



CHARTERED
SECRETARIES
特許秘書

Becoming a Chartered Secretary and Chartered Governance Professional

A rewarding career at the heart of business



The Hong Kong Institute of Chartered Secretaries 香港特許秘書公會 (Incorporated in Hong Kong with limited liability by guarantee)

The Hong Kong Institute of Chartered Secretaries (HKICS) is an independent professional body dedicated to the promotion of its members' role in the formulation and effective implementation of good governance policies, as well as the development of the profession of Chartered Secretary and Chartered Governance Professional in Hong Kong and throughout the Mainland.

HKICS was first established in 1949 as an association of Hong Kong members of The Chartered Governance Institute (CGI), formerly known as The Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators (ICSA) of London. It was a branch of CGI in 1990 before gaining local status in 1994 and has also been CGI's China Division since 2005.

HKICS is a founder member of Corporate Secretaries International Association (CSIA), which was established in March 2010 in Geneva, Switzerland. In 2017, CSIA was relocated to Hong Kong where it operates as a company limited by guarantee. CSIA aims to give a global voice to corporate secretaries and governance professionals.

HKICS has more than 6,000 members and 3,200 students.

For more information, please visit www.hkics.org.hk.

What is a Chartered Secretary?

Chartered Secretaries are senior professionals equipped with a broad skill set encompassing corporate law, accounting and finance, governance, strategy, tax and corporate secretarial practice. They principally work as company secretaries or in related roles and are the primary source of advice on corporate governance to their board. This can span everything from legal and accounting advice, to strategy development and corporate planning.

What is a Chartered Governance Professional?

Chartered Governance Professionals are highly qualified and experienced professionals who have a deep understanding of governance and risk management across listed companies, private and not-for-profit organisations. In view of the ever more complex regulatory environment under which organisations now operate, the skills and knowledge possessed by members of this profession – in roles such as risk managers and compliance managers – are becoming increasingly sought-after.

Chartered Secretaries and Chartered Governance Professionals are the standard bearers for good business practice. They are obliged to uphold the highest standards of governance and ethical behaviour in the organisations for which they work.



Chartered Secretaries and Chartered Governance Professionals play a central role in promoting and maintaining corporate governance in an ever-changing world, in particular in Hong Kong and the Mainland with stock markets growing in size, complexity and statutory and regulatory compliance requirements.

David Fu FCIS FCS(PE), Company Secretary, Swire Pacific Limited



Developing your potential

The dual qualification of Chartered Secretary and Chartered Governance Professional awarded by HKICS provides opportunities in a wide range of career paths.

The qualification offers an excellent foundation for you to develop your career in roles such as senior executive positions, company secretaries, risk managers, compliance officers and administrators.

Members of HKICS often act as company secretaries of listed companies, senior management of corporate service providers, financial controllers, chief governance officers and compliance directors.



Based on my working experience in the international finance community in Hong Kong and the Mainland, Chartered Secretaries and Chartered Governance Professionals play an important role in upholding corporate governance and assisting the board of directors of corporations handle challenges arisen from new regulations, technology and rapid changing business environment. If you plan to pursue your career in the finance industry, there are ample opportunities ahead to be a qualified member of the Institute.

Ma Chan Chi, Company Secretary, China Construction Bank Corporation

Sample roles and responsibilities of Chartered Secretaries and Chartered Governance Professionals

Facilitating board and shareholder meetings

Advising the board and management on all aspects of corporate governance

Ensuring regulatory compliance

Identifying and managing potential risk

Sample employment opportunities

Company Secretary in a wide range of different entities

Risk/ Compliance officer, Corporate Administrator

Executive and non-executive directors, chief executive and board chairman

Governance Officer, Investor Relations

Joining a respected and international profession

The Chartered Secretary and Chartered Governance Professional qualification is recognised and respected in Hong Kong and the Mainland and will also give you the skills and the opportunity to work in a range of different jurisdictions around the world. Graduates of HKICS are also graduates of The Chartered Governance Institute (CGI), which has over 30,000 members and 10,000 students worldwide. HKICS is a founder member of Corporate Secretaries International Association Limited (CSIA) which represents approximately 100,000 governance professionals in more than 70 jurisdictions.

Members of HKICS enjoy many opportunities to work in the Mainland. Not only because there is a huge demand in the Mainland for governance professionals, but also due to the involvement of HKICS in shaping and assisting the development of the corporate secretarial and governance professions in the Mainland.

“ If Chartered Secretaries and Chartered Governance Professionals are true to their calling, they are the conscience of the organisation they work for, be it commercial, financial, educational, or otherwise. They uphold the governance and integrity of their workplace and inculcate a corporate culture of best practice and compliance for the long term sustainability of their organisation.

Edith Shih FCIS FCS(PE), Executive Director & Company Secretary, CK Hutchison Holdings Limited

HKICS members are recognised as:

Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Ltd

Company secretaries at listed companies

Hong Kong Bar Association

Professionals with direct access to barristers

Companies Registry

Professional company secretaries

Official Receiver's Office

Professionals eligible to act as trustees in bankruptcy cases

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

Professionals able to certify verification of identification documents

Your career path

Your route to membership of HKICS starts with a recognised university degree or a recognised professional qualification. University graduates in accounting, finance, management, corporate governance or law are eligible to apply for exemption from Chartered Governance Qualifying Programme (CGQP) examinations. You may then register as a student of HKICS and opt to either sit CGQP examinations or take one of the Master's degree programmes offered by four local universities under a Collaborative Course Agreement with HKICS. Students who successfully complete CGQP, either by examinations or collaborative courses and/or exemptions, become graduates of both HKICS and CGI.

HKICS will launch the CGQP in January 2020, replacing the current International Qualifying Scheme (IQS). The new programme places a greater emphasis on risk management and compliance, a revised focus on finance and decision-making, as well as introducing a new module on boardroom dynamics.

Once graduates have acquired the requisite work experience, they may apply to become a member of HKICS/CGI. All prospective members must declare they are fit and proper for admission to HKICS and be recommended by two referees who are professionals, one of whom must be a member of both HKICS and CGI. Successful applicants become an Associate of both HKICS and CGI and, with the requisite further work experience, Associates may apply to become Fellows.

“Becoming a Chartered Secretary and Chartered Governance Professional simultaneously is to join an exclusive club. It's a world-wide recognised qualification that provides opportunities for its members to work in almost any country and to be involved in a great variety of work that makes most days different from the last.

Neil Olofsson FCIS, Corporation Secretary and Regional Company Secretary Asia-Pacific, The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited

“With the opening up of the Mainland Chinese capital market, the Chinese board secretarial community continues to bring value to companies and society. The Chartered Secretary and Chartered Governance Professional qualification equips Chinese board secretaries with key multi-disciplinary knowledge in governance, risk management, law, finance and boardroom dynamics as they increasingly get in touch with the global market.

Dr Gao Wei FCIS FCS(PE), Board Secretary & Chief Financial Officer, Zhongguancun Science-Tech Leasing Company Limited

ROUTE TO MEMBERSHIP



Chartered Governance Qualifying Programme (CGQP) Effective from January 2020

Part One

- Corporate Governance
- Corporate Secretaryship and Compliance
- Hong Kong Company Law
- Interpreting Financial and Accounting Information

Part Two

- Strategic Management
- Risk Management
- Boardroom Dynamics or Hong Kong Taxation (electives)

For details of the syllabuses, please visit the Institute's website: www.hkics.org.hk.



As an Independent Non-executive Director (INED) of several companies and being a qualified Chartered Secretary and Chartered Governance Professional myself, I found that the role of Company Secretary is indispensable in ensuring a company and its board in conforming the increasingly demanding regulatory and listing requirements to the highest standard. The role of Company Secretary will become more and more significant when the corporate governance environment in Hong Kong continues to evolve in complexity and quality standard. I strongly feel that a qualified and competent company secretary is both a facilitator and a trusted adviser to the board members in fulfilment of their ever-changing roles and duties.

Richard Ho FCIS FCS, INED of several listed and non-listed companies

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