

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(2)2016/03-04

(These minutes have been  
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PL/ED

**Panel on Education**

**Minutes of meeting  
held on Monday, 15 March 2004 at 4:30 pm  
in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building**

- Members present** : Hon YEUNG Yiu-chung, BBS (Chairman)  
Dr Hon YEUNG Sum (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan  
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong  
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung  
Hon SIN Chung-kai  
Hon Jasper TSANG Yok-sing, GBS, JP  
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP  
Hon SZETO Wah  
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, JP  
Dr Hon LO Wing-lok, JP  
Hon WONG Sing-chi  
Hon Audrey EU Yuet-mee, SC, JP
- Members absent** : Dr Hon David CHU Yu-lin, JP  
Hon MA Fung-kwok, JP
- Public Officers attending** : Mr Michael STONE, JP  
Secretary-General  
University Grants Committee
- Ms Irene YOUNG  
Principal Assistant Secretary for Education and  
Manpower (Higher Education)

**Attendance by invitation** : The Federation of the Hong Kong Higher Education Institutions Staff Associations

Professor SHUM Kar-ping  
Chairman

Dr Fred CHIU  
Council Member

Academic Staff Association, The University of Hong Kong

Mr CHAN Che-wai  
Chairman

Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union

Mr CHAN King-ming  
Ordinary Executive Committee Member

Non-Academic Staff Association, The University of Hong Kong

Mr Stephen CHAN Chit-kwai, JP  
President

Teachers' Association of The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Professor CHANG Song-hing

Staff Association of The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Mr WONG Lung  
Adviser

Hong Kong University of Science and Technology Staff Association

Mr LAM Kin-lai  
Chairman

Hong Kong Polytechnic University Staff Association

Dr CHAN Chun-wah  
Chairman

Dr Joseph LEE Heung-wing  
Assistant Secretary

The Academic Staff Association of Hong Kong Institute  
of Education

Mr WONG Ping-ho  
Executive Committee Member

Lingnan University Staff Representative

Mr LI Pang-kwong  
Associate Professor

Mr NG Kwai-wah  
Senior Research Administration Officer

City University of Hong Kong Staff Association

Mr FUNG Wai-wah

City University of Hong Kong Students' Union

Mr Kevin CHAN Ka-wang  
President

Miss Keith LAM Sze-wun  
Executive Committee

Hong Kong Polytechnic University Students' Union

Mr LAI Chun-kit  
President

Mr Sin Ka-kui  
Deputy President (External)

Hong Kong University Students' Union

Mr CHAN Chi-kin  
President

Mr HO Chun-shing  
(Internal) Vice President

Lingnan University Students' Union

Mr HO Chung-hei  
President

Mr WONG Tsz-fung  
External Vice President

**Clerk in attendance** : Ms Doris CHAN  
Chief Council Secretary (2)2

**Staff in attendance** : Mr Stanley MA  
Senior Council Secretary (2)6

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**I. Confirmation of minutes**

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1640/03-04 and CB(2)1645/03-04]

The minutes of the meetings held on 14 and 30 January 2004 were confirmed.

**II. Information paper(s) issued since the last meeting**

2. Members noted that no information paper had been issued since the last meeting.

**III. Items for discussion at the next meeting**

[Appendices I and II to LC Paper No. CB(2)1638/03-04]

3. Members agreed to discuss the following items at the next regular meeting scheduled for Monday, 19 April 2004 at 4:30 pm -

- (a) Way forward on Information Technology in education; and
- (b) Consolidation of high cost and under-utilized primary schools.

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Clerk

4. Members agreed to invite members of the Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting to join the discussion of item (a) above, and the primary schools which would not be allocated a Primary One class in the 2004-05 school year to give views on item (b) above. Mr SZETO Wah suggested that the Clerk should request the Administration to provide the particulars of the affected primary schools.

**IV. Future developments in the higher education sector**

5. The Chairman informed the meeting that the Panel had invited the eight University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded institutions to send representatives to present their views on the UGC document entitled "To make a difference, to move with the times" (the Document) [LC Paper No. CB(2)1076/03-04(01)]. The eight institutions had replied that they would not send representatives to the meeting. The City University of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and the Chinese University of Hong Kong had provided written submissions to the Panel [LC Paper Nos CB(2)1638/03-04 (01) to (04)] while the University of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Institute of Education responded by letter, copies of which were forwarded to members vide LC Paper No.CB(2)1656 /03-04 on 12 March 2004.

Meeting with deputations and the Administration

6. The Chairman welcomed representatives of the Administration and the 15 deputations to the meeting. At the invitation of the Chairman, representatives of the 15 deputations presented their views which were summarized in paragraphs 7 to 23 below.

*Federation of Hong Kong Higher Education Institutions Staff Associations  
[LC Paper No.CB(2)1722/03-04(02)]*

7. Dr Fred CHUI presented the views of the Federation of the Hong Kong Higher Education Institutions Staff Associations (the Federation) as detailed in its submission which was tabled at the meeting.

8. Professor SHUM Kar-ping said that the new strategic role of UGC in steering the UGC sector was in conflict with the principles of institutional autonomy and academic freedom. He pointed out that the role and functions of UGC was inherited from colonial administration and such an organisation was found only in a few countries today.

9. Professor SHUM emphasized that the Federation held a strong view that UGC-funded institutions should be independent and autonomous in both academic and non-academic areas, and their future developments should not be

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led by UGC by way of a performance and role related funding mechanism. In particular, the Federation strongly objected to the proposal that UGC could withhold 10% of the recurrent funding for institutions, which the Federation considered should be allocated to institutions without conditions. Professor SHUM suggested that the Panel should examine the role of UGC in the future development of the higher education sector.

*Academic Staff Association, The University of Hong Kong*

10. Mr CHAN Chi-wai said that the Academic Staff Association of the University of Hong Kong strongly opposed the proposed direction in steering the higher education sector as set out in the Document. Mr CHAN pointed out that members of the UGC and its committees were serving on a voluntary basis. Since they were not frontline educational professionals, they did not have the necessary expertise to steer the future development of the higher education sector and only acted in accordance with the instructions of the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) in the administration of the higher education sector. Mr CHAN considered the proposed role related funding mechanism a form of indirect government intervention in institutional autonomy and academic freedom. Mr CHAN suggested that UGC and its committees should include representatives from the Federation and staff associations of the institutions.

*Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union*  
*[LC Paper No. CB(2)1701/03-04(01)]*

11. Mr CHAN King-ming presented the views of the Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union as detailed in its submission. Whilst supporting that the higher education sector should play a key role in building Hong Kong as Asia's World City, driving forward the economic and social development of society and developing Hong Kong into the education hub of the region, the Union did not agree that UGC should play an active role in steering the higher education sector and provide planned education programmes and developments for institutions to follow. Mr CHAN stressed that institutional autonomy and academic freedom should be maintained and respected in the future development of the higher education sector.

*Non-Academic Staff Association, The University of Hong Kong*  
*[LC Paper No. CB(2)1670/03-04(01)]*

12. Mr CHAN Chit-kwai presented the views of the Non-Academic Staff Association of the University of Hong Kong as detailed in its submission which was tabled at the meeting. Mr CHAN said that the Association supported long-term collaboration between institutions to maximize the efficiency of the higher education sector, and the adoption of a three-year and a four-year structure for senior secondary school education and undergraduate programmes in universities respectively. The Association also suggested that the Government

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should continue to provide funding support for sub-degree and taught post-graduate degree programmes as it would help achieve the objective that the higher education sector in Hong Kong should serve as the education hub of the region.

*Teachers' Association of The Chinese University of Hong Kong*

13. Professor CHANG Song-hing said that coordination of institutional efforts in the course of implementation was important in enhancing the benefits of collaboration. Professor CHANG cited the existing different application and enrolment procedures for post-graduate programmes offered by UGC-funded institutions to illustrate the need to collaborate efforts among institutions. Professor CHANG also pointed out that individuality was a distinctive and indispensable element in certain areas of research such as liberal arts, and should not be overlooked in the face of an emphasis on collaboration of efforts. He also cautioned that the value of research work should not be assessed solely from an economic or social perspective, and the priority of research work should also not be determined by its short-term economic value.

*Staff Association of The Chinese University of Hong Kong*

14. Mr WONG Lung said that the role of UGC in the higher education sector was unclear and kept changing in the past few years. Mr WONG considered the current governance structure of the Chinese University of Hong Kong effective and there was no need for UGC to interfere with its management by introducing a performance and role related funding mechanism for the 2005-08 triennium. Mr WONG expressed support for including representatives of the Federation in the membership of relevant UGC working groups.

*Hong Kong University of Science and Technology Staff Association*

15. Mr LAM Kin-lai said that the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology Staff Association supported role differentiation and deep collaboration between institutions, development of the Hong Kong higher education sector to be the education hub of the region, facilitation of knowledge exchange between Hong Kong and the Mainland, and adoption of a four-year structure for undergraduate programmes. The Association suggested that the Government should encourage private endowment to support institutional research projects, and assure that role differentiation and deep collaboration between institutions would not result in reduction of staff. Mr LAM said that the Association agreed with the comments of the other deputations regarding the inclusion of representatives of the Federation in relevant UGC working groups and the proposed withholding of 10% recurrent funding under the performance and role related funding mechanism.

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*Hong Kong Polytechnic University Staff Association  
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1722/03-04(01)]*

16. Dr CHAN Chun-wah and Dr Joseph LEE presented the views of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University Staff Association in its submission which was tabled at the meeting. They highlighted that the Association strongly objected to the adoption of a performance and role related funding mechanism by UGC to interfere with institutional autonomy and academic freedom, and expressed disappointment that the Document had not provided a blueprint for the future development of higher education in Hong Kong. The Association strongly requested that UGC should consult staff of UGC-funded institutions and incorporate representatives of the Federation into its policy formulation process.

*The Academic Staff Association of Hong Kong Institute of Education  
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1670/03-04(02)]*

17. Mr WONG Ping-ho introduced the submission of the Academic Staff Association of Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd). He highlighted the concern of the Association on the planned supply of places in the academic programmes of HKIEd for the 2005-08 triennium, which would concentrate on the training and development of pre-service and in-service English teachers. He considered that UGC had deviated from its terms of reference and cited examples to illustrate that UGC had acted on the instruction of EMB to interfere with the supply of education programme places in HKIEd. The Association considered that UGC should consult relevant institutions, in particular the Advisory Committee on Teacher Education and Qualifications, on the provision of education programmes for the new triennium. The Association strongly suggested that the role of UGC in the higher education sector should be reviewed.

*Lingnan University Staff Representative*

18. Mr LI Pang-kwong said that in proposing to strengthen its role in strategic planning and policy development for the higher education sector, UGC should examine whether it had the necessary resources and talents to achieve the task. Mr LI also considered that UGC should improve the transparency of its funding allocation process, in particular the formula for calculating funding allocation. Mr LI expressed support for higher education to play a key role in social development and provide the depth and breadth of people who could participate in making Hong Kong a vibrant, economically powerful, cultured, civilized and socially active and responsible society. Mr LI also agreed that it was important to nurture a core of local faculty in local universities who would engage themselves heavily with the local community as their social and public role was vital to the development of a civil society and the quality of life.



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*City University of Hong Kong Staff Association  
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1722/03-04(03)]*

19. Mr FUNG Wai-wah presented the views of the City University of Hong Kong Staff Association in its submission which was tabled at the meeting. The Association considered that the Administration should continue to subsidize sub-degree and taught post-graduate programmes offered by institutions, consult stakeholders in the establishment of a blueprint for the future development of the higher education sector, and ensure that institutions would not sacrifice their staff in their pursuit of deep collaboration and cost-effectiveness in the future.

*City University of Hong Kong Students' Union*

20. Mr Kevin CHAN said that City University of Hong Kong Students' Union welcomed the proposals in the Document. The Students' Union considered that role differentiation and deep collaboration among UGC-funded institutions would promote efficiency, diversity and excellence in higher education. Mr CHAN said that students would like to be informed of the progress of the collaboration among institutions, and to exchange views with UGC on the future development of the higher education sector. Mr CHAN stressed that students should be allowed to participate in matters relating to the development of universities.

*Hong Kong Polytechnic University Students' Union*

21. Mr LAI Chun-kit said that the Hong Kong Polytechnic University Students' Union strongly objected to role differentiation among institutions. The Students' Union considered that the Document had focused on the role of UGC instead of the blueprint for the future development of higher education. Mr LAI stressed that UGC should continue to play the role of an effective coordinator in the higher education sector. Mr SIN Ka-kui added that the Students' Union strongly opposed the policy of withholding 10% of the recurrent funding to force institutions to focus research efforts on their areas of strength, which was in violation of the principle of academic freedom.

*Hong Kong University Students' Union*

22. Mr CHAN Chi-kin said that the Hong Kong University Students' Union supported role differentiation and collaboration among UGC-funded institutions in the future development of the higher education sector. Mr CHAN stressed the importance of institutional autonomy and academic freedom, and said that UGC should not attempt to influence academic development through resources allocation. Mr CHAN considered it impractical to expect institutions to achieve international competitiveness in the face of funding cuts for the UGC sector. Mr CHAN hoped that the Administration would formulate and publish a blueprint for implementing the proposed three-year senior secondary education and four-

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year university education.

*Lingnan University Students' Union*

23. Mr HO Chung-hai said that the Lingnan University Students' Union looked forward to the support of UGC for Lingnan University to become an excellent liberal arts institution. However, the Students' Union considered that the inclusion of other subject areas such as Science in the University's strategic role statements would facilitate all-round development of its students. The Students' Union welcomed enhancing collaboration among institutions but questioned the need to withhold 10% of recurrent funding as it would underpin institutional autonomy and quality of education in the long term. The Students' Union also considered that the Administration should increase funding for Lingnan University and improve the transparency of UGC in steering the higher education sector.

Administration's responses to deputations' concerns

24. At the invitation of the Chairman, Secretary General, University Grants Committee (SG(UGC)) said that the Higher Education Review in 2002 had set out the blueprint for the future development of the higher education sector, which included the recommendation to strengthen role differentiation and encourage collaboration among UGC-funded institutions to promote diversity and excellence. To follow up and implement the blueprint, UGC would play a more proactive role to steer institutions towards clear role differentiation, facilitate deep collaboration among institutions in advancement of their respective roles, and to facilitate excellence to emerge through fair and constructive competition. With this in mind, UGC had worked with institutions to review their role statements based on their strengths, and institutions had agreed to the strategic role statements in Annex A of the Document. The objective was to improve efficiency and enhance role differentiation among institutions.

25. SG(UGC) further said that the Higher Education Review also recommended sharpening the funding mechanism to enhance cost-effectiveness of the sector in the light of the community's expectation. In essence, the performance and role related funding mechanism would put greater emphasis on performance and role. SG(UGC) explained that the scheme was first carried out in 2000 when 2% of the recurrent funding for the sector was allocated on the basis of the institutions' performance and role-related efforts. The increase of the performance and role-related funding from 2% to 10% for the 2005-08 triennium was an augmentation of the scheme based on the recommendations of the Higher Education Review which were endorsed by UGC and the Administration. The aim of the scheme was to stimulate institutions to work towards better performance and more strategic developments in accordance with their roles, and not to reduce funding for individual institutions.

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26. SG(UGC) pointed out that four of the universities had specifically written in to the Panel in support of role differentiation and deep collaboration as set out in the Document, while two others had said they had no problems with the proposed direction. None had voiced objection. SG(UGC) stressed that the role of UGC and the performance and role related funding mechanism were aimed at enhancing the cost-effectiveness of the UGC sector, and should not have any adverse impact on institutional autonomy and academic freedom. In fact, UGC would strive towards creating a clear framework for institutions to plan their development programmes in their own way. Since public funds constituted 80% of the total funding requirements of the sector and in the face of the fiscal deficits, UGC would have to work with UGC-funded institutions to maximize the efficiency of the sector through role differentiation and deep collaboration between institutions to meet the expectation of the community in the long term.

27. SG(UGC) also referred to the report of the Institutional Integration Working Party published in March 2004 which had recommended that the proposed merger between the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) and the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) should not be further explored for the present.

Discussion

*Performance and role-related funding, role differentiation and deep collaboration*

28. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong considered that the increase of the performance and role-related funding from 2% to 10% of the block recurrent grant for the 2005-08 triennium would in effect change the role of UGC. Increasingly more emphasis would be placed on ensuring value for money in higher education. He expressed disappointment about the statement of the UGC Chairman that UGC-funded institutions would be more alert when their recurrent funding withheld by UGC was increased from 2% in the current academic year to 10% in the new triennium. He also considered the statement at variance with the role of UGC as a “buffer” to safeguard institutional autonomy and academic freedom. He questioned how institutions could maintain their autonomy and academic freedom when their academic development proposals had to be critically examined by UGC for funding allocation purpose. Ms Audrey EU also considered the statement made by the UGC Chairman at the press conference inappropriate and unacceptable.

29. SG(UGC) responded that at the press conference, the UGC Chairman had made it clear that UGC had no intention to penalize institutions by way of increasing the performance and role-related funding from 2% to 10%. He explained that the strategic role statements in the Document were recently agreed between institutions and UGC, and should reflect more clearly the

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distinctive role that each institution had in the higher education system. UGC hoped that all institutions would indeed fulfill their roles and have good performance and thus be allocated the 10% performance and role-related funding. In view of the current fiscal environment, it was reasonable to expect institutions to perform in accordance with their strategic roles in order to maximize the efficiency of the sector as a whole.

30. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong considered that each UGC-funded tertiary institution had a unique history of development and institutions with a short history should be given the time and freedom to develop their own strengths. Mr CHEUNG did not agree that UGC should interfere with the roles and academic developments of institutions for the sake of maximizing the efficiency of the sector in order to help reduce the fiscal deficits.

31. SG(UGC) responded that the strategic role statements would be subject to reviews at the end of the next triennium. UGC would welcome institutions to develop along the directions that they had informed UGC that they wished to develop in the long term.

32. Ms Cyd HO expressed concern about the impact of deep collaboration among institutions in the long term. Ms HO pointed out that deep collaboration between institutions might eventually lead to institutional integration ranging from full merger to loose affiliation, either at the institutional level or at the intra-institutional level. Ms HO further expressed concern about how institutions would determine and whether staff would be consulted on the closure of certain department or faculty as a result of institutional integration. Ms HO considered it important that UGC-funded institutions should develop a democratic governance structure so that staff would be thoroughly consulted before the adoption of any collaboration that would have a significant impact on staff employment and morale.

33. Dr Fred CHUI of the Federation cited his personal experience to support his claim that there were problems of governance in the UGC-funded institutions. Dr CHUI held a strong view that the benefits of staff should not be sacrificed in the implementation of deep collaboration between institutions and performance and role-related funding, and staff should not be penalized as a result of improper management by the governing bodies and heads of institutions under the performance and role-related funding. Dr CHUI expressed concern that the expanded performance and role related funding system would jeopardize the future development of the higher education sector.

34. Mr CHAN King-ming of the Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union expressed disappointment about the findings and recommendations of the report of the Institutional Integration Working Party as it acknowledged the value of institutional integration on the one hand but concluded that a merger between CUHK and HKUST was not viable on the other. Mr CHAN said that academic

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autonomy and freedom should not be sacrificed for the sake of improving cost-effectiveness and that the future developments of higher education should not be led by economic considerations. Mr CHAN also expressed concern that deep collaboration among institutions would jeopardize the unique features and merits of individual programmes.

35. Ms Audrey EU said that she had no objection to facilitating deep collaborations among institutions and maximizing efficiency in the higher education sector. She asked how the performance and role-related funding mechanism would work in practice.

36. SG(UGC) explained that under the performance and role-related funding mechanism, institutions would assess their own performance against certain indicators, some of which would be suggested by the institutions themselves. The assessments would be made according to the criteria and related benchmarks and measures suggested by the institutions. The Assessment Panel under the UGC would consider and seek to verify the assessment results submitted by the institutions. UGC would consult the institutions and invite their full participation in the evaluation process.

*Role of UGC in higher education*

37. Dr YEUNG Sum questioned the legitimacy of UGC's powers and authority to steer the higher education sector and monitor the performance of institutions on the basis of their strategic role statements. Dr YEUNG stressed that the Democratic Party considered that UGC should continue to play the role of a "buffer" between the Government and the institutions, safeguarding academic autonomy on the one hand and ensuring value for money for taxpayers on the other. Dr YEUNG suggested that UGC should review the need to strengthen its role in strategic planning and policy development for higher education.

38. SG(UGC) responded that UGC welcomed different views and suggestions to improve its operation and transparency. SG(UGC) explained that the terms of reference of UGC included, among others, to advise the Government on the application of funds as might be approved by the legislature for education in the UGC-funded institutions and on such aspects of higher education referred to UGC by the Chief Executive. The review on the future of higher education conducted in 2002 was a major review carried out by UGC upon the request of the SEM. Arising from the review, the Administration had endorsed the recommendation that UGC should adopt a more proactive approach by strengthening its role in strategic planning and policy development in higher education. SG(UGC) considered that the term "buffer" did not mean a passive messenger or agent. UGC should add value by balancing the needs and demands of the Administration and UGC-funded institutions in the course of the development of the higher education sector.

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39. Dr YEUNG Sum remarked that UGC should maintain a neutral stance in the course of steering the higher education sector to achieve international competitiveness, without jeopardizing institutional autonomy and academic freedom. Dr YEUNG did not consider that UGC had all along adopted a neutral stance in fulfilling its role as a "buffer" between the Administration and UGC-funded institutions in the past.

40. Mr SZETO Wah said that the role of UGC in the higher education sector had changed from a "bridge" to a "whip" in order to facilitate deep collaboration among institutions and enhance cost-effectiveness of UGC-funded institutions. Mr SZETO encouraged members of the higher education sector to bring forward the disputable issues in higher education for public debate in order to protect institutional autonomy and academic freedom.

*Provision of education programmes in the 2005-08 triennium*

41. Referring to the concern of the Academic Staff Association of HKIED expressed by Mr WONG Ping-ho in paragraph 17 above, Ms Emily LAU asked how and to what extent that education programmes offered by UGC-funded institutions in the next triennium would concentrate on the training and development of English teachers. Mr WONG Ping-ho replied that he did not have the detailed information but pointed out that a majority of the postgraduate and undergraduate education programmes would be offered to English teachers in the new triennium.

Admin

42. Ms Emily LAU requested the Clerk to seek clarifications from HKIED and UGC on the planned supply of education programmes in the new triennium. Mr SZETO Wah added that teachers and students concerned should reveal the relevant proposals for an open and fair discussion in the community.

*Consultation*

43. The Chairman asked whether UGC would consider incorporating representatives of the Federation as members in order to obtain feedback from frontline educators in the higher education sector.

44. SG(UGC) responded that UGC comprised individual members contributing their expertise to the work of UGC in their personal capacity. He pointed out that UGC currently included nine eminent overseas and six local academics who were not representing any organizations. Nevertheless, UGC would discuss ways to improve communication with the stakeholders in the higher education sector at its meeting in April 2004.

45. Ms Emily LAU said that members were given the impression that heads of UGC-funded institutions accepted the proposals in the Document. In view of

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deputations' strong opposition to the new role of UGC as set out in the Document, she considered that UGC should review its consultation process with a view to improving communication with the stakeholders of the sector.

Admin

46. The Chairman asked whether UGC would consult the higher education sector on the Document and revert to the Panel at a later stage. SG(UGC) responded that the Document was not a consultation document but UGC welcomed views and comments from members and looked forward to hearing community feedback to the Document. He undertook to provide information on the approach that UGC would be taking and revert to the Panel on the progress of the proposals in the Document at a later stage.

**V. Any other business**

47. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 7:10 pm.

Council Business Division 2  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
16 April 2004