

Administrators attack adult education policy

By CATHERINE BECK

THE Government had shown "a lack of understanding and insight" about the important role adult education could play in Hongkong's future, educational administrators said yesterday.

Their complaints culminated in a call for immediate government attention to the

matters of funding and responsibility for such programmes - perhaps in the form of a policy paper on the issue.

The pro-vice-chancellor of the Chinese University, Professor Tam Sheung-wai, said recent government policy towards rapid tertiary expansion should not be achieved at the expense of programmes for those who left school long ago.

He called on the Government to assume responsibility for the overall planning of adult education. "Then tuition fees could be cheaper and courses available more expensive," Professor Tam said.

"I hope that the Government can take further steps in assessing degrees and professional qualifications received outside the conventional education systems."

He and others speaking at yesterday's joint commencement day of 25 local Caritas adult educational centres said local opportunities for adult education were a key to future manpower needs.

Dr Theresa Shak Wai-han, co-ordinator of Caritas Adult and Higher Education Services, called reports of the administration's efforts to restrict the adult educa-

tion budget "mystifying".

The Government, and in particular the Education Department, "patently neglects the needs of the very people who brought success and prosperity to Hongkong" through its unsupportive policies, Dr Shak said.

She suggested that an Adult Education Board should be set up to co-ordinate government, subvented, and private interests.