



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) 3/9/1-11

電話 Telephone : 3509 8501

來函檔號 Your Ref. :

傳真 Fax Line : 2804 6499

27 July 2021

Clerk to Panel on Education
Legislative Council
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong
(Attn: Ms Angel Wong)

Dear Ms Wong,

Panel on Education
Letter from Dr the Hon CHIANG Lai-wan

Thank you for your letter of 10 June to the Secretary for Education.

Our reply to Dr the Hon CHIANG Lai-wan dated 12 July 2021 and its English translation is enclosed for the Panel's reference.

(Derek Lai)
for Secretary for Education



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(Translation)

12 July 2021

Dr the Hon Chiang Lai-wan
Room 605, 6/F
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Dr Chiang,

Thank you for your letter of 8 June. I am authorised to reply as follows.

In the letter, you mentioned a research project participated by a then scholar from The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) and scholars from four overseas universities from 2017 to 2018. The concerned project was not funded by the Research Grants Council under the University Grants Committee (UGC), hence we do not have relevant information. Besides, this Bureau has noticed reports claiming that HKUST had written to the research team in late 2019 to state that the research had not received HKUST's approval and had requested the research team to remove statements from the research paper mentioning HKUST's approval. The HKUST scholar concerned had also left the University in September 2019.

The eight UGC-funded universities in Hong Kong are established pursuant to their respective ordinances, and each has a council established to supervise the operation of the university. While academic freedom and institutional autonomy are protected by the Basic Law and the appointment of academic staff or selection of research projects are matters under institutional autonomy, the fact that universities are funded by the

public coffer means the university administrations are responsible for ensuring their operation is in compliance with the laws of Hong Kong as well as the interests of the community at large, and that they are accountable to the public. Under the principle of upholding academic freedom and institutional autonomy, the Education Bureau will liaise with the universities to ensure that they fulfil their legal obligation and to provide appropriate support for this purpose.

(signed)

(Derek Lai)
for Secretary for Education