

HKSAR Government Scholarship Fund

Report on the operation in the 2008/09 Academic Year

Introduction

This paper reports on the operation of the HKSAR Government Scholarship Fund (the Fund) in the 2008/09 academic year.

Establishment of the Fund

2. As Hong Kong develops high value-added services, we need to nurture and attract talents to sustain our economic and social development. Attracting quality non-local students to study in Hong Kong and stay and work here upon graduation will help enlarge our talent pool and improve the quality of our population. Our education hub policy aims to attract outstanding non-local students to study in Hong Kong and, through this process, further internationalise our higher education sector and increase the exposure of our local students. One of the initiatives that the Government implemented in 2008 in this connection was the establishment of a \$1 billion scholarship fund to award government scholarships to outstanding local and non-local students.

3. The Legislative Council Finance Committee approved in February 2008 the funding for establishing the Fund to provide government scholarships to outstanding local and non-local students, so as to –

- (a) attract outstanding non-local students to study in publicly-funded degree or above level programmes in Hong Kong;
- (b) reward outstanding local students who choose to pursue their studies in such programmes in Hong Kong;
- (c) recognise the achievements of outstanding local and non-local students, with a view to attracting them to stay in Hong Kong after graduation; and

- (d) promote the further development of Hong Kong as a regional education hub and enhance Hong Kong's competitiveness in the long run.

4. Participating institutions¹ will distribute scholarships to outstanding local and non-local students enrolled in their publicly-funded full-time degree or above level programmes, with selection made having regard to the following considerations –

- (a) excellent performance in academic studies;
- (b) recognised contribution to the institution/society;
- (c) demonstrated leadership and good communication skills; and/or
- (d) strong commitment to the Hong Kong community.

5. Both local and non-local students² are eligible for scholarships under the Fund (at a rate of \$40,000 per year for local students and \$80,000 per year for non-local students). Scholarships are awarded based on merit and local and non-local students would compete on an equal basis in the light of their academic and non-academic achievements. Once awarded, a scholarship would be tenable for the normal duration of the programme concerned and is renewable annually subject to satisfactory academic performance of the awardees.

6. The Fund has been set up as a trust under the Permanent Secretary for Education Incorporated, which acts as the trustee of the Fund. A Steering Committee has been established to advise the trustee on the overall strategy and policy pertaining to the administration and development of the Fund. An Investment Committee has also been set up under the Steering Committee to formulate policies for and monitor the investment of the Fund, and to advise on the appointment of fund

¹ Participating institutions are the eight University Grants Committee-funded institutions (i.e. City University of Hong Kong (CityU), Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU), Lingnan University (LU), the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), the Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd), the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU), the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST), and the University of Hong Kong (HKU)) and the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA).

² "Non-local students" refer to persons entering Hong Kong for the purpose of education with a student visa/entry permit issued by the Director of Immigration. They are to be distinguished from children aged below 18, who come to Hong Kong as dependants of persons admitted to work, study, reside or invest in Hong Kong and are treated as local students for the purpose of admission to institutions and schools in Hong Kong without immigration restriction.

managers, as appropriate, to handle the investment of the funds. The respective membership lists are at **Annex A**.

Scholarship Distribution in 2008/09

7. In the 2008/09 academic year, \$11,970,000 was allocated to the participating institutions. The scholarship grants were allocated to the institutions in accordance with their actual enrolment in relevant programmes in the previous academic year on a pro rata basis, and subject to the proviso that no institution would receive less than 2% of the total sum allocated. The distribution of the scholarship grants among the institutions is at **Annex B**.

Selection Process

8. Participating institutions have set up respective mechanisms under their established scholarship selection bodies to process applications and select recipients for the scholarships. Most selection bodies also conducted interviews, and, in the case of incoming non-local students, the admissions offices of some institutions were consulted in assessing their merits.

9. In the 2008/09 academic year, the participating institutions awarded scholarships to 230 students. Two of the institutions have topped-up on the allocated grants in order to fully utilise the scholarship grants. Salient features of the recipients are set out below.

Local / Non-local Recipients

10. Of the 230 recipients, 162 were local students and 68 were non-local students (of whom 55 were from the Mainland). All except one institution have awarded scholarships to both local and non-local students. Except for one institution which has stipulated that the same amount of scholarships would be allocated for local and non-local students, all institutions have not stipulated a split in advance. As regards the institution which has only awarded scholarships to local students this year, it has indicated that at least 50% of the scholarships would be set aside for non-local students in the future.

Level and Discipline of Study

11. The scholarships were awarded to students enrolled in degree or

above level programmes. Among the 230 scholarship recipients, the number of students enrolled in undergraduate, taught postgraduate and research postgraduate programmes were 217, 5 and 8, respectively. Of the 217 undergraduate recipients, a majority of them (145) were year 1 students.

12. The top three areas of study discipline among the recipients are business/management, medicine and health.

Recipients' Academic Performance

13. Year one scholarship recipients have generally achieved very good results in their entrance examinations. Several institutions only awarded the scholarships to local recipients who had multiple "A's" in their Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination (HKALE), with one institution's year one recipients all having at least five "A's" in their HKALE results. Non-local year one recipients were awarded in view of similar levels of performance in non-local examinations (e.g. GCE A-level, IB Diploma, SAT, etc). Some year one recipients from the Mainland were awarded on the basis of their GPA results from the foundation year studies.

14. As for the other more senior recipients, they have generally achieved an average of about 3.7 in GPA and all of them ranked above the 75th percentile of their respective institutions, with many ranking above the 95th percentile.

15. Apart from academic result, institutions have also taken into account candidates' leadership, communications skills and commitment to Hong Kong, in assessing their eligibility for the scholarship.

Scholarship Distribution in 2009/10

16. Participating institutions have indicated that the scholarship scheme is an effective tool in recruiting more outstanding local and non-local students to study in Hong Kong. The trustee has approved the allocation of about \$24 million to the institutions for scholarship awards in the 2009/10 academic year.

Advice Sought

17. Members are invited to note the report.

Education Bureau
August 2009

Membership List of Steering Committee

Chairman: Secretary for Education or his representative

Members: Mrs Pamela Chan Wong Shui, BBS, JP,

Mr Chung Shui-ming, GBS, JP

Professor Nyaw Mee-kau

Mr Richard Tang Yat-sun, BBS, JP

Dr Carrie Willis Yau Sheung-mui, JP

Ms Shirley Wong She-lai

Membership List of Investment Committee

Chairman: Secretary for Education or his representative

Members: Mr Patrick Chan Kwok-wai

Mr Clifton Chiu Chi-cheong

Ex-officio Members: Permanent Secretary for Education or his representative

Director of Accounting Services or his representative

Annex B

Distribution of Scholarship Grants in the 2008/09 Academic Year

	Enrolment in 2007/08#	Rounded to the Next Ten Thousand (\$)
City University of Hong Kong	8 368	1,690,000
Hong Kong Baptist University	4 829	980,000
Lingnan University	2 338	470,000
Chinese University of Hong Kong	12 100	2,440,000
Hong Kong Institute of Education	2 284	460,000
Hong Kong Polytechnic University	9 226	1,860,000
Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	6 761	1,360,000
University of Hong Kong	12 246	2,470,000
Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts	386	240,000*
Total	58 538	\$11,970,000

Actual enrolment in full-time publicly-funded programmes at degree or above levels

* If calculated based on enrolment in 2007/08, HKAPA will receive less than 1% of the total sum. The amount has therefore been adjusted upward to 2% of the total sum allocated.