

**For discussion on
18 February 2025**

**Panel on Education
Subcommittee on Promoting the Development of Hong Kong
into an International Education Hub**

**Promotion of Internationalisation by the University Grants
Committee-funded Universities**

Purpose

This paper introduces various initiatives taken by the Government and the University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded Universities in promoting internationalisation.

Background

2. The 2023 Policy Address has set out clearly the strategic directions and objectives for enhancing the quality of education in Hong Kong, with a view to developing Hong Kong into an international post-secondary education hub and a cradle of future talents. Hong Kong possesses sound education infrastructure and our overall competitiveness in education ranks top five in the world. Among which, Hong Kong's post-secondary education is highly internationalised and diversified, and we boast five of the world's top 100 universities with outstanding research talents, making Hong Kong an international hub for exchange and collaboration among high-calibre talents. Hong Kong has all along been actively serving the country's needs with its own strengths, endeavouring to complement the national education goals, the Belt and Road (B&R) Initiative, the opportunities arising from the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA), as well as the necessary manpower support for Hong Kong's development of the "eight

centres” as outlined in the 14th Five-Year Plan. Our goal is to build on our strengths to attract more outstanding talents from around the world, provide local students with broader international perspectives, and thus nurture a diversified pool of talents, with a view to strengthening Hong Kong’s momentum of development while contributing to national development.

3. To fully leverage the distinctive advantages of the post-secondary education sector in Hong Kong under “One Country, Two Systems”, and to press ahead with the development of Hong Kong as an international hub for post-secondary education, the Government is taking forward a series of specific policy initiatives, such as raising the enrolment ceiling of non-local students for publicly funded post-secondary institutions; increasing the annual quota of the B&R Scholarship; gradually expanding the quota of the Hong Kong PhD Fellowship Scheme; continuing with the implementation of the Hong Kong Scholarship for Excellence Scheme; and injection of additional funding into the Funding Scheme for Mainland and Global Engagement and Student Learning Experience by the UGC to support local students to participate in learning experience activities outside Hong Kong. In connection with the above policy objectives, the 2024 Policy Address has announced to further step up efforts on this front in promoting talent nurturing and building the “Study in Hong Kong” brand.

Increase non-local student quota of publicly-funded post-secondary institutions

4. Hong Kong is a city where East meets West. With its cultural infrastructure and international network built over the years, Hong Kong attracts outstanding talents from around the globe. Our post-secondary institutions offer vibrant and diverse campuses which have always been popular among Mainland and overseas students. Four of our UGC-funded universities have even ranked among top ten of the most internationalised universities in the world. Over the past five years, the number of non-local students has gradually increased by about 20% to a record high of around 23 100 in the 2023/24 academic year. Among them, about 14 800 students from over 100 countries or regions enrolled in more than 200 UGC-funded undergraduate programmes, which is

equivalent to 19.9% of the local student places at that study level.

5. As announced in the 2023 Policy Address, the enrolment ceiling of non-local students in publicly-funded post-secondary institutions will be increased. Starting from the 2024/25 academic year, the enrolment ceiling of non-local students in publicly-funded post-secondary institutions (applicable to taught programmes) has been doubled from 20% to 40% (of local student places). The institutions may, having regard to their own conditions, progressively attract more students from abroad, B&R countries in particular, as well as from the Mainland, to pursue their studies in Hong Kong. The high quality of teaching and supporting facilities will facilitate the expansion and quality enhancement of our post-secondary institutions, thereby promoting Hong Kong's development into an international education hub. In the 2024/25 academic year, the number of non-local students enrolling in UGC-funded programmes has further increased to 26 600. Among them, some 17 200 students enroll in undergraduate programmes, which is equivalent to about 23.2% of the local student places. The Government is pleased to see that the funded universities have made use of the relaxed enrolment ceilings to successfully recruit more non-local students to pursue their studies in Hong Kong.

Promoting an Inclusive Culture on Campus

6. Admitting international students with more diversified background is only the beginning, as it is important to help them integrate into the student community and adapt to the campus environment in order to yield benefits to the universities, local students and non-local students collectively. With the increase in the enrolment ceiling of non-local students, they will become a more sizeable part of the student body of the institutions. As such, universities should devote more efforts and resources than ever to promote and drive a culture for inclusivity on campus.

7. Apart from knowledge acquisition, a comprehensive learning experience in universities should also comprise various aspects such as cultural exchanges, social networks, personal development, as well as language and employment support. In order to offer high-quality

educational experience to non-local students, universities should provide comprehensive and suitable support on top of learning in classrooms, and create a vibrant and diversified cultural environment by making reference to features of good practice, so as to promote an inclusive culture on campus. We encourage UGC-funded universities to make reference to and disseminate best practices for strengthening support to non-local students in their academic and daily lives.

8. To name a few examples, initiatives to promote an inclusive culture on campus may include:

- (a) **Cultural exchanges**: Organise or participate in multi-cultural activities for non-local students to better understand the social landscape, festivals and customs of Hong Kong as well as foster a sense of belonging towards our city. On the other hand, non-local students can introduce their unique cultural backgrounds to other students through the festivities of different places, thereby promoting mutual exchanges among students and the sense of inclusivity on campuses, with a view to achieving “internationalisation at home”;
- (b) **Interpersonal network**: Under the peer support schemes established at institutional, departmental or hostel levels, local students are engaged to provide peer support to non-local students who are new to Hong Kong. These arrangements will not only allow more effective support for non-local students, but also enable local students to connect with a wide variety of people from different backgrounds. Meanwhile, the universities may introduce incentive schemes to encourage non-local students to participate in various extra-curricular activities, through which they may develop interpersonal networks with students sharing similar aspirations or interests for better integration into campus life;
- (c) **Personal development of students**: To keep on track with study progress while adapting to the changes in living environment may bring challenges to the physical and mental conditions of non-local students. Universities may take initiatives in

strengthening connections with them to show care and support. They should proactively identify students in need of further attention or assistance, and provide counselling services which could address problems frequently encountered by non-local students. Meanwhile, universities should ensure that suitable religious facilities are provided on campuses with a view to appreciating, respecting and fulfilling students' personal needs; and

- (d) **Language learning and employment support:** Under existing arrangements, eligible non-local graduates/students may apply to stay or return to work in Hong Kong after graduation under relevant schemes. Starting from last November, the Government has granted temporary exemption to full-time non-local undergraduate students studying in Hong Kong to take up part-time jobs, with a view to enhancing their personal experience and understanding of working in Hong Kong, as well as attracting them to stay for future development after graduation. Universities may provide non-local students with career development support, such as interview workshops and career talks tailored for them. Universities may also offer elementary Chinese/Cantonese courses which will not only enable these students to better integrate into the life on campus and in the community, but also help them explore suitable opportunities for future development in Hong Kong, thereby injecting impetus into our economic development.

9. At the same time, both local and non-local students may have special needs in relation to their diet or daily life due to different cultures or religious beliefs. Universities should continue to gauge the views of different student groups extensively and pay heed to the situation, with the aim of providing specific campus facilities (e.g. multi-faith prayer rooms and toilets with appropriate sanitary fittings) and catering services (e.g. providing halal food options in catering outlets on campus) for meeting the practical daily needs of these students in their campus life as far as possible.

Promoting the “Study in Hong Kong” Brand

10. To support universities in further publicising Hong Kong’s higher education to the world, telling the good story of Hong Kong, promoting the “Study in Hong Kong” brand and attracting more quality non-local students to study in Hong Kong, the UGC has been providing funding for universities to bolster their efforts on enhancing internationalisation and strengthening engagement with Mainland China, establishing strategic partnerships with academic institutions around the world and broadening the international perspectives of local students, so as to enable them to tap the opportunities arising from the development of our country.

Strengthening global links of the higher education sector

11. Under the strategic plans of building a strong education nation, the higher education sector in Hong Kong has taken up the important tasks of going global to forge connections between our country and the world. To support the universities in enhancing their promotional efforts, the UGC has allocated around \$20 million in the 2022-25 triennium to the Heads of Universities Committee’s Standing Committee on Internationalization (the HUCOMSCI), a Committee involving the eight UGC-funded universities, to visit different countries for participation in international conferences and expositions, seminars and related activities on higher education. Moreover, delegations led by the Secretary for Education, comprising representatives of the UGC and various universities, fostered connections with representatives of governments, heads of universities and stakeholders of higher education around the globe to establish networks and keep abreast of the latest development of the higher education institutions in different places. The opportunities were also taken to showcase the excellent teaching quality and robust research capabilities of our higher education sector, as well as to expand the network of student exchanges and academic collaborations, with a view to further enhancing the reputation and status of Hong Kong’s higher education sector in the international arena.

12. The HUCOMSCI plans to make use of its resources in 2025 to participate in the annual conference and exhibition of the Asia-Pacific Association for International Education to be held in Delhi, India, the

NAFSA Annual Conference & Expo to be held in San Diego, the United States, and the annual conference of the European Association for International Education to be held in Gothenburg, Sweden. By then, the eight UGC-funded universities will set up a joint Hong Kong Pavilion in the above expositions and deliver keynote speeches on “Study in Hong Kong” to promote the competitive edges of Hong Kong as an international post-secondary education hub to overseas partners, so as to encourage more exchanges and collaboration between Hong Kong and the rest of the world on higher education development. Through UGC, we will continue to support HUCOMSCI’s work in this regard by deepening institutional collaboration and joint-up efforts for further promotion of the “Study in Hong Kong” brand around the world, thereby accelerating the development of Hong Kong into an international post-secondary education hub.

Recruitment activities

13. With the increase in the non-local student enrolment ceiling, the universities have been actively stepping up their recruitment efforts in the Mainland and overseas by establishing partnerships with the secondary schools in those places, participating in education expos in individual regions and organising seminars for interested parents and students, so as to attract more students to pursue study in Hong Kong. In recent years, students from countries such as Central Asia, East Asia, Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Africa have been among the targets of the UGC-funded universities and joint overseas recruitment tours to Vietnam, Thailand, Kazakhstan, India, etc. have been organised to provide talks/workshops for students in these countries. The UGC-funded universities have planned to organise nearly 200 overseas recruitment activities in the 2024/25 academic year, many of which are targeted at B&R countries from the ASEAN. Universities will continue to organise joint recruitment roadshows and participate in overseas education expos, in an effort to recruit more students from around the world to study in Hong Kong.

Hosting large-scale international academic events

14. On the other hand, we are pleased to see that universities and organisations have been actively hosting large-scale international

academic events, inviting participation of representatives and renowned scholars from universities of different parts of China and the world. The events held in 2024 included the U21 Annual Network Meeting and Presidential Symposium organised by the University of Hong Kong; the Sino-US University Presidents' Dialogue jointly organised by the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the Peking University; the THE Global AI Forum co-hosted by the Hong Kong Polytechnic University and Times Higher Education; the inaugural Molecular Frontiers Symposium in Greater China jointly organised by the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and the Frontier Molecular Foundation; and the Global University Presidents & Leaders Summit hosted by the Hong Kong Association for External Friendship and supported by the UGC and nine local universities. The Government and the UGC will continue to strive to host international education conferences and exhibitions in Hong Kong. This will bring together leaders and representatives of the higher education sector from around the world, accentuate Hong Kong's image as an international hub for post-secondary education and showcase the outstanding achievements of Hong Kong's higher education to the world, thereby further elevating the international status of universities in Hong Kong.

Broadening the International Perspectives of Local Students and Tapping Opportunities in the Mainland

15. While promoting internationalisation, the UGC-funded universities have also actively organised more exchange activities to broaden the international perspectives of our students and encourage them to tap the opportunities offered in the Mainland. As of end-November 2024, the UGC-funded universities have signed more than 2 600 student exchange agreements with institutions around the world. In 2023/24 academic year, the number of incoming exchange students rebounded to about 5 100, with over 60% coming from Europe or North America. The number of outgoing exchange students also rebounded to around 5 600.

16. Furthermore, starting from the 2023/24 academic year, the UGC has injected an additional funding of \$100 million into the Funding Scheme for Mainland and Global Engagement and Student Learning

Experience (the Scheme) to encourage the UGC-funded universities to provide more exchange and learning opportunities outside Hong Kong as well as to promote cultural exchanges in a diversified and inclusive international learning environment. Universities are using the funding to implement over 200 initiatives for supporting local students' participation in learning experience outside Hong Kong, such as exchange programmes, study visits, internships, field trips, service learning and international activities, etc., with an emphasis on the GBA. The funding may also be utilised to encourage activities for multicultural interaction on campus and promote exchanges between students from different backgrounds and cultures, so that students can benefit from an international learning environment and broaden their horizons while studying on local campuses. The additional funding can benefit more students of the UGC-funded universities, and is in line with the target set out in the 2022 Policy Address for about 50% of local undergraduates of the UGC-funded universities to have learning experience outside Hong Kong by the 2025/26 academic year.

Conclusion

17. The publicly-funded universities have implemented a series of initiatives to promote internationalisation in their campuses. On recruiting non-local teaching staff and students, the universities in general recruit world-renowned scholars to promote academic exchanges. They would work with top notch recruitment agencies, organise exchange activities and host large-scale conferences in order to attract more teaching staff to join their teaching force and promote world-class scientific research. As regards the recruitment of non-local students, the universities regularly organise overseas school visits and education expos, as well as form alliances with top senior secondary schools and government departments worldwide to offer opportunities for further study. In light of the high living cost in Hong Kong, the universities have proactively increased the number of scholarships to attract outstanding international students, ensuring that these students will not be barred from enrolment due to financial burden. Some universities have even set up task forces specifically to review and take forward strategies relating to the recruitment of non-local students. On enhancing a culture of inclusion and integration on campus, the global affairs offices or student support

offices set up by universities provide training programmes on diversity and inclusion with the aim of developing an inclusive working environment. Also there are regular gatherings to help new staff familiarise with the campus and the local community and promote exchanges; cross-cultural activities in different faculties and departments to help foster a culturally inclusive learning atmosphere; as well as different cultural events organised from time to time to enable local and non-local students to commemorate cultural heritage together. Besides, the language support provided by student affairs offices can help non-local students overcome the language barriers. In addition, the universities offer various kinds of orientation activities in which local students are invited to act as peer partners to help non-local students adapt to the local culture. The residential life education programmes implemented at different universities also encourage exchanges across cultures and languages, providing different student groups with ample opportunities for cultural integration. All these fully demonstrate the universities' commitment in promoting cultural inclusiveness and integration. As for broadening the international perspectives of local students, our universities have comprehensive student exchange programmes in place. Students may choose to study as exchange students at the many universities in different countries and regions under the programmes for one term or one year. The experience can effectively broaden students' international perspectives as well as enhance their foreign language skills and cultural awareness. The universities, through actively signing student exchange agreements with leading universities in countries and regions worldwide, provide exchange quotas for students to take part in a wide range of exchange activities, including site visits, conferences, internships, practice-based research, clinical training and cultural discovery, in different parts of the world. Regarding the promotion of the "Study in Hong Kong" brand, in support of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government's efforts to promote the development of an international hub for post-secondary education and further build the "Study in Hong Kong" brand, delegations of universities participate in international education conferences and recruitment roadshows every year through the HUCOMSCI to strengthen the ties with their overseas counterparts. The latest progress on the initiatives taken by the UGC-funded universities in driving internationalisation is set out in **Annex 1 to 8**.

Advice Sought

18. Members are invited to take note and comment on the latest progress on the initiatives taken by the Government and the UGC-funded universities in promoting internationalisation.

Education Bureau

February 2025

Initiatives for Promoting Internationalisation on University Campuses

City University of Hong Kong

Recruitment of Non-local Faculty Members and Students

City University of Hong Kong (CityUHK) has launched the Distinguished Visiting Professors, Presidential Assistant Professors, and Global Research Assistant Professors schemes to attract world-class talent to Hong Kong, fostering the integration of global perspectives into academia and innovation. These initiatives position CityUHK as a hub for international excellence and reinforce Hong Kong's status as a premier global education and research center.

In parallel, we conducted over 45 undergraduate recruitment initiatives in the past year across 30 countries and regions, including emerging markets such as Brunei, Nigeria, Ghana, Tanzania, Azerbaijan, and Romania. As of mid-January 2025, non-local direct applications for undergraduate programs have increased by over 70% compared to the same period last year, with applicants hailing from 73 different places of origin in this recruitment cycle.

Opportunities of International Exposure for Local Students

CityUHK provides an extensive range of overseas learning, internship, and entrepreneurial opportunities for students, fostering global exposure, academic enrichment, and innovation. Through our well-established Student Exchange Programme, students can study for one semester or a year at more than 400 partner institutions across over 45 countries and regions. Renowned exchange partners include the National University of Singapore, University College London, Peking University, and Cornell University, among others.

In 2024, CityUHK welcomed over 850 incoming exchange students and sent nearly 700 outgoing students abroad. Additionally, we collaborated with prestigious universities such as MIT, Harvard University, and the University of California, Berkeley to offer short-term summer programmes lasting over 28 days. In summer 2024, CityUHK subsidised over 400 undergraduate students to participate in these transformative learning experiences.

Furthermore, various colleges, schools, and departments organised discipline-specific or thematic study tours, providing students with tailored global learning opportunities. These initiatives reflect CityUHK's commitment to nurturing

globally minded and innovation-driven graduates.

Promoting a Culture of Inclusiveness and Integration on Campus

CityUHK is dedicated to fostering a vibrant and inclusive learning environment that encourages students to collaborate, explore diverse cultures, and enjoy a dynamic multicultural campus life. Through a variety of university-led activities and programmes, as well as support for student-initiated initiatives, CityUHK connects students with valuable resources and networks. These efforts enable students to engage in peer support, deepen their understanding of local society and cultures, enhance their language and communication skills, and promote meaningful interactions among individuals from diverse cultural and academic backgrounds.

One notable initiative is the Student-initiated Projects programme, administered by the Global Engagement Office. This funding resource empowers students to organise events and activities that promote campus internationalisation and integration. Each year, the programme supports approximately 20 events, attracting over 3,000 participants. These projects not only enhance cross-cultural understanding but also inspire students to take the lead in creating a more inclusive and globally engaged campus community.

By nurturing a multicultural and supportive environment, CityUHK ensures that students are prepared to thrive in today's interconnected world, reflecting its commitment to global engagement and professional education.

Promotion of the “Study in HK” brand

To support the HKSAR Government's initiative to develop Hong Kong into an international hub for post-secondary education and to further promote the “Study in Hong Kong” brand, CityUHK, as the convenor of the HUCOM Standing Committee for Internationalisation (HUCOMSCI), has taken a leading role in fostering global collaboration. In September 2024, CityUHK led a delegation of over 35 staff from 8 publicly funded universities to the European Association for International Education (EAIE) annual conference in Toulouse, France. The delegation was joined by Dr. Christine Choi, Secretary for Education, JP, and Prof. James Tang, Secretary-General of the University Grants Committee, to engage with government officials and educators from around the world, promoting the “Study in Hong Kong” initiative.

Building on this success, CityUHK will continue its efforts by leading delegations to two major education conferences in India and the United States in March and

May of this year. These initiatives aim to enhance Hong Kong's global presence in higher education and attract international students to the city.

Moreover, CityUHK is actively forging international partnerships with universities worldwide to increase Hong Kong's visibility and provide enriching opportunities for students. For instance, CityUHK has established joint-degree programmes with Satbayev University in Kazakhstan, supported by their Ministry of Science and Higher Education, which will fund up to 100 scholarships for Kazakhstani students to study at CityUHK starting in 2026. Additionally, CityUHK has launched the Future Global Leaders Programme in collaboration with the University of Cambridge. This initiative will enable Cambridge students to participate in short-term leadership training programmes at CityUHK every summer, fostering cross-cultural exchanges and leadership development.

Through these initiatives, CityUHK reaffirms its commitment to advancing internationalisation, strengthening global partnerships, and positioning Hong Kong as a premier destination for world-class education.

Initiatives for Promoting Internationalisation on University Campuses

Hong Kong Baptist University

Recruitment of Non-local Faculty Members and Students

HKBU conducts global recruitment of teachers vigorously. It launches initiatives such as “Talent100” and participates in the Global STEM Professorship Scheme of the HKSAR Government. More than half of its teachers are non-local academics from over 30 countries/regions. HKBU is committed to admitting 40% non-local undergraduate students from all over the world by 2027/28. To explore new sources of students, HKBU reaches out to a range of selected countries in the Middle East, Africa and Europe such as Qatar, UAE, Mauritius and Spain. Since 2023, there has been a 30% increase in applications and/or admittees from countries such as Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Nepal and Pakistan. Undergraduate applications from the Mainland have also increased by 16% since 2023.

HKBU organised over 20 and 300 recruitment events respectively for Mainland and overseas prospective students in 2023/24. It hosted the annual Counsellors Fly-In programme which had 27 overseas participants in 2023/24. There is a strong collaboration with our Zhuhai campus in recruitment. HKBU has increased its number and amount of scholarships by 10% in 2024/25 for non-local non-Mainland students, including new ones for specific Belt and Road countries and students with non-academic talents (e.g., Olympians).

Promoting a Culture of Inclusiveness and Integration on Campus

Student associations take the lead in fostering cultural exchange and student integration, while the Office of Student Affairs and International Office provide a full range of support to non-local students. Since 2003, the Host Family Programme has recorded more than 1200 family participations, benefiting more than 2500 non-local students. Students gain support and a deeper understanding of the local culture and community through social gatherings and dialogue with the families. 93 local and non-local students have joined the Roommate Pairing Scheme which was launched in 2023/24. BU Market is a designated campus space opened in 2023/24 to promote exchange of ideas and cross-cultural interactions among students of different backgrounds.

Opportunities of International Exposure for Local Students

In 2023/24, more than 30% of HKBU undergraduates completed at least one non-local learning activity, around 20% in the Mainland and 16% overseas. We aim at, by 2028, giving all undergraduates at least one non-local learning experience before graduation.

Promotion of the “Study in HK” brand

HKBU promotes Hong Kong as a destination of study together with the Great Bay Area (GBA) under the “One Exchange, Two Experiences” banner. We leverage our Zhuhai Campus which is known as the Beijing Normal University-Hong Kong Baptist University United International College. In the Extended Study Programme, HKBU full-degree and exchange students have the opportunity to study in the Zhuhai campus for one semester or one year. Since 2023, 50 international students have benefited from it.

Every semester, HKBU arranges a 3-day immersive tour to the GBA for the international students. They stay at the residential halls in the Zhuhai Campus and attend a variety of learning activities. In 2023/24, 380 students from 52 countries/regions joined the tour. The student feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Our global partners have also expressed immense interest in the programme. In 2023/24, 16 representatives from our international partners joined the annual International Partners Fly-In Programme. In 2024/25, 18 partners from 8 countries set up booths at HKBU to promote summer overseas learning opportunities for our students.

Initiatives for Promoting Internationalisation on University Campuses

Lingnan University

Recruitment of Non-local Faculty Members and Students

Lingnan University (LU) aspires to be a global research-focused liberal arts university for the digital age. Internationalization of the campus and the absorption of excellent scholars have always been among the most important goals at LU. Over the past 12 months, LU has launched the “Lingnan 60 Global Talent Scheme” to recruit over 60 outstanding scholars from worldwide to work with LU before 2027. At the same time, senior professors have also visited different cities and participated in conferences to recruit faculty members. With these measures, it is ensured that LU can secure the status of a world-class research institution with the joining of brilliant scholars worldwide.

To attract non-local students, LU diversified its marketing channels and conducted extensive online promotions, including virtual events, live sessions, webinars, and individual consultations. LU also established attractive AI-related programmes, increased scholarship quotas for non-local students, expanded student-resident ratios and the downtown campus, and engaged in in-person promotions such as education fairs and outreach activities. Additionally, LU participated in prominent forums and alliances to collaborate globally and raise the University’s profile.

Promoting a Culture of Inclusiveness and Integration on Campus

As an institution that emphasises promoting inclusiveness, diversity, and integration, LU puts great effort into maintaining these crucial elements on the campus. LU’s Equal Opportunities Committee and other units in the university promote equity on campus through activities that foster diversity and inclusion. Enhancements were made to the Multi-Faith Meditation Room for students and staff. Additionally, a large-scale awareness campaign and Integrated Learning Programme were launched to support inclusiveness.

To enhance cultural experiences, LU hired a member from a Belt and Road country to promote international awareness through cultural knowledge, food, and drinks. The university also enhanced its exchange buddy scheme, recruiting 100 local students to support inbound students, and implemented a co-living residential program to integrate all students.

Opportunities of International Exposure for Local Students

LU offers various overseas learning and internship opportunities to provide our students with better international awareness. With our well-developed student exchange programme, the number of exchange partner institutions is increasing steadily with 275 worldwide partners across 53 countries, which provide over 800 exchange opportunities to our students. LU had piloted a French taster course to help outbound students prepare for their experience in France. LU also provided unique overseas service-learning opportunities for students to collaborate with students from South-East Asia, such as the Philippines, Vietnam, and Indonesia, and join various internship programmes around the world.

Additionally, LU aims to benefit students through close collaborations with world-class institutions. LU students were previously invited by UCLA to join its intensive one-week Innovation and Entrepreneurship Programme. LU also established a 6-week immersive Innovation and Entrepreneurship Programme, recruiting around 20 students from prestigious engineering schools like Cambridge, Toronto, and Chicago to work with Lingnan students. Furthermore, LU partnered with Peking University to create the “Lingnan-Yuanpei STEM Summer Academy,” offering students unique experiences and the opportunity to transform creative ideas into grant-winning business plans.

Initiatives for Promoting Internationalisation on University Campuses

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Recruitment of Non-local Faculty Members and Students

The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) has strengthened its efforts in its **outreach work attracting undergraduate student applications from nearly 80 countries and regions** this academic year. Our presence in East and Southeast Asia, emerging markets such as Vietnam, Central Asia, and the Middle East have allowed us to attract high-calibre students. Our *Admission Caravans* series is a strategic initiative to foster greater engagement with prospective international students, enhance the cultural diversity of our student body and more effectively promote Hong Kong as a premier education destination. We forge **partnerships with Consulate Generals** in Hong Kong and with their assistance, we have connected with key schools and developed a School Nomination Scheme which has attracted bright students from Vietnam. In 2024 we developed a partnership with a scholarship programme run by the Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology which has sponsored some 25 students from Indonesia to join the CUHK Summer Institute where secondary five students can experience university life and teaching at CUHK. Recognising the high cost of living in Hong Kong, CUHK has **increased scholarships for non-local students** by 19 percent, totaling about HK\$110 mil to attract outstanding students for 2025 entry.

Besides, joint **recruitment efforts of all the UGC-funded universities** have allowed us to present a united front in promoting Hong Kong as the superior destination for higher education.

Moreover, interdisciplinary double major programmes have been launched in collaboration with CUHK(SZ), attracting international students and exposing them to the vast career opportunities in the Greater Bay Area (GBA).

As a world-class comprehensive research university, CUHK **attracts leading scholars and scientists** as well as emerging talents from around the world through schemes such as the Vice-Chancellor Early Career Professorship Scheme and the Vice-Chancellor Professorship and Visiting Professorship Scheme to strengthen our teaching and research. In 2023/24 we have recruited over 100 new faculty members from outside Hong Kong, representing some fifteen nationalities.

Promoting a Culture of Inclusiveness and Integration on Campus

CUHK's unique College system provides the perfect environment to integrate non-local degree-seeking and exchange students. These students are spread across the residential halls of our nine colleges and many share rooms with local students, promoting cultural exchange and friendship. Besides, the colleges curate special programmes bringing local, mainland and international students together, promoting harmony and engagement within the college communities.

Our Office of Student Affairs ensures that non-local students are provided the support needed to settle into life in Hong Kong and CUHK. Special programmes such as *Flourishing at CUHK* **supports new students** with modules on understanding Hong Kong and transition assistance. Year-round programmes such as Cultural Festivals, International Connection Programme, International Cultural Ambassador Scheme, Chinese Culture Immersion Programme, and Global Lens allow intercultural exchange and support our Internationalization at Home efforts. Our *Cultural Extravaganza* event held in October 2024 which drew over 3,000 staff and students allowed all members of the campus community to learn about and experience the different cultures represented on campus.

Opportunities of International Exposure for Local Students

CUHK has student exchange partnerships with close to 290 universities in 37 countries/regions, offering **term-time exchanges** to some 900 students in 2024-25. In addition to this, students took up 4,300 **short-term non-local experiential learning opportunities**, representing a 50 percent increase from the previous year. These opportunities including field trips, conferences, internships, research attachments, clinical training, cultural exploration and many more in over 50 countries and regions are offered by some 50 units across the university.

We have developed **new models** for international programmes, allowing students to access global learning without having to invest extended time and resources. Hybrid model using online platforms and in-person short field trips adopted for our Hong Kong and Korean Cultural Industries Programme, for example is a successful model we look to replicate with other partner universities.

Our global education efforts cut across the university. Generous **funding** from the UGC has allowed us to support new initiatives catering to diverse student learning needs of different academic disciplines.

Besides bilateral partnerships, CUHK leverages its membership in prestigious **networks** as such the Association of Pacific Rim Universities, which provides opportunities for both virtual and in-person learning with students from over 60 universities in 16 economies.

CUHK collaborates with over 20 institutions worldwide through **various teaching programmes, joint degrees, and integrated curriculum initiatives**, offering students exposure to diverse learning environments and cultures. Our dual degrees with universities in the UK, USA, Japan, and Chinese Mainland, for example, enhances our educational offerings and global exposure for students.

Our **Co-operative Education Programme** provides over 700 placement opportunities in the Greater Bay Area and Asia including Indonesia, Japan and Thailand, partnering with more than 130 corporate entities like Tencent and Standard Chartered Bank. Through the programme, students deepen comprehension of the region's economic growth, connect with local industry leaders and gain hands-on experiences that will prepare them well for a successful career.

Promotion of the “Study in HK” brand

CUHK recently established the **Zhizhen School of Interdisciplinary Mathematical Sciences**, an initiative of the internationally renowned mathematician Professor Yau Shing-tung. It will cultivate mathematical science leaders in Hong Kong, aligning with the national aspiration to build China into a leading country in education, as well as the nation’s 14th Five-Year Plan’s vision of strengthening basic research. This also aligns with the aspiration of the Hong Kong government to develop Hong Kong as an international hub for post-secondary education.

Initiatives for Promoting Internationalisation on University Campuses

The Education University of Hong Kong

Recruitment of Non-local Faculty Members and Students

The Education University of Hong Kong (EdUHK) has made several strategic efforts over the past year to recruit more non-local faculty members, which included offering comprehensive and enticing remuneration packages to attract top talent from around the globe, bolstering EdUHK's Visiting Professorship Scheme to expand the global networks, engaging professional recruitment firms to identify and attract talent from various regions, as well as developing an employer branding strategy for EdUHK. In 2024, EdUHK recruited 39 non-local scholars from 12 countries and regions.

EdUHK has set up a "Task Force on Admissions of Non-local Students for Higher Diploma and Undergraduate Programmes" to review and implement strategies for non-local recruitment and admissions in early 2024. Various scholarship and nomination schemes have been established to admit non-local students enrolling in undergraduate and postgraduate programmes through multiple channels. A hybrid approach was also employed to accommodate the recruitment of non-local students. This strategy involved leveraging a combination of international and Chinese digital media, social media platforms, and traditional educational media. EdUHK has also dedicated experienced staff members to actively participate in diverse global education fairs and international recruitment activities from time to time, such as the China Education Expo 2024 in Beijing and the GBA Higher Education Expo in Shenzhen, where they have directly engaged with high school students across mainland China. Over 20 recruitment-related activities were conducted for non-local students undergraduate programmes in 2023/24. The number of non-local applicants for undergraduate programmes, from 34 countries and regions, for 2024/25 has increased by over 21%.

In the past year, more resources were invested in recruitment and outreach activities, such as branding and advertising campaigns in mainland China, conducting a hybrid talk for non-local students and parents on Information Day, introducing the non-local student ambassador programme, and strengthening the networks with high schools/universities in various countries/regions by participating in the China Education Expo and the QS Higher Ed Summit, and promoting postgraduate programmes in the Belt and Road countries and the Greater Bay Area, as well as offering intensive International Outreach Study

Programmes and Overseas Research Attachment Scheme through partnerships with top international universities. In addition, EdUHK has been proactive in facilitating the Field Experience arrangements for non-local students of teacher education programmes, enabling Mainland students to conduct their Field Experience at local schools or mainland-based schools offering the HKDSE curriculum, to attract more mainland students to enroll in EdUHK.

Promoting a Culture of Inclusiveness and Integration on Campus

Each unit of EdUHK have been making every effort to promote cultural integration and inclusion on campus and beyond. In the past year, the Human Resources Office has conducted a range of training sessions focused on diversity and inclusion to cultivate a workplace characterised by inclusive communication and mutual respect. In addition to the induction/orientation programme, EdUHK regularly organised gatherings for new joiners to help them familiarise themselves with EdUHK and the Hong Kong community and foster networking opportunities.

Meanwhile, a series of intercultural activities were organised by various faculties and departments to foster a culturally inclusive learning atmosphere. Besides, the Global Affairs Office organised a Cultural Showcase, where over 400 non-local students gathered with local students to celebrate and share their unique cultural heritages. The Student Affairs Office offered Cantonese language classes throughout the year to assist non-local students in overcoming the language barrier and conversing with local students on campus. During the orientation period, local students served as buddies in the peer support schemes, providing guidance to non-local students in their cultural adjustment. The Intercultural Fair and Mid-Autumn Festival Fair were the flagship cultural integration events specifically targeted at non-local students. A total of 530 non-local students participated in these two events in 2024. The “Connect the Dots” and “GoodLife@EdUHK” also offered an array of cultural enrichment and integration activities for various student groups, including non-local postgraduates, non-Chinese speakers, and Mainland students. EdUHK’s Hall Life Education activities also included a wide variety of non-formal learning activities that encouraged cross-cultural as well as language exchange. A total of 150 hall-based cross-cultural and language exchange activities were organised last year. All of these efforts contributed to the campus’s commitment to cultural inclusiveness and integration.

Opportunities of International Exposure for Local Students

EdUHK has raised local students' international exposure through embedding international elements into the curriculum and, offering more opportunities for formal and informal experiences, both globally and within mainland China. The non-local learning experiences include i) outgoing exchange; ii) compulsory Cross-faculty Core Course to visit the GBA; iii) Language Immersion Programme; iv) Field Experience in GBA; v) Experiential Learning on Professional Ethics for Teachers; vi) study/field trips; vii) non-local internship; viii) international conferences and competitions. In 2023/24, the percentage of undergraduate students with non-local learning experience since admission has reached 61%. Close to 50% of undergraduate students and 52% of research postgraduate students joined non-local learning experience in the GBA, the mainland China and worldwide yearly.

In addition, events such as the Student Exchange Fair and the Cultural Showcase were organised on campus to elevate local students' international exposure. During the Cultural Showcase, over 400 international students from more than a dozen countries and regions, including mainland China, Finland, Germany, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Spain, Switzerland, Tajikistan, the Netherlands showcased their creativity by wearing traditional costumes and promoting their cultures in innovative ways at culturally-themed booths to local students, aimed at fostering cultural exchange and further enriching the global perspectives of local students.

Promotion of the “Study in HK” brand

EdUHK regularly organised various international education conferences and seminars to promote academic exchange with scholars from around the world. The 1st International Conference for Research in Early Childhood Education and Development and the International Conference on Chinese Language Heritage in a Diverse World held last year attracted scholars from mainland China, Macau, Taiwan, the United States, Australia, Singapore, Japan, Malaysia and other regions to participate.

EdUHK proactively developed collaborations with institutions around the world, and MOUs have been signed to establish frameworks for co-operation in various areas, including academic exchange, research co-operation, and teacher training, thereby promoting educational partnerships globally. Meanwhile, EdUHK is also a member in the Shanghai-Hong Kong University Alliance, the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao University Alliance, and the Beijing-Hong Kong University Alliance. As the convenor of the Shanghai-Hong Kong University Alliance, EdUHK organised the 2024 Annual Conference last year to explore effective

ways to foster high-level educational and scientific research exchanges between the two cities.

EdUHK has not only actively engaged in international events such as the Asia-Pacific Association of International Education (APAIE), the European Association for International Education (EAIE), and NAFSA: Association of International Educators (NAFSA), but also co-organised the “Hong Kong Partners Week” in December 2024 alongside the eight UGC-funded universities. EdUHK is responding by creating the “Study in Hong Kong” brand alongside other UGC-funded universities, the UGC and the EDB while also strengthening ties with overseas universities to enhance Hong Kong’s influence as an international hub for post-secondary education through global collaboration.

Initiatives for Promoting Internationalisation on University Campuses

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Recruitment of Non-local Faculty Members and Students

Over the past year, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) has implemented various strategic initiatives to boost the recruitment of non-local students. The University has actively explored new markets, focusing on regions with good potentials, such as Central Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and South America, with the aim of diversifying the student body and internationalising the campus. In pursuit of these goals, PolyU representatives have visited these regions to establish collaborations with local schools, thereby strengthening engagement with prospective students and educators. PolyU has also organised thematic sessions targeting overseas students and their parents, providing them with the chance to explore subjects beyond the traditional scope, thereby promoting PolyU's programmes and the advantages of study in Hong Kong. The student ambassadors programme has been expanded to include a wider range of nationalities, leveraging their unique insights to convey promotional messages to targeted countries and to attract a diverse array of non-local students.

PolyU spares no effort in its global search of outstanding scholars to join the University to boost the leadership and impact of its educational and research activities. In 2024, over 50% of the academic/teaching/clinical staff members newly recruited by PolyU were from outside Hong Kong. The University leverages its "Strategic Hiring Scheme" to attract remarkable international talent to join PolyU with the offering of competitive remuneration packages and start-up grants to support research activities. "The Presidential Young Scholars Scheme" has also been set up to attract outstanding young scholars.

Promoting a Culture of Inclusiveness and Integration on Campus

Over the past 12 months, PolyU has promoted inclusiveness and integration on campus through Empowerment, Synergy, and Engagement.

Empowerment

Through guidance and collaboration, PolyU has empowered non-local student associations to become active contributors on campus. They have organised over 45 events and engaging 8,000+ students from diverse backgrounds. These events

have enriched campus life by showcasing unique cultures and fostering connections.

Synergy

Non-local student associations have been positioned as the University's key partners in promoting integration, co-hosting events with PolyU units such as the Campus Life Festival. Feedback from participants has highlighted high levels of inclusivity and a sense of belonging.

Engagement

PolyU has actively organised a wide array of activities to promote inclusiveness and integration on campus. Notably, the University successfully organised the "PolyU Chinese Culture Festival Mid-Autumn Festival Gala" in September 2024, attracting over 7,000 participants from the University community, including students, staff, and alumni. In addition to celebrating the Mid-Autumn Festival, this event fostered cross-cultural understanding among students, promoted a sense of community, and enhanced unity and diversity, further demonstrating the University's steadfast commitment to promoting inclusivity and integration.

Supported by the UGC's Funding Scheme for Mainland & Global Engagement & Student Learning Experience, initiatives like "The PolyU Connect Programme" have bridged cultural gaps through local tours, Chinese cultural activities, and Happy Hour Gathering, etc., benefiting 4,200+ students. The "Cultivating Connections: An Immersive Orientation for Inbound Students" promoted cross-cultural exchanges through luncheons and workshops, fostering meaningful connections among PolyU students and inbound interns. PolyU also launched a Peer Support Scheme, training students to mentor and support non-local students. Additionally, PolyU has promoted inclusiveness, cultural exchanges, and mutual learning among students from diverse backgrounds through social media and newsletters that highlight intercultural events.

Opportunities of International Exposure for Local Students

PolyU has made significant progress in enhancing the international exposure of local students through a wide range of initiatives. By expanding the global network of partnerships, PolyU has enabled students to immerse themselves in diverse cultures and gain invaluable practical experience. PolyU is also dedicated to providing undergraduate students with non-local learning opportunities, including but not limited to student exchange programmes, Work-Integrated Education Programmes, Service-Learning Programmes and Cluster-Area Requirements subjects, all of which further enrich students' global perspectives.

Additionally, PolyU has organised a series of global guest lectures, featuring renowned international experts who addressed a variety of contemporary topics. Cultural exchange events, including international festivals and language meetups, were held to enhance cultural understanding and foster lasting international friendships. PolyU also provided funding opportunities to support local students' participation in various overseas activities, such as Global Classroom, international conferences and competitions. Through these comprehensive initiatives, PolyU has equipped students with the skills and perspectives needed to thrive in an increasingly globalised world.

Promotion of the “Study in HK” brand

PolyU is committed to developing Hong Kong into an international hub for post-secondary education through enhancing internationalisation and strengthening engagement with the Mainland. To attract non-local high school students and undergraduate students to study in Hong Kong and to increase global awareness of Hong Kong's higher education, PolyU has launched new initiatives such as the PolyU Summer Institute and an extended session of the PolyU International Summer School. Additionally, PolyU has extended its global student recruitment efforts and expanded the University's global partnerships by organising delegation visits led by senior management to regions including Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Europe.

PolyU will continue to strengthen its global partnership network through proactive participations in alliances, international conferences, exhibitions, summits, and various forms of networking activities. To attract more international students to study in Hong Kong, PolyU will utilise funding support to provide scholarships for high-calibre applicants to its undergraduate programmes.

Initiatives for Promoting Internationalisation on University Campuses

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) has consistently pursued a dynamic plan geared towards enhancing its global presence and fostering international collaborations. Over the past 12 months, the University has implemented strategic initiatives and programs to strengthen HKUST's international outlook and support the "Study in Hong Kong" brand.

Recruitment of Non-local Faculty Members and Students

HKUST has been proactive in attracting world-class talents, both in its faculty and student body. The University has launched the “30 for 30” talent acquisition campaign to strategically recruit internationally acclaimed research leaders and academic scholars from around the globe, focusing on key areas such as biomedical science, translational medicine, material science, future energy, AI, fintech, sustainability, art tech, humanities and so on. Approximately 100 new global talents have joined HKUST since October 2022, with 40 new additions in 2024, and we are aiming to recruit 100 more this year. As of end-2024, HKUST is home to 874 faculty members from 40+ countries/regions. These faculty members hail from esteemed institutions worldwide, enhancing the University's academic diversity and expertise.

On student recruitment, HKUST has the highest percentage of international undergraduate students among universities in Hong Kong. To align with the Hong Kong Government's policy to increase non-local undergraduate admission quota, the University rolled out comprehensive outreach campaigns in targeted counties in the Belt and Road Initiative, such as India, Indonesia and Kazakhstan, to recruit prospective students. Also, HKUST is the first University in Hong Kong to house full government scholarship recipients from the Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK), and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia (MoECRT). HKUST also recruited the first batch of five High-Achieving, Low-Income (HALI) students from Egypt, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Cameroon, and Ghana respectively. As of the 2024/25 academic year, HKUST is home to 19,265 students from 80+ countries (i.e. 31.3% international intake rate).

Promoting a Culture of Inclusiveness and Integration on Campus

HKUST is committed to fostering an inclusive, integrated and open campus environment. The University organised university-wide campaigns and events such as the International Women's Day, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, and the From Diversity to Infinity Festival, and supported over 110 students' clubs and groups on a wide range of topics and interests. In the 2023/24 academic year, the University trained and provided service opportunities to over 220 student volunteers through the Peer Companion Training Program and SENtastic Leaders Program. Participants provided chat services, shared personal experiences and organised outreach activities for deepening the caring and inclusive environment on campus.

The University also organised the Global Service Day 2024 as part of the "Connect for Change" initiative, over 663 dedicated members (including 50% of non-Cantonese speaking) of the HKUST community undertook over 40 community service projects, all aligned with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and promoted the united 1-HKUST spirit. These initiatives and programs exemplify a joint effort of all University members to engage with the community and promote diversity, respect, and inclusiveness across the campus. The University's Diversity & Equal Opportunities unit co-ordinated cultural competency training and workshops to help students and staff navigate and appreciate the diverse cultural landscape and promote social inclusiveness on campus.

Meanwhile, HKUST champions a flexible and family-friendly working environment for staff to create an inclusive and supportive workplace. In December 2024, the University introduced a weekly work-from-home day and special leave options aimed at enhancing work-life balance and promoting an employee-centric culture.

Opportunities of International Exposure for Local Students

HKUST provides ample opportunities for its local students to gain international exposure through academic and research opportunities. The University maintains a robust student exchange program, facilitating a vibrant exchange of students for coursework and research projects. With over 300 active academic partners around the world, the 2023/24 academic year saw close to 1,100 outbound undergraduate exchange students and 730 inbound exchange students. Furthermore, HKUST partners with top-tier institutions to offer short-term study abroad programs and international internships, enabling students to gain practical experience and broaden global perspectives in their fields of study. Newly introduced short-term

study partners in the academic year 2024/25 include Freie Universitaet Berline (Germany) and Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (The Netherlands).

The University introduced the International Conference Sponsorship Scheme to support schools to organise and host international conferences with impact, bringing together renowned scholars, policymakers and industry leaders from around the world to discuss the latest developments in key research areas. Since its establishment in late 2023, the scheme has awarded 15 international academic conferences to be held in Hong Kong. In 2024, the University also introduced an international student track to invite partners to join the signature HKUST One Million Dollar Entrepreneurship Competition, adding to the global impact of the event while promoting innovation spirit.

Promotion of the “Study in HK” brand

HKUST actively participates in global networks and maintains strong partnerships with leading international institutions. As a founding and core member of over 40 renowned international alliances including Asian Universities Alliance (AUA) and Association of East Asian Research Universities (AEARU), highlighting the University’s leadership role in international academia. HKUST’s participation as Chairperson in AEARU (2024-2025) and as Executive President in AUA (2023-2024) also contribute to the overall branding of Hong Kong as a hub of international education and research. In addition, HKUST initiated the Global Knowledge Network, a joint research seed grant program aims to catalyze global research collaborations with prestigious institutional partners worldwide, laying the foundation for ongoing knowledge exchange. Confirmed partners in 2024 include KTH Royal Institute of Technology (Sweden), Pohang University of Science and Technology (South Korea), The University of New South Wales (Australia), The University of Queensland (Australia) and Yonsei University (South Korea), with more esteemed institutions in the pipeline.

Outside academia, HKUST proudly represented Hong Kong’s higher education sector in prestigious international events to shape the global agendas. As the only Hong Kong member of the Global University Leaders Forum (GULF) of the World Economic Forum, the University’s senior leadership was invited to share insights at the Forum’s Winter and Summer Davos, attended by over 5,000 distinguished leaders from 120+ countries and regions. Also, HKUST is the first and only university in Greater China region to be selected to host the Forum’s Young Global Leaders (YGL) immersive leadership development program in 2023 and 2024.

In conclusion, HKUST's ongoing efforts and strategic initiatives in internationalisation profoundly impacts its global engagement and commitment

to fostering an inclusive academic community. HKUST is well-positioned as a leading global university and a pivotal contributor to the "Study in Hong Kong" brand, promoting the city as a world-class educational destination.

Initiatives for Promoting Internationalisation on University Campuses

The University of Hong Kong

As one of the most international universities worldwide, the University of Hong Kong (HKU) has all along implemented a range of comprehensive strategies to promote internationalisation and strengthen the University's international outlook.

Recruitment of Non-local Faculty Members and Students

HKU has been proactive in inviting renowned scholars worldwide to visit HKU for academic exchanges. We have also fostered partnerships with leading international recruitment agencies to complement our recruitment strategies for senior professoriate members from around the globe. In 2024, HKU recruited 123 international scholars of a wide array of disciplines and career stages from at least 13 nationalities. Of this group, 90% were from outside Hong Kong. Furthermore, we have made a conscious effort to engage with the global academic community by actively participating in networking events and hosting large-scale conferences, thereby attracting more faculty members to join HKU to contribute to our world-class research initiatives.

For non-local admissions, in addition to regular outreach activities such as overseas school visits and participation in education fairs, HKU carries out promotions through various overseas media channels. HKU actively forges partnerships with top high schools and government organisations around the world to collaborate on student recruitment and scholarship opportunities, aiming to enhance support and access for non-local students who are interested in studying in HKU. HKU also collaborates with other prestigious universities to offer dual degree programmes that appeal to a diverse range of overseas students. The HKU Academy for the Talented, established by the HKU Admissions Office to serve elite students globally, has provided tailored programmes and experiential activities to offer students a glimpse into HKU that can better prepare for their admission to HKU.

Promoting a Culture of Inclusiveness and Integration on Campus

HKU is dedicated to promoting diversity, inclusiveness and integration on campus. To this end, HKU has spared no effort in organising a series of activities to promote inclusiveness and integration on campus.

In 2024, to promote sensitivity towards inclusion and ability diversity, the Centre of Development and Resources for Students (CEDARS) launched the Excellent and Inclusive Practice Award to recognise the best practices of university staff in supporting students with special education needs (SEN). Among the 18 nominations received, three staff were selected and presented with the awards at the Inaugural Ceremony in April 2024. In September 2024, CEDARS also developed a new integrated website to showcase the university's commitment and achievements in disability inclusion.

Jointly organised by CEDARS, the Libraries, and the Equal Opportunity Unit in February 2024, the week-long thematic awareness raising campaign "SEN Week 2024: Embracing Inclusion, Empowering Minds" attracted over 400 staff and students to participate.

Other continuous initiatives are detailed in *Appendix 1* for reference.

Opportunities of International Exposure for Local Students

HKU has continued to launch robust programmes to internationalise local students and broaden their global outlook. A key effort is the student exchange programme, with partnerships expanded to over 410 institutions across 47 jurisdictions, allowing students to immerse in diverse academic and cultural environments. Additionally, visiting programmes, short-term study opportunities and virtual exchanges cater to students' interests and timetables.

International internships provide hands-on global work experience, while overseas exploration trips, field studies and service-learning programmes enhance students' perspectives and leadership abilities. Specialised training and workshops equip students with essential skills for the global stage.

To promote these opportunities, HKU has hosted numerous information sessions with overseas institutions, study-abroad fairs and personalised consultation sessions. Students can learn to better map out their international journeys through such activities. Meanwhile, students who remain on campus can also enjoy an international environment through regular cultural exchange activities. The new "Buddy Programme" also allows local students to consistently interact with international students to further promote a multicultural campus environment.

Other continuous activities to promote
a culture of inclusiveness and integration on campus

a. Pre-Arrival Support and After-Arrival Orientation

Pre-arrival sessions and the iMap platform are organised to assist new students with arrival preparation and anti-scam measures. After arrival, events including orientation talks, games, city tours, and festival celebrations are also in place to foster better inclusion.

b. GLOCAL Connect Programme

Senior students would serve as buddies to help newcomers build global connections and local experiences through social and cultural activities. Events include the Greater Bay Area Tour in Shenzhen for cross-cultural exchange, the HKU Ferry ride promoting diversity, and various GLOCAL Connect social gatherings.

c. Cultural and Intellectual Exchange Activities

An interdisciplinary programme series that addresses local, regional, and global issues. It facilitates discussions on universal values, human dignity, and culture through curated collaborations with student hosts from around the world, fostering unique perspectives and exchanges. Examples include “Global News Chat” and “Happy Thursday - Tea from Around the World.”

d. Student Hall Pairing and Representation

Local and non-local students share rooms in student halls, alongside efforts to enhance non-local student representation in student society committees.

e. Raising Sensitivity Towards Special Educational Needs (SEN)

The Peer Impact Network strives to create a supportive and inclusive environment at HKU through peer support. The programme prioritises issues such as cultural integration, awareness about mental health, and SEN because these areas are closely related to all students, irrespective of their backgrounds. Complementary training packages are offered to students in supporting their peers in need. Language tutoring sessions like Survival Cantonese and Peer English Tutoring are conducted to facilitate cultural adjustment and eliminate language barriers in a stress-free setting.