



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

6 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 6 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 67
Funding of academic research projects by the
Research Grants Council**

I refer to your letter of 22 December 2016 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

網址 : <http://www.edb.gov.hk> 電子郵件 : edbinfo@edb.gov.hk
Web site : <http://www.edb.gov.hk> E-mail : edbinfo@edb.gov.hk
香港添馬添美道2號政府總部東翼7樓705室

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

Consideration of Chapter 6 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 67

**Funding of academic research projects by
the Research Grants Council (RGC)**

**Secretary for Education (SED)'s reply to
a written question raised by the PAC**

Question

According to paragraph 2.6 [of Chapter 6 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 67], you said that it was not easy to identify non-local academics of high standing who were willing to commit to serving Hong Kong. Have you explored measures, in consultation with the University Grants Committee (UGC), to overcome the difficulties and appoint individuals who are competent and experienced to meet the specific needs of RGC and at the same time ensure a healthy turnover of Council members?

Reply

The Secretary for Education has close liaison with the UGC Secretariat on the appointment of Members, including non-local Members, to RGC, and tap on our extensive networks in the international academic community to identify suitable candidates whenever the opportunity arises.

In the context of the UGC Secretariat's response to Chapter 2 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 67, the Secretariat has pointed out that the terms of appointment of non-local members (including non-local RGC members) did not offer a fee, and the honorarium given to them was an award regardless of the time spent on UGC activities. Non-local members travelled to Hong Kong to attend meetings on a voluntary basis and often had to take leave from their own full-time jobs. Recognising that non-local members' time was being given normally without payment, and that there were immense benefits to attract top university leaders from around the world to serve Hong Kong, the Secretariat considered it appropriate that the standard of hotel accommodation offered to them when attending meetings in Hong Kong should be commensurate with their standing and should not deter candidates from accepting an offer of appointment.

Besides, it should be reckoned that non-local Members also generally take more time to fully familiarize themselves with the local higher education landscape. Therefore, there have been cases where the Secretary for Education considered it fully justified to extend the term of appointment of selected non-local members slightly beyond six years.

The Review of the RGC (Phase I) is being implemented by UGC. It will study, amongst others, the structure of the RGC. In the light of the recommendations of the review, we will consider improvement measures in consultation with UGC / RGC.