradigm

Macro-level Intervention 1: Enhancing public awareness of the Disability Discrimination Ordinance

1. It is recommended that young PWDs shall be informed of their legal rights clearly in early stages of the school-to-work transition, thus removing a knowledge gap barrier to effective awareness of the legal protection under the DDO.
2. The Government should introduce a positive duty under the DDO for the provision of reasonable accommodation for PWDs, thus building a truly enabling environment for PWDs.
3. To further promote accessibility throughout the journey to/from the workplace as part of the positive duty, the Government can further engage owners of buildings built before 1997 to carry out improvement work on accessibility enhancement through incentive schemes and financial support, except buildings with inherent site difficulties or technical hardship in carrying out such improvement work (Section 25 (2) of the DDO).

Macro-level Intervention 2: Promoting the acceptance of diversity in community through public education

4. The EOC, and the Labour and Welfare Bureau should devote their efforts to make and enable an inclusive environment such as by education and the use of inclusive language and the launch of inclusive programmes, as well as abolition of the use of disability-related terms with negative connotations.
5. The Education Bureau, schools, and NGOs should strengthen their alliance to build an effective coordination that engages the business sector. Relevant interventions include i) promoting of diversity and inclusion through the formal school curricula and ii) engaging the business sector through extra-curricular activities' arrangement.
6. Promotion on diversity and inclusion can be realised through Strand (4) Community and Citizenship of "General Studies" for Primary 1–6 and Module 1.2 Interpersonal Relationships and Social Inclusiveness of "Citizenship, Economics and Society" for Secondary 1–3.
7. Extra-curricular activities' arrangement include the Life Planning Education and Other Learning Experiences in secondary schooling can be used to nurture values, self-worth, educational and career aspirations. The Business-School Partnership Program can serve as an incubator for building diversity and inclusion in the workplace, as well as narrowing the expectation gaps of employers and young PWDs when the latter experience their actual transition to work.

Policy Direction 2: Bridging gaps in cross-sector collaboration

Mezzo-level Intervention 1: Strengthening support system in mainstream secondary schools

8. The Education Bureau should expand the scope of support mode in the School Partnership Scheme to allow for timely knowledge transfer from special schools to mainstream schools.
9. The Education Bureau should stabilise the provision of specialists' support at school, particularly the School-based Speech Therapy Service.
10. Schools should strengthen the collaboration with NGOs through the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) throughout Pathways 1 and 2 transitions. The SENCO can mobilise the school's life planning education and career guidance unit to offer their expertise on supporting young PWDs, while NGOs can offer their expertise on handling PWDs in the process of young PWDs' school-to-work transition.
11. The Education Bureau should embark on a mandatory implementation of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for students with disabilities who need individualized learning support. Relevant transition support as a part of the IEP should also be included.

Mezzo-level Intervention 2: Promoting more diversified school-to-work transition pathways for young PWDs

12. The industries and the job areas covered in "Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Mechanism" under the Qualifications Framework (QF) should be enriched as an alternative route for the Pathway 2 transition or acquisition of qualifications on a par with the Pathway 3 transition for young PWDs (and other suitable groups) if circumstances allow through

cross-sector collaboration.

13. Three dimensions of cross sector collaboration are required, i) collaboration with NGOs specialising in youth (employment support) services, employment support for PWDs, and the life planning education and career guidance unit at schools regarding selection of industries to be added to the RPL mechanism, ii) collaboration with reputable industry associations regarding quality assurance and iii) building employers' confidence in the RPL mechanism via the relevant industry associations.

Mezzo-level Intervention 3: Engaging the business sector in workplace inclusion

14. The Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited should request all listed companies to disclose their workplace-inclusive efforts in their Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) reports. A mandatory disclosure of those items enables public scrutiny of enterprises' performances in supporting the employment and inclusion of PWDs.
15. NGOs specialising in employment support for PWDs should extend their scope of interventions through including enterprises as target systems of their interventions. These efforts could help enterprises better prepare for engaging and accommodating PWDs in the workplace.
16. The Labour and Welfare Bureau, the Labour Department and the Social Welfare Department should promote workplace inclusion through strengthening their inter-departmental collaboration, such as i) including commitment to workplace inclusion in the Funding and Service Agreements (FSAs) regarding the provision of vocational rehabilitation services for PWDs, ii) considering an increment in the subsidy for employers' procurement of assistive devices and execution of workplace modifications through the "Support Programme for Employees with Disabilities", and iii) assisting in the promotion of disability inclusion during their execution of disability inclusion in the workplace with a support network.
17. The Labour and Welfare Bureau, the Buildings Department and the Architectural Services Department may work together regarding enhancement of accessibility of the built environment and work environment. Also, NGOs, the Labour Department, and the Social Welfare Department should take the initiative to encourage the business sector to make better use of subsidies to facilitate workplace.

Policy Direction 3: Enhancing multi-level interventions

Micro-level Intervention 1: Strengthening support for post-secondary students with disabilities

Enhancing campus accessibility and inclusiveness for young PWDs

18. The University Grants Committee (UGC) should make a determined commitment to promote campus accessibility through re-positioning the special grant for supporting students with disabilities and creating an inclusive campus culture as recurrent expenditure.
19. Key Performance Indicators should be set to measure universities' performance in promoting an inclusive environment conducive to whole personal development. The Education Bureau should ensure young PWDs in self-funded post-secondary institutions are not disregarded in their school-to-work transition.

Enhancing handling of learning, psychological and interpersonal difficulties facing young PWDs

20. The special educational needs (SEN) support units of post-secondary institutions should strengthen their support system through engaging teachers and peers.
21. For engaging the teachers/instructors, the academic adviser system should be strengthened as the practical point of interventions. Teachers/instructors are strongly recommended to identify key issues pertaining to young PWDs' learning, psychological wellbeing, and interpersonal relationships as early as possible, and best utilise their role to facilitate SEN support unit's timely interventions.
22. For engaging the students (i.e., peers and friends of young PWDs), the SEN support unit should strengthen their commitment to engage students through their participation in relevant peer support/ambassador programmes.

Preparing young PWDs for their Pathway 3 transition

23. The career support units of post-secondary institutions should focus on young PWDs who are more likely to seek job through internship opportunities, work-integrated education, and relevant disability career guidance programmes.
24. The NGOs specialising in employment support for highly educated young PWDs should focus on those who require extensive support for job seeking, and the career support units of post-secondary institutions should establish a comprehensive procedure with follow-up actions for referral of young PWDs to external organisations.
25. The Labour Department should focus on post-Pathway 3 transition matters, such as engaging the business sector in workplace inclusion and promoting workplace accessibility and incentivizing employers to hire PWDs with lower educational attainment.
26. The UGC should consolidate universities' efforts through formulating university-wide policy guidelines regarding the provision of support services and accommodation for young PWDs.

Micro-level Intervention 2: Enhancing support for persons with invisible disabilities

Relevant interventions in the Pathway 1a transition

27. The home-school co-operation coordinated by SENCO should be considered as point of school-initiated intervention, with the support from school counselling team and Student Support Team (SST) in fostering mutual understanding between students with and without disabilities. Engagement of NGOs should be coordinated by SENCO based on the cross-sector collaboration.
28. The Education Bureau should consider mandating teachers' commitment in relevant modules of "Thematic Course on Supporting Students with SEN" under the Basic, Advanced and Thematic (BAT) Courses to strengthen teachers' capacity in taking care of students with invisible disabilities.

Relevant interventions in Pathway 1b transition

29. Actions should be taken through SEN Support Unit, teachers/instructors and students, with peer support/ambassador programmes in UGC-funded universities to enhance mutual understanding between students with and without disabilities.
30. NGOs should best utilise their expertise in supporting these young PWDs when the latter experiencing actual transition secondary/post-secondary from education to work.

Relevant interventions in Pathways 2 and 3 transitions

31. The Government departments and NGOs should provide disability awareness training for workplace supervisors, colleagues, and top-level management staff, with the aim of enhancing their awareness of the implicit needs of young persons with disabilities.

Micro-level Intervention 3: Engaging parents/carers in devising young PWDs' school-to-work transition strategies

32. Family-centred approach should be adopted to develop mutual understanding between key stakeholders and a support system in early stages of school-to-work transition, and rights-based approach should be promoted to empower young PWDs to take the lead in latter stages of school-to-work transition within their capacity. Psycho-education should also be provided to help parents/carers cope with stress/frustration stemming from taking care of their child(ren) with disabilities.

Parents'/Carers' involvement in Pathway 1a transition

33. Mainstream and special schools should take the initiative to strengthen home-school cooperation with a family-centred approach to enhance parents'/carers' participation.
34. The family-centred approach should engage practitioners when the school-based intensive learning support (i.e., IEP) is not yet in place. Parents/carers are encouraged to understand their child(ren)'s interests and abilities and develop realistic expectations with practitioners to facilitate development of their child(ren).

Parents'/Carers' involvement in Pathways 1b, 2 and 3 transitions

35. Young PWDs are encouraged to develop independence in making decisions related to their school-to-work transition, parents/carers should respect the rights of their child(ren) unless the latter cannot make decisions on their own due to their disability or actively seek advice from them. Schools and NGOs should bring up their point of interventions in case young PWDs need personalised/extensive support.