

Construction of student hostels at Lung Wah Street, Kennedy Town

The Administration was requested to provide information on the current allocation of student hostels to local and non-local students enrolled in the UGC-funded and self-financing programmes, and the development and allocation of student hostels in the long run, having regard to the need for appropriate use of public resources.

The allocation of student hostel places is a matter within institutional autonomy, and each UGC-funded institution has devised its own set of admission and allocation criteria. Based on the information provided by the eight UGC-funded institutions, the allocation of student hostel places as in September 2007 is as follows -

	Local students enrolled in		Non-local students enrolled in		Exchange students	Total ¹
	UGC-funded programme	non-UGC-funded programme	UGC-funded programme	non-UGC-funded programme		
City University of Hong Kong	1,357	15	755	496	296	2,919
Hong Kong Baptist University	926	-	427	240	182	1,775
Lingnan University	1,283	-	106	31	80	1,500
The Chinese University of Hong Kong	3,565	-	1,782	13	367	5,727
The Hong Kong Institute of Education	1,136	8	182	303	69	1,698
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	1,551	-	896	278	279	3,004
The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	1,637	22	1,195	484	368	3,706
The University of Hong Kong	2,704	2	1,131	-	486	4,323
Total	14,159	47	6,474	1,845	2,127	24,652

¹ The above figures include hostel places funded by the Government as well as those built by the institutions using their own sources of funding (but exclude those not currently available for occupancy by students such as those under renovation). There are about 5,400 privately-funded hostel places in the UGC-funded sector available for occupancy in 2007/08. Under the existing hostel policy, each place in the wholly-privately-funded student hostels should be counted as one quarter of a place when assessing the provision of publicly-funded student hostels required by each UGC-funded institution.

Based on the existing criteria for calculating the level of publicly-funded student hostel provision and taking into account the additional hostel places for exchange activities, the UGC-funded sector should be provided with about 30,500 publicly-funded hostel places by the 2007/08 academic year. As there are currently about 21,400 publicly-funded student hostel places, the UGC-funded sector will thus have a shortfall of about 9,100 publicly-funded hostel places by the 2007/08 academic year.

To meet the student hostel shortfall, the UGC-funded institutions have been actively planning for construction of new hostels. At present, there are six new projects (including the student hostel project of HKU at Lung Wah Street, Kennedy Town) for the provision of some 6,600 publicly-funded hostel places. This notwithstanding, an additional 2,100 hostel places will be needed to cater for the knock on implications of the additional year of undergraduate studies starting from the 2012/13 academic year. Moreover, as a result of the increased quota for non-local students in publicly-funded programmes, the accommodation shortfall in the UGC-funded sector would increase by around another 6,500 hostel places. In other words, there will still be a shortfall of some 11,100 places.

In view of the scarcity of suitable land near the institutions (particularly those in the urban area) for hostel development and the substantial lead time required for consultation and funding procedures, it is likely that the problem of inadequate hostel facilities will stay with us for some time, unless other innovative ways to address this issue can be found. One of the proposals under consideration is to construct “joint hostels” for shared use by institutions. The Administration will continue to work with the institutions to resolve the hostel shortfall issue.