

立法會

Legislative Council

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Report of the Bills Committee on City University of Hong Kong (Amendment) Bill 2025

Purpose

This paper reports on the deliberations of the Bills Committee on City University of Hong Kong (Amendment) Bill 2025 (“the Bills Committee”).

Background

2. City University of Hong Kong (“CityU”) is one of the eight local universities funded by the University Grants Committee (“UGC”). It was established in 1984 as a body corporate by the City Polytechnic of Hong Kong Ordinance (Cap. 1132) and was subsequently retitled as “City University of Hong Kong” through the enactment of the City University of Hong Kong Ordinance (Cap. 1132) (“CityU Ordinance”) in 1994.

3. Under the existing section 10(1)(j) of the CityU Ordinance, the President of the Students’ Union of CityU (“SU”) is an ex-officio member of the Council of CityU (“the Council”). According to the Council, there have been concerns over the representativeness of SU, which has not been able to properly elect a President and an Executive Committee in accordance with its Constitution in the past five years except in 2022. SU continued to fail to properly elect a President in its election conducted in June 2024. At that time, less than 20% of CityU’s undergraduate students are SU members (i.e. eligible voters to elect the President of SU) and only 146 of them participated in the voting, accounting for 6.89% of the eligible electors. During all those times when SU failed to properly elect a President, the SU Council Chairman became Acting President of SU and sat on the Council as the undergraduate student member. In the Council’s view, this arrangement is contrary to the legislative intention of the CityU Ordinance, under which the ex-officio member of the Council should be a duly elected President of SU.

4. To strengthen the representativeness of the undergraduate student member on the Council and by making reference to the practices of other local peer UGC-funded universities,¹ the Council at its meeting on 21 March 2024 endorsed the proposed amendments to the CityU Ordinance to the effect that one undergraduate student elected from among undergraduate students would replace the President of SU to serve on the Council.

City University of Hong Kong (Amendment) Bill 2025

5. The City University of Hong Kong (Amendment) Bill 2025 (“the Bill”) is a Member’s Bill proposed by Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung. It was published in the Gazette on 17 and 24 January 2025 respectively and received its First Reading at the Legislative Council (“LegCo”) meeting of 12 February 2025. The Bill seeks to amend the CityU Ordinance to:

- (a) replace the President of SU as a member of the Council by one undergraduate student elected from among undergraduate students and appointed by the Council;
- (b) bring into line the election and appointment by the Council mechanism of the two staff members, the undergraduate student and the postgraduate student as members of the Council; and
- (c) provide for related matters.

The Bills Committee

6. At the House Committee meeting on 14 February 2025, Members agreed to form a bills committee to scrutinize the Bill. The Bills Committee was chaired by Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, and its membership list is in [Appendix 1](#). The Bills Committee has held one meeting with CityU and the Administration. The Bills Committee notes that CityU undergraduate students have been consulted seven times on their preference for identifying their representative for serving on the Council, with views collected from student societies and student leaders. There has been good support for the

¹ Among the eight universities funded by the University Grants Committee, five universities elect student representatives of the university councils. The five universities are the University of Hong Kong, Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Hong Kong Polytechnic University and Lingnan University.

proposed amendments as revealed by the consultation results. Therefore, the Bills Committee has decided that it is not necessary to invite public views on the Bill.

Declaration of interest

7. Prof Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun and Prof Hon CHOW Man-kong have declared that they are teaching staff members of CityU. Hon Dennis LEUNG Tsz-wing has declared that he is an alumnus and a member of the Court of CityU. Hon CHAN Yung has declared that he is an alumnus of CityU. Ir Hon CHAN Siu-hung has declared that he was a member of the Court of CityU.

Deliberations of the Bills Committee

8. Members in general support the Bill and express concerns on various issues. The major views and concerns of members are summarized below.

Voting rate of student election

9. Members consider that replacing the current ex-officio member of the Council, who is the President of SU, with an undergraduate student representative of the Council elected from among undergraduate students is conducive to enhancing the representativeness of undergraduate students on the Council and promoting students' active participation in university affairs, thereby enhancing university governance. However, some members are concerned that SU has repeatedly failed to elect a President and an Executive Committee in recent years. Currently, less than 15% of CityU's undergraduate students are SU members. In the SU election held in February 2025, only about 12% of eligible students have voted, indicating a relatively low turnout in recent student elections. Members urge the University to step up publicity for the election of undergraduate student representative on the Council and encourage more candidates to stand for election, so as to increase the voting rate and promote competition.

10. CityU has indicated that it will set up a task force after the passage of the Bill to promote the relevant elections and formulate publicity strategies. Different departments within the University will also work closely together to promote the elections to all undergraduate students through channels such as the University website, social media, and electronic bulletin boards on campus. A dedicated elections website will also be

established to increase the voting rate. In addition, the Student Development Services of CityU will also provide leadership training to student leaders and student groups to support student participation in the elections.

11. To ensure the recognition of the undergraduate student representative on the Council, some members suggest that the University consider setting a minimum number of voters for future elections as appropriate, and that the University and the Education Bureau adopt measures to enhance the civic awareness of undergraduate students and their participation in university affairs. CityU has advised that while there is currently no minimum requirement for the number of voters in elections, under the new electoral mechanism the number of eligible undergraduate student voters will increase from the existing some 1 700 SU members to more than 12 000 undergraduate students of the University, which will helpraise the number of student voters.

12. Some members enquire whether CityU would put in place measures to ensure that the members appointed by the Council love the country, love Hong Kong and love the University. CityU has remarked that candidates must confirm their agreement to abide by the laws of Hong Kong (including laws on safeguarding national security) when submitting their nominations, and newly elected members of the Council must also agree to abide by the code of conduct. In addition, starting from the 2025-2026 academic year, every new CityU student must participate in the “Whole Person Development” course to cultivate among them a stronger sense of social responsibility and good citizenship. CityU will review, optimize and improve the methods and arrangements for the election of members of the Council from time to time as appropriate.

Support for student representative

13. Given that the undergraduate student representative on the Council, who would be elected from among undergraduate students in the future, will serve as a member of the Council in personal capacity, members are concerned that the representative may fail to perform the duties due to a lack of resources, and suggest that the University provide the representative with appropriate support and training. Some members are of the view that SU still has a certain degree of representativeness. Regardless of whether the student elected as the undergraduate student representative on the Council is an SU member, the University should assist the representative in establishing a regular communication mechanism with SU, foster their collaboration and ensure that SU’s views can be conveyed to the Council.

14. CityU has advised that the Secretariat to the Council will provide various support services including leadership training and office facilities to the elected undergraduate student representative. The representative can participate in discussions on the University's long-term plans and internal affairs, such as formulating the budget, etc., so as to perform the role as a bridge of communication between the University and students. Under the new election mechanism, even if an SU member is not elected as the undergraduate student representative of the Council, CityU will continue to proactively communicate with SU, provide it with appropriate support, and invite the undergraduate student representative to discuss matters with SU and the University when necessary.

Drafting matters

15. It is suggested that CityU should, by making reference to the practices of other universities, consider adding definitions of "undergraduate student" and "postgraduate student" in the Bill, and clarify in CityU's statutes the arrangements for changes in the status of undergraduate student representative (such as graduation or the change from undergraduate student to postgraduate student). CityU has explained that when the status of an undergraduate student representative on the Council changes, CityU will arrange a by-election in accordance with statutes. Currently, CityU has clearly defined the terms "undergraduate student" and "postgraduate student" in its statutes. As the Council has the power to formulate statutes to govern the election of teacher and student members of the Council, CityU will, where necessary, amend the relevant definitions in the future, and members' suggestions will be taken into account in the course of the review.

16. The Bills Committee notes that there are no proposed transitional provisions in the Bill to deal with the unexpired term or cessation of office of the relevant Council members who were appointed immediately before the date on which the Bill (if passed) comes into operation as an enacted Ordinance. Upon enquiries from the Legal Adviser to the Bills Committee, Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung has advised that transitional provisions would not be necessary and it is CityU's policy intention that the replacement of the President of SU as Council member by an elected undergraduate student would take place upon commencement of the enacted Ordinance, and the incumbent staff members and the postgraduate student appointed as Council members would not be affected by the Bill.

Proposed amendments to the Bill

17. The Bills Committee notes that, upon the advice of the Legal Service Division, Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung will propose an amendment to

the Bill to incorporate the validation provision under clause 4 of the Bill into the CityU Ordinance. The provision seeks to remove any possible doubt over the legality of the elections of staff members and postgraduate student conducted respectively under section 10(1)(h) and (k) of the CityU Ordinance before the commencement of the Bill. A draft of the relevant amendment is in [Appendix 2](#).

18. The Bills Committee supports the amendments proposed by Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung and will not propose any amendments to the Bill.

Resumption of Second Reading debate

19. The Bills Committee has completed scrutiny of the Bill and supports the resumption of the Second Reading debate on the Bill at the LegCo meeting of 14 May 2025 by Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung.

Consultation with the House Committee

20. The Bills Committee reported its deliberations to the House Committee on 28 March 2025.

Council Business Divisions
Legislative Council Secretariat
7 May 2025

Appendix 1

Bills Committee on City University of Hong Kong (Amendment) Bill 2025

Membership list

Chairman Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, GBM, GBS, JP

Members Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung, GBM, GBS, JP
Prof Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, GBS, JP
Hon Doreen KONG Yuk-foon
Dr Hon TIK Chi-yuen, SBS, JP
Dr Hon Johnny NG Kit-chong, MH, JP
Prof Hon CHOW Man-kong, JP
Hon Dennis LEUNG Tsz-wing, MH
Hon Rock CHEN Chung-nin, SBS, JP
Hon CHAN Yung, SBS, JP
Ir Hon CHAN Siu-hung, JP
Hon Lillian KWOK Ling-lai
Hon Benson LUK Hon-man
Hon TANG Fei, MH
Prof Hon LAU Chi-pang, BBS, JP

(Total : 15 members)

Clerk Ms Shirley CHAN

Legal Adviser Miss Quincy NG

DRAFT

City University of Hong Kong (Amendment) Bill 2025

Committee Stage

Amendments to be moved by the Honourable Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung

Clause

Amendment Proposed

2 By deleting “section 3” and substituting “sections 3 and 4”.

4 By deleting the clause and substituting –

“4. Section 25 added

At the end of the Ordinance –

Add

“25. Validation

Elections conducted pursuant to section 10(1)(h) or (k) of the City University of Hong Kong Ordinance (Cap. 1132) (*principal Ordinance*) before the commencement of the City University of Hong Kong (Amendment) Ordinance 2025 (of 2025) are deemed to have been elections conducted in accordance with electoral rules that were treated as if they were statutes made under section 21A of the principal Ordinance.”.”.