



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部教育局
Education Bureau
Government Secretariat, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
The People's Republic of China

本局檔號 Our Ref. : EDB(HE)CR 18/2041/07

電話 Telephone : 3509 8501

來函檔號 Your Ref. :

傳真 Fax Line : 2804 6499

18 January 2017

Clerk
Public Accounts Committee
Legislative Council
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
Hong Kong
(Attn: Mr Anthony Chu)

Dear Mr Chu,

**Legislative Council
Public Accounts Committee**

**Consideration of Chapter 2 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 67
Funding of universities by the University Grants Committee**

I refer to your letter of 6 January 2017 to the Secretary for Education. The requested information is now set out at Annex for reference by the Public Accounts Committee.

Yours sincerely,



(Sharon Ko)

for Secretary for Education

cc

Secretary-General, University Grants Committee
Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Attn: Mr Raistlin Lau)
Director of Audit

**Legislative Council
Public Accounts Committee (PAC)**

Supplementary information provided by the Secretary for Education in response to the letter from the Clerk to the PAC dated 6 January 2017

- (a) **Measures taken / to be taken by the Administration to collate statistics of Mainland students who have remained to work/stay in Hong Kong after graduating**
- (b) **Statistics on Mainland students of postgraduate programmes who have remained to work / stay in Hong Kong after graduating for the past five years**

At present, the Immigration Department (ImmD) administers the “Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates (IANG)”, which allows non-local students who have obtained an undergraduate or higher qualification in a full-time and locally-accredited local programme in Hong Kong to apply to stay/return and work in Hong Kong. Both non-local fresh graduates (i.e. non-local graduates who submit applications to ImmD within six months after graduation) and returning non-local graduates (i.e. non-local graduates who submit applications to ImmD beyond six months after graduation) are eligible under the scheme. In this regard, IANG-related statistics are maintained by ImmD.

According to ImmD, the number of approved IANG applications since April 2015 from Mainland residents who have obtained master’s degrees and doctorate degrees are tabulated below:

	2015 (April to December)	2016
Doctorate degree	661	894
Master’s degree	6 008	6 425

According to ImmD, the above breakdown statistics are not readily available for the period before April 2015. Besides, breakdown statistics by source of funding (University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded and non-UGC-funded) are not readily available.

For reference purpose, the total number of approved IANG applications

from Mainland residents since 2012 (including graduates from both UGC-funded and non-UGC-funded undergraduate and postgraduate programmes) is also provided as follows:

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total number of approved IANG applications from Mainland residents	6 428	8 187	9 714	9 541	8 611

(c) Number of total and successful applications for postgraduate programmes in the UGC-funded universities, breakdown by local applicants, Mainland applicants, and non-local applicants other than Mainland applicants, each year for the past five years

The number of applications for and student intakes of UGC-funded research postgraduate (RPg) programmes by place of origin from the 2012/13 to 2016/17 academic years are set out at Appendix to Annex.

Information on the number of applications for UGC-funded taught postgraduate (TPg) programmes is not available.

(d) Measures taken/to be taken by the Administration to encourage more local talents to apply for postgraduate programmes in Hong Kong

(e) Whether the Administration will consider reserving a certain number of places of postgraduate programmes for application by local applicants only

Research is crucial to the development of higher education and enhancing the competitiveness of an economy. With a view to boosting the research capacity of Hong Kong through attracting high quality talents from around the world, the Government accepted and the Panel on Education of the Legislative Council was briefed on the UGC's recommendation in 2002 that the quota for non-local RPg students should be removed from the UGC-funded universities. The UGC's recommendation, which was formulated after extensive consultation with the universities, academics and the community at large, is conducive to attracting the best talents worldwide to enhance the research quality of Hong Kong, thereby ensuring that public money is spent on the most worthy causes, and is in line with the international practice. In contrast, imposing restrictions on the number of non-local students for RPg programmes would only pose hindrance to the

***Note by Clerk, PAC: Please see Appendix 24 of this Report for Appendix to Annex.**

pursuit of academic excellence by the local higher education sector and lead to a loss of high quality research talents and projects to other places.

As a result of the UGC's recommendation in 2002, UGC-funded universities currently admit RPg students on a merit basis, taking into account the students' academic results and research capability, regardless of their place of origin. RPg students so admitted play an important role in the higher education sector. Apart from participating directly in a large number of research activities, they are also engaged in the teaching activities of universities (as teaching assistants, laboratory administrators, etc.) and serve as a bridge between undergraduates and the teaching staff, thereby making contributions to teaching and the passing on of knowledge in universities.

Over the past years, the Government and universities have organized symposiums, seminars, talks, and promotion activities such as through RoadShow to attract local talents to apply for postgraduate programmes in Hong Kong. This notwithstanding, the decision of local graduates on whether and where to pursue postgraduate studies, especially RPg programmes, is a personal choice affected by such factors as prevailing employment opportunities in the market, students' career orientation and prospect in the teaching/research fields. Furthermore, among local students who choose to pursue RPg studies, many would do so abroad, so that they can conduct research under a different culture and environment.

In the 2015/16 academic year, about 29% of the applications for UGC-funded RPg programmes submitted by local students were admitted by universities, whilst only about 11% of applications by non-local students (including those from the Mainland) were admitted. This indicates that the chance for local students to be admitted to UGC-funded RPg programme is more than double of that for non-local students. Moreover, UGC-funded universities have yet to fully utilise their over-enrolment capacity, which means if applications for RPg programmes are received from outstanding local students, UGC-funded universities still have spare capacity to consider their admission on a merit basis.

As regards UGC-funded TPg programmes, recruitment of non-local students to UGC-funded TPg programmes (alongside sub-degree and undergraduate programmes) is subject to a cap, by study level, that is equivalent to 20% of the approved student numbers. This helps strike a balance between enrolling non-local students for the benefit of the higher education sector as a whole, and ensuring that the vast majority of the student population of these programmes remains local.