

**HKU SPACE Community College  
and  
HKU SPACE Po Leung Kuk Community College**

**Written Submission for LEGCO Meeting (Panel on Education) on 11 January 2013**

1. HKU SPACE as the extension arm of HKU, responded to government's request in 1999 to expand post-secondary provision by
  - (i) Establishing the HKU SPACE Community College (HKUSPACE CC) in 2000, to offer Associate Degree and Higher Diploma programmes. This was followed by setting up another community college in collaboration with Po Leung Kuk, the HKU SPACE Po Leung Kuk Community College (HPCC), in 2006.
  - (ii) Providing quality teaching and responding to the needs of society and students wishing to pursue post-secondary education.
2. In 2011/12, the University, together with HKU SPACE, established a self-funded college, Centennial College, to offer self-financed degree programmes. This was again in response to government policy and community needs.
3. Suggestions to the government:
  - (i) The support provided by government via land grants and interest-free loans is important in facilitating the necessary purpose-built campus facilities to meet the needs of students for a decent campus life. However, start-up grants are also needed as it is difficult to provide sufficient resources for development based on fee income alone.
  - (ii) Help to increase the recognition of Associate Degrees and Higher Diplomas by providing more government positions for holders of these qualifications.
  - (iii) Educating the public more clearly that:
    - two more years of associate degree/higher diploma education better prepares the students for further study or to join the work force;
    - Associate Degree/Higher Diploma programmes give students who failed to get into university a second chance;
    - two more years of education for the high school leavers helps elevate the education level of our society.
4. Experience gained from 2012/13 admissions

The 2012/13 academic year presents a unique and unprecedented set of circumstances given the double cohort which resulted in some 45,000 qualified applicants for University entry (AL + DSE). In addition, a further 20,000 DSE

applicants were qualified for entry to sub-degree programmes. Since the UGC funded places could not admit more than 30,000 applicants, the self-financed sector should play its part in responding to legitimate community expectations to provide further education opportunities.

For the two community colleges of HKU SPACE, more than double the number of applications in 2011 were received (22,000 for HKUSPACE CC and 9,365 for HPCC). These represent 5 and 6 times of the target numbers for the two colleges, 4,101 and 1,544, respectively. It should be stressed that these figures were a forecast and not an indication of capacity.

Steps were taken therefore in the light of the heavy demand, to consider whether quality provision could be made to allow for the admission of more well qualified students. This provision was achieved through appointing additional teachers, seeking the help of existing teachers and by securing extra learning centre facilities. Ultimately some 5,687 and 3,008 new students were admitted with some programmes ceasing admission way before the deadlines where capacity limits were reached. This admissions figure represents some 26% and 32% of applications received, lower than the historical average.

Moreover we have also encountered unexpected circumstances. For example the hit rate i.e. acceptance of offer was more than 10% higher than the previous year. The percentage of DSE students gaining minimum entrance requirement for sub-degree programmes was almost 10% higher than expected. Such variation and inexperience of dealing with DSE applications also contributed to the higher intake.

The quality of the students accepted was high. For example, the average score of the best five subjects including Chinese Language and English Language of the DSE students admitted to HKUSPACE CC was 15.8. That represents an average achievement of higher than 3,3,3,3,3 which is above the minimum university entrance requirement of 3,3,2,2,2. It would have been remiss not to offer as much opportunity for study as feasible to qualified applicants while maintaining quality provision. Moreover, our track record of AD/HD students progressing to degree study is good with over 60% securing University places and with the vast majority of the remainder finding employment.

We believe it is unlikely that the circumstances of the double cohort year will be repeated and anticipate that the number of applications and admissions will decline in future, particularly in view of the falling secondary school graduate numbers in the next few years. We also anticipate that we may be able better to predict the number of admissions in the light of experience of demand from DSE applicants.