

33pc of teacher trainees fail on old criteria

By STELLA LEE

ABOUT one-third of the three-year course students admitted for teacher training at the colleges of education under their new criteria failed to meet the previous stringent academic rules, a survey has found.

The study, to be discussed at today's Legislative Council education panel meeting, shows that 149 students admitted for the three-year course designed to train teachers for primary and secondary schools would not have been previously considered.

The Education Department survey appears to contradict department denials of any lowering of standards.

A department spokesman said the revised arrangement aimed to widen the pool of candidates by allowing flexibility to be built into the system, with the minimum admission criteria remaining unchanged.

Candidates must have at least six passes in the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination and must have a total of 11 points or above in the best six subjects (calculated on the basis of one point for a Grade E).

The six subjects can be obtained in two sittings with at least four subjects in one sitting. This compares to the old admission criteria under which students had to obtain all qualifications in one sitting.

Among the 149 students, some — although they were able to obtain passes in six to eight subjects in one sitting — did not meet the 11-point minimum requirement. Others met the 11-point re-

■ TWO members of the Education Commission who resigned last week said yesterday they were glad to see the body had agreed to study pre-school education.

Professor Arthur Li Kwok-cheung, chairman of Chinese University's Surgery Department, and Dr Paul Morris, a reader at Hong Kong University's Department of Curriculum Studies, quit in protest against the commission's attitude towards pre-school and special education.

"This is a very good sign," Professor Li said.

quirement but did not get sufficient passes in one sitting.

"A comparison between the intakes into three-year courses in 1992 and 1993 shows that in both years the intakes cluster around six to eight subjects and 11 to 18 grade points," the survey said.

"The difference in standards as reflected by these two indicators is marginal and statistically insignificant."

But the chairman of the Joint College of Education Reviewing Committee, Cathy Wong Siu-fong, worried that the lowering of admission criteria would affect the future teachers' standards.

"You need to have a good academic standard if you want to be a teacher," she said, adding that the students mainly study teaching methods at the colleges and there was only a minor proportion there for the enhancement of their academic knowledge.