

EDB(CD)/ADM/55/1/89(2)

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3 July 2007

Miss Odelia Leung,
Legislative Council Secretariat,
Legislative Council Building,
8 Jackson Road,
Central,

Dear Miss Leung,

Panel on Education
Administration Responses to Questions raised by
Hon Fernando Cheung and Hon Audrey Eu

I refer to the questions raised by Hon Fernando Cheung and Hon Audrey Eu at the meeting of the Panel on Education held on 25 May 2007 where Members discussed issues relating to the preparation for the New Senior Secondary (NSS) academic structure (334). The Administration's responses are as follows:

Hon Fernando Cheung's question: What is the flexibility exercised by the UGC-funded institutions in admission requirements for ethnic minority students and students with Special Educational Needs (SEN)?

(a) With regard to the admission requirements for ethnic minority students are concerned, the Administration is aiming to circulate to the Panel, before the end of July 2007, a progress report on its discussions with the UGC-funded institutions on further flexibility in the application of the Chinese Language requirement.

(b) As regards admission requirements for students with SEN, the Subcommittee to Study Issues Relating to the Provision of Boarding Places, Senior Secondary Education and Employment Opportunities for Children with Special Educational Needs has raised the same issue at its April meeting. The Administration would provide a written response to the Subcommittee.

Hon Audrey Eu's question: What are the criteria for the allocation of the additional funding of up to \$20 million to each of the eight UGC-funded institutions in support of their planning work for the development of undergraduate curriculum under the 334 structure, as well as the one-off grant of \$550 million earmarked for the UGC sector?

(a) To ensure a smooth implementation of a four-year normative undergraduate programme under the new academic structure, it is important for the UGC-funded institutions to start their curriculum planning early. The UGC has reserved up to \$20 million for each UGC-funded institution as extra resources over a three year period to support the institutions' planning and preparation work, starting from 2006/07. To be eligible for funding, each institution had to submit a proposal outlining their plan and proposed usage. In deciding the funding allocation, the UGC has taken into account relevant factors such as institutions' needs, the merits of their proposals, and whether the requested funding is relevant to the preparation of the undergraduate curriculum under the new academic structure, etc.

(b) As regards the \$550 million which had been earmarked for the institutions, it should be noted that the bulk of these funds, as indicated in the Finance Committee Paper (FCR (2005-06)24), are intended to be disbursed from 2009-10 onwards. However, the UGC is already in discussions with institutions about the funding allocation. In order to give assurance of the amount and timing of release of the funds, the UGC intends to make decisions soon.

Thank you for your attention and action. For enquires, please contact Dr S K Kwan at 2892 5817.

Yours sincerely,

(Chris WARDLAW)
for Secretary for Education Bureau