

For information

Legislative Council Panel on Education
Progress Report of
the Hong Kong Scholarship for Excellence Scheme

Purpose

This paper briefs Members on the latest progress in implementation of the Hong Kong Scholarship for Excellence Scheme (HKSES).

Background

2. The HKSES aims to support local students to pursue studies in world renowned universities outside Hong Kong with a view to grooming a top cadre of talents with global vision, international network and world-class education, thereby contributing to enhancing Hong Kong's competitiveness as Asia's World City in a globalised knowledge economy. The scheme also seeks to support those students who have excellent academic achievement but lack the financial means to study in top-notch universities outside Hong Kong. Launched on 25 November 2014, the scheme will benefit three cohorts of students, with up to 100 students per cohort, starting from the 2015/16 academic year. A Steering Committee was set up to advise the Government on the policy, strategy and administration of the HKSES. Members were informed of the key features and implementation details of the HKSES vide an information paper CB(4)197/14-15(01) issued in 2014.

Implementation Progress

The 2015/16 Cohort

Application

3. A total of 658 applications were received for the 2015-16 cohort, with 399 applying for undergraduate programmes and 259 for postgraduate programmes.

Selection

4. The Steering Committee on the HKSES adopted a merit-based approach to selection, targeting the best and most outstanding Hong Kong students who are admitted to world renowned universities or programmes. Selection was based on the academic achievements and other attributes such as leadership qualities and potential, contribution and commitment to the society, etc. A three-stage selection process - preliminary screening (from February to March 2015), shortlisting (from March to April 2015), and interview (from May 2015 onwards), were adopted to facilitate an objective and rigorous selection.

5. The selection process of the first cohort of applicants under the HKSES is near completion¹. Of a total of 658 applicants, 283 were shortlisted for further consideration in the process. As at end November 2015, 181 shortlisted applicants who have received confirmed offers from their chosen universities and programmes have been invited to attend interviews. Scholarship has been offered to a total of 90 awardees, with 62 awardees pursuing undergraduate study and 28 pursuing postgraduate study. Statistics of the awardees are set out at Annex.

Awardees

6. All of the 90 awardees received their formal secondary education in Hong Kong. The universities to which they were admitted included not only top-notch comprehensive universities but also distinguished liberal arts colleges and world class institutions specialised in a single or a few particular disciplines in the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Australia and Canada. The disciplines in which they have enrolled cover a wide spectrum, ranging from conventional ones such as natural and social sciences, liberal arts and literature, law, architecture, engineering, to disciplines of study which are not available in Hong Kong, such as veterinary medicine, forest science, classical study, art gallery study and medical robotics. A list of the 90 awardees and their respective study programmes and universities is available at the HKSES website (www.edb.gov.hk/hkses).

¹ As most undergraduate and postgraduate programmes offered by universities in Australia in the 2015/16 academic year will commence in February 2016, interviews may need to be arranged for those shortlisted applicants who receive confirmed offers from their chosen universities located in Australia in the coming two months or so. The list of awardees of the first cohort is expected to be finalised by February/March 2016.

7. Each awardee was offered a non-means-tested scholarship to cover the tuition fees, subject to a ceiling of HK\$250,000 per annum, whichever is lower. Of the 90 awardees, seven received full scholarship from other sources and hence were awarded the scholarship title under the HKSES (without any monetary benefit) as a token of Government's recognition of their outstanding achievements. Apart from the non-means-tested scholarship, 14 were offered a means-tested bursary up to HK\$200,000 per student per annum, comprising up to HK\$50,000 per annum for covering tuition fee in excess of HK\$250,000; and up to HK\$150,000 per annum for covering living and other study-related expenses. The scholarship and bursary (if applicable) will last for the normal duration of the concerned programme in respect of undergraduate studies and up to two years in respect of all postgraduate studies. They will be renewable annually subject to the provision of satisfactory documentary proof of the awardees' good academic performance.

8. All awardees have signed an undertaking to complete the specific study programme and to return to Hong Kong upon graduation to work for at least two years or a period equivalent to the duration of receiving the scholarship, whichever is longer.

Support to Awardees

9. Apart from monetary reward, mentorship has been arranged for all awardees. 32 leaders/experts in different sectors have been lined up to serve as mentors of individual awardees and provide them with guidance, advice and counselling.

10. The awardees are expected to play a key and active role in introducing and promoting Hong Kong as Asia's World City to their fellow schoolmates and other contacts while studying abroad. Our overseas Economic and Trade Offices as well as the overseas offices of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, Invest Hong Kong and Hong Kong Tourism Board will maintain close liaison with the awardees and actively engage them as "Hong Kong Student Ambassadors" in different events and activities (e.g. VIP visits, New Year gatherings, spring receptions, seminars, exhibitions, performances, concerts, etc) organised/participated by the offices as appropriate.

The 2016/17 Cohort

11. Following the successful implementation of the HKSES in the first cohort, the HKSES is now open for the second cohort of application from eligible Hong Kong students who intend to pursue undergraduate or postgraduate studies in world renowned universities outside Hong Kong starting from the 2016/17 academic year (i.e. from August 2016 to July 2017). Applications are required to be submitted online via the scholarship application system at the HKSES website on or before 31 December 2015.

12. The Steering Committee will adopt broadly the same criteria and procedures of the first cohort in selecting the second cohort of awardees. Preliminary screening will be conducted from January to February 2016, followed by shortlisting from February to March 2016 and interview from April 2016 onwards.

Advice Sought

13. Members are invited to note this paper.

Education Bureau
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Hong Kong Scholarship for Excellence Scheme**Statistics of Awardees**
*(as at 30 November 2015)***(A) By Sex**

<u>Sex</u>	<u>Number of Awardees</u> (% over Total)
Male	47 (52%)
Female	43 (48%)
Total:	90

(B) By University

<u>University</u>	<u>Number of Awardees</u> (% over Total)
University of Cambridge (UK)	16 (18%)
University College London (UK)	11 (12%)
London School of Economics and Political Science (UK)	8 (9%)
University of Oxford (UK)	7 (8%)
University of Edinburgh (UK)	6 (7%)
King's College London (UK)	5 (6%)
Imperial College London (UK)	5 (6%)
Harvard University (US)	3 (3%)
Durham University (UK)	2 (2%)
Guildhall School of Music and Drama (UK)	2 (2%)
University of Glasgow (UK)	2 (2%)

<u>University</u>	<u>Number of Awardees</u> (% over Total)
University of Manchester (UK)	2 (2%)
Yale University (US)	2 (2%)
Others (Australia, Canada, UK, US)	19 (21%)
Total:	90

(C) By Discipline

<u>Discipline</u>	<u>Number of Awardees</u> (% over Total)
Law	19 (21%)
Science ¹	13 (14%)
Economics and Finance	10 (11%)
Arts ²	9 (10%)
Performing Arts ³	7 (8%)
Engineering ⁴	5 (6%)
International Relations and Global Affairs	5 (6%)
Architecture	4 (4%)
Veterinary Medicine	4 (4%)
Art Gallery and Museum Studies/ Arts Administration and Cultural Policy	3(3%)
Medicine ⁵	3 (3%)
Others ⁶	8 (9%)
Total:	90

¹ Including Biomedical Science, Forensic Science, Forest Science, Mathematics, Natural Science, Neuroscience, and Physics.

² Including English, Classical Studies, History, and Translation.

³ Including Music, Dance, and Theatre Practice.

⁴ Including Advanced Aeronautical Engineering, Materials Science & Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering.

⁵ Including Experimental Medicine, Medical Robotics & Image Guided Intervention, and Medicine.

⁶ Including Development Psychology and Clinical Practice, Education, Education with Music, Experimental Psychology, Geopolitics, Territory & Security, International Planning, Media, Cultural & Communication, and Music Therapy.