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11 November 2011

Ms Amy Yu
Clerk to the Panel on Education
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
Hong Kong

Dear Ms Yu,

Following the Legislative Council Panel on Education meeting held on 11 July 2011, the University Grants Committee (UGC) was requested to provide information on –

- (a) the number of First-Year-First-Degree (FYFD) places and the programmes concerned set aside by each institution for competitive allocation and the number of FYFD places allocated to each institution after the exercise;
- (b) the amount of resources requested by institutions in their respective Academic Development Proposals, the amount of resources allocated to each institution after the exercise and how such resources were allocated within the institutions.

2. The UGC follows a triennial planning cycle for the recurrent grant allocation exercise to our funded institutions. Institutions are required to submit the Academic Development Proposals (ADPs) to the UGC for assessment and decision of their student target numbers for the next triennium. ADP is a comprehensive document which sets out the institution's overall strategy for academic developments. It has three purposes, including (i) to provide a platform for the institutions to review their recent development and on

that basis put forward development proposals for the immediate future; (ii) to serve as the foundation for the institution's costed estimates; and (iii) to provide an assurance of the anticipated supply of graduates where approved academic programmes are to meet specific manpower needs. Hence, the ADP of an institution should be read and interpreted in its entirety, and any attempt to extract data from or interpret only part of it would risk information out of context.

3. With regard to item (a), the competitive allocation of student places only constitutes part of the entire ADP exercise. However, to respond to Members' request, the table below indicates the number of FYFD places set aside by each institution for competitive allocation, i.e. 6% of their non-manpower planned FYFD places –

Table 1

| Institution | Number of places set aside for the competitive allocation exercise for the 2012-15 triennium |
|--|---|
| City University of Hong Kong (CityU) | 122 |
| Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU) | 68 |
| Lingnan University ¹ (LU) | 22 (4%) |
| Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) | 153 |
| Hong Kong Institute of Education ² (HKIED) | 0 |
| Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) | 109 |
| Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) | 112 |
| University of Hong Kong (HKU) | 138 |
| Total | 724 |

4. As stated in the paper [LC Paper No. CB(2)2291/10-11(07)], the objectives of the competitive allocation exercise were (i) to encourage institutions to think through their whole institutional endeavour in a strategic manner, in particular their academic priorities; and (ii) to advance institutions' international competitiveness in line with their role, and the higher education sector as a whole. It must be stressed that the UGC respected the autonomy of the institutions and did not intervene in their strategic review of the programmes

¹ LU was required to set aside 4% of its FYFD places because of its "small size".

² HKIED did not need to set aside any places for competitive allocation, since most of its programmes were either subject to the Administration's manpower planning requirement or "protected" areas – in June 2009, the Executive Council approved the provision of 120 additional FYFD places to HKIED to provide non-teacher-education programmes starting from 2010/11 onwards to pave way for its development into a multi-disciplinary institution.

and arrangement of institutions' academic portfolio or programme offering. According to the institutions, the strategies/programmes adopted by them for setting aside FYFD places for competitive allocation varied and are indicated below –

- **CityU:** the competitive allocation exercise demonstrated CityU's commitment to portfolio management through downsizing and eliminating underperforming and outmoded academic programmes and reinvesting in new academic opportunities pertinent to the needs of the community. CityU set aside an additional 2% of places on top of the required 6%, i.e. 8% in total, for competitive bid. Programmes were mainly from Science & Engineering, Business and Humanities and Social Sciences areas.
- **HKBU:** its ADP was guided by its vision to serve the long-term interests and changing needs of the community. The objectives were to provide broad-based creativity-inspiring education and enhance integration and synergy among the key disciplines. Programmes for competitive allocation were selected based on the detailed written submissions from individual faculty/schools and a university-wide review of programmes. Places were set aside from Physics, Digital Graphics and Visual Arts programmes.
- **LU:** places set aside for competitive allocation were from the Arts and Business programmes while places for Social Sciences programme remained unchanged. The strategy of keeping the Social Sciences student number intact is to support the new approach of the BSocSc (Hons) in its 4-year curriculum.
- **CUHK:** programmes were classified into three broad areas of study, *i.e.* Arts, Humanities and Social Science; Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics; and Business Administration, Law, Education and Medicine. Non-manpower planned FYFD places were set aside from each of these broad areas of study for competitive allocation.
- **PolyU:** there were eight faculties and schools (namely Engineering, Construction and Environment, Applied Science and Textiles, Business, Humanities, Health and Social Sciences, School of Design and School of Hotel and Tourism Management). Non-manpower planned FYFD places were set aside from these faculties and schools.
- **HKUST:** the institution set aside places for competitive allocation across-the-board from each of the four Schools (*viz.* Science; Engineering;

Business Management; Humanities and Social Science), The exercise had regard to factors such as the level of student enrolment for Schools/programmes which would enable majors and electives in core disciplines to be sustained; the range of courses and programmes offered by the disciplines/Schools; and the role of the institution.

- **HKU:** regularly reviews its programmes to ensure that its offerings were strong, relevant, competitive and sustainable. The setting aside of FYFD places for competitive allocation was due in part to HKU's continuing efforts to review and revitalize its programmes. In making its proposals for expansion or curtailment of programmes during the ADP exercise, factors such as alignment with the strategic plan of the University, student demand and community needs, manpower requirements of particular sectors, etc. were taken into account by the University. HKU set aside places from programmes under various faculties, including Architecture, Arts, Business and Economics, Engineering, Science and Social Sciences for competitive allocation.

5. The outcome of the competitive allocation of FYFD places was based on the assessment of the ADPs submitted by the institutions. The UGC evaluated the institutions' ADPs according to the four broad criteria mentioned in the paper [LC Paper No. CB(2)2291/10-11(07)], namely Strategy, Teaching & Learning, Advanced Scholarship and Community, as agreed with the institutions. The table below shows the number of places earned back by the institutions after the competitive allocation exercise –

Table 2

| Institution | Number of places earned back by the institutions after the competitive allocation exercise |
|--------------------|---|
| CityU | 122 |
| HKBU | 34 |
| LU | 22 |
| CUHK | 261 |
| HKIEd | 0 |
| PolyU | 0 |
| HKUST | 139 |
| HKU | 236 |
| Total | 814³ |

³ The total numbers of places in the two Tables were not the same because figures in Table 1 had not included the 90 additional non-manpower FYFD places (out of the extra 380 places) as mentioned in paragraph 6.

6. We would like to emphasise that places set aside by the institutions under the competitive allocation mechanism only constituted a small part of the total number of student places to be distributed for the next triennium. The Administration had in fact provided an increase of 380 FYFD places for the next triennium. Of the increase, 290 places were allocated to meet manpower requirements and the remaining 90 places were added to the central pool for competitive allocation to institutions. The competitive allocation results had also not taken into consideration the effect of the swapping of places among the eight institutions as agreed among themselves and the UGC in the 2005-08 triennium. Furthermore, the number of senior year places would gradually be increased in the coming triennium, and this would lead to a surge in the overall undergraduate places allocated to each institution⁴. Therefore, a more complete picture showing the distribution of the total number of undergraduate places⁵ to individual institutions for the next triennium is as follows –

Table 3

| Institutions | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | Total for the 2012-15 Triennium |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|------------------------------------|
| CityU | 7 931 | 10 078 | 10 254 | 10 702 | 31 033 |
| HKBU* | 4 286 | 5 590 | 5 662 | 5 829 | 17 081 |
| LU | 2 087 | 2 534 | 2 487 | 2 460 | 7 481 |
| CUHK | 9 984 | 13 518 | 13 956 | 14 337 | 41 811 |
| HKIEd | 3 164 | 4 149 | 4 188 | 4 179 | 12 516 |
| PolyU | 8 553 | 11 177 | 11 453 | 11 998 | 34 627 |
| HKUST | 5 680 | 7 655 | 7 747 | 7 801 | 23 203 |
| HKU | 9 435 | 12 732 | 13 137 | 13 451 | 39 320 |
| Total | 51 119 | 67 432 | 68 883 | 70 757 | 207 072 |

* Including "2+2" Diploma in Education programme which is funded at Ug level.

** Figures above include both approved FYFD and senior year places.

7. Regarding item (b) of the question, as mentioned in paragraph 2, ADPs are “uncosted proposals” submitted by the institutions setting out their strategic development and review on the academic programmes. Institutions were not required to calculate their funding needs for the next triennium at the ADP stage. After assessing the ADPs, the UGC would offer advice/comments to individual institutions and inform them the student number targets for the

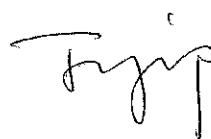
⁴ Except for LU which did not ask for any additional senior year places to “stay small”.

⁵ The number of FYFD places distributed to individual institution under the current three-year and the new four-year cohorts for the next triennium will be different, as the competitive allocation mechanism was not applied to the distribution of places to the existing three-year cohort.

next triennium. The UGC would then work out the grant recommendations and submit it to the Administration for consideration. A submission would then be made to the Legislative Council for approval of the funding required.

8. Following the approval of the grant recommendations by the Legislative Council, the UGC would inform the institutions their recurrent funding allocation for the next triennium, which would be in the form of a block grant. The block grant system provides for a one-line allocation of resources to the institutions for a funding period without attaching detailed requirements as to how it should be spent. Institutions have autonomy to decide how to use the grants; for instance the amount of funds to be allocated to individual faculty/department, or between academic and administrative areas, as long as they observe the guidelines set out in the "UGC Notes on Procedures".

Yours sincerely,



(Miss Jenny Yip)
Acting Secretary-General

c.c. Chairman, UGC
Secretary for Education
Presidents of the UGC-funded institutions