



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部教育局  
Education Bureau  
Government Secretariat, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region  
The People's Republic of China

本局檔號 Our Ref. : EDB(HE)CR 3/2041/03

電話 Telephone : 3509 8501

來函檔號 Your Ref. :

傳真 Fax Line : 2804 6499

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Clerk to Panel  
Legislative Council Panel on Education  
Legislative Council Complex  
1 Legislative Council Road  
Central  
Hong Kong  
(Attn: Ms Angel Wong)

Dear Ms Wong,

**Legislative Council Panel on Education**  
**Follow-up to the Meeting on 4 January 2019**

At the meeting on 4 January 2019, Members of the Panel on Education requested the provision of supplementary information on two agenda items, namely "Eighth Matching Grant Scheme" and "Recurrent funding for University Grants Committee-funded universities". The Government's response is set out below.

The Eighth Matching Grant Scheme

The Matching Grant Scheme (MGS) is a non-recurrent scheme that mainly seeks to help the higher education sector diversify its funding sources. When planning a new round of MGS, the Government will define the coverage of the exercise upon careful consideration of the then state of development of the higher education sector as a whole, as well as the needs of publicly-funded and self-financing post-secondary institutions. Regarding the eighth MGS, given that the seventh MGS launched in August 2017 for application by eligible local self-financing degree-awarding institutions is still running with uncommitted funds (i.e. \$500 million), self-financing institutions will not be included in the eighth MGS.

網址 : <http://www.edb.gov.hk> 電子郵件 : [edbinfo@edb.gov.hk](mailto:edbinfo@edb.gov.hk)  
Web site : <http://www.edb.gov.hk> E-mail : [edbinfo@edb.gov.hk](mailto:edbinfo@edb.gov.hk)

香港添馬添美道 2 號政府總部東翼 7 樓 7/F, East Wing, Central Government Offices, 2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong

## Recurrent Funding for University Grants Committee-funded Universities

### *Research postgraduate places and the related allocation mechanism*

Prior to 2009, research postgraduate (RPg) places were allocated en bloc in accordance with the roles and missions of the University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded universities. To support the development of the universities, a consensus was subsequently reached between the UGC and the universities to introduce a competitive mechanism for the allocation of RPg places, provided that –

- (a) its operation will not upset the stable development of the universities; and
- (b) it is multi-faceted and based on the assessment of research findings, such as peer reviews.

The allocation mechanism has since gone through years of development and incorporated certain competitive elements. In the 2019/20 to 2021/22 triennium, a total of 5 595 RPg places will be allocated using the following six methods –

- (a) 405 places to be allocated under the Hong Kong PhD Fellowship Scheme (HKPFS);
- (b) 600 places to be allocated on the basis of universities' performance as assessed by the Research Grants Council (RGC) under its funding schemes;
- (c) 600 places to be allocated on the basis of the results of Research Assessment Exercise 2014;
- (d) 600 places to be allocated on the basis of the outcome-based evaluation of RPg programmes;
- (e) 600 places to be allocated under the HKPFS and/or on the basis of universities' performance as assessed by RGC under its funding schemes; and
- (f) the remaining 2 790 places to be allocated as per past practice, that is, en bloc in accordance with the roles and missions of the universities.



In the next three years, the provision of RPg places will stay at the level of 5 595. According to the six allocation methods set out above, the distribution of indicative student number targets of UGC-funded RPg programmes in full-time equivalent terms for the 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22 academic years is set out at **Annex**. The unallocated RPg places for the 2019/20 to 2021/22 triennium and will be subject to the results of HKPFS and RGC funding schemes in the next few years. Ultimately, all 5 595 places will be allocated to the eight UGC-funded universities.

### *Cash Limit*

The recommended Cash Limit for the entire UGC-funded sector for the 2019/20 to 2021/22 triennium is about \$20.2 billion per year on average, 12.8% up from the \$17.9 billion for 2018/19, and the increase can be attributed mostly to the following factors –

	Increase in Cash Limit (%)
Necessary price and pay adjustments	about 10% (Note)
Top-up funding for additional UGC-funded first-year-first-degree and taught postgraduate places for healthcare disciplines	about 1%
Changes in student numbers, student unit costs and other factors	about 2%

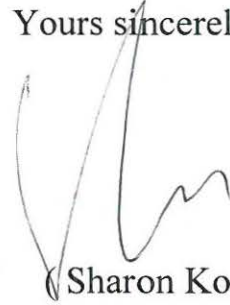
Note: The calculation of the Cash Limit for the 2019/20 to 2021/22 triennium is based on the price and pay levels in 2018, while that for the 2016/17 to 2018/19 triennium is based on the levels in 2015. The increase in Cash Limit reflects the price and pay adjustments over the three years from 2015 to 2018.

### *Joint provision of a Bachelor Veterinary Medicine Programme by the City University of Hong Kong and Cornell University of the United States*

The Government was advised by the City University of Hong Kong (CityU) that it had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Cornell University of the United States in 2009 to establish a long term strategic partnership in world-class veterinary and biomedical education and research. The MOU covered a wide range of areas, including programme design, research development, specialist facilities development, student and staff recruitment, quality oversight, etc. The two universities will keep the MOU under review and update it when necessary. CityU will continue to maintain close communication with relevant government departments and the UGC to ensure that the UGC-funded Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine Programme meets both international

standards and the requirements of local monitoring authorities, and that the veterinary programme and related research can cater for the overall development needs of Hong Kong. Since the MOU is a confidential institutional instrument signed between CityU and Cornell University, CityU is unable to provide the full text.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Sharon Ko', written over a faint circular stamp.

( Sharon Ko )  
for Secretary for Education

Encl.

c.c. Secretary-General, University Grants Committee

**Tentative distribution of indicative student number targets of  
UGC-funded research postgraduate programmes  
for 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22**

(in full-time equivalent terms)

University	Tentative allocation of research postgraduate places among UGC-funded universities		
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
City University of Hong Kong	581	500	425
Hong Kong Baptist University	221	190	160
Lingnan University	56	48	40
The Chinese University of Hong Kong	1 381	1 267	1 174
The Education University of Hong Kong	73	62	49
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	574	497	437
The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	1 027	913	818
The University of Hong Kong	1 432	1 314	1 206
Pending the latest results of Hong Kong PhD Fellowship Scheme and Research Grants Council funding schemes	250	804	1 286
<b>Total</b>	<b>5 595</b>	<b>5 595</b>	<b>5 595</b>