

新聞稿 PRESS RELEASE



A Senate Statement of The Chinese University of Hong Kong

The Education Commission Report No. 3 (pre-released to the Vice-Chancellor of CUHK) deals with many aspects of educational development in Hong Kong, but this statement of The Chinese University of Hong Kong responds specifically to sixth form and tertiary education, which are of direct concern to the University.

The University has always taken as its mission the improvement of the quality of education in Hong Kong, with an emphasis on achieving synthesis of Western and Chinese cultures. In the light of recent educational developments worldwide, the University has taken the initiative to explore possibilities of maximizing the flexibility inherent in its four-year undergraduate curriculum. The six-year secondary education system followed by four-year tertiary education, already adopted in many countries of the world, is in the view of many groups and individuals, including the University, highly preferable on educational grounds. The University's undergraduate curriculum is aimed at quality and flexibility while permitting entry of students from both Secondary 6 and Secondary 7 without any increase in public examinations and without inherent conflict with the proposed reform in sixth form education.

The University Senate has deliberated on the Third Report and has unanimously concluded that the recommendations for a common entry point to all tertiary institutions after Secondary 7 and for all first degree course lengths at all institutions to be the same, are unacceptable.

Implementation of the recommendation of a common entry point to all tertiary institutions after Secondary 7 will do grave injustice to 48 percent of our sixth form students, as quoted in the Report, who joined four-year tertiary institutions in Hong Kong and North America, not to mention countries omitted in the figures. Keeping these students against their will for an extra year just to earn an exit qualification entails unnecessary expenses for parents as well as tax-payers. The proposal to block sixth form students from timely exit to local four-year institutions will almost certainly result in the unintended acceleration of the drain of our young talent to overseas institutions.



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The second recommendation of an equal-length degree course in all tertiary institutions ignores the different educational purposes for which the courses are designed. It will seriously undermine the ongoing efforts of the University to further upgrade the quality of education and to be responsive in meeting present and future community needs. A high degree of flexibility in CUHK's academic programmes is built into the recently introduced credit unit system which the Education Commission favourably endorses. CUHK's present exploratory attempts to establish and expand academic exchange with prestigious overseas universities and to increase flexibility of our academic programmes are both predicated upon a four-year curriculum.

Clearly the two recommendations run counter to mainstream educational developments all over the world and will have far-reaching and deleterious consequences on the education system in this territory. Their implementation will seriously erode the long established educational goals of the University, which it solemnly pledges to uphold. They will work at cross purposes with the two existing universities in Hong Kong, which have implemented or are about to implement innovative reforms in their curriculum in response to current community needs, thus providing an unprecedented opportunity for introducing a common admissions scheme based on a 4-year undergraduate curriculum. Given the long-term and far-reaching implications of the recommendations, CUHK earnestly appeals for a lengthening of the two-month consultation period to at least four months following the recent practice for important public documents, in order that the Report may receive extensive and exhaustive study without which a proper evaluation cannot be undertaken.

Selection of students and setting of curriculum are two universally recognized and respected rights of all major universities in the world. Both rights are being safeguarded by the University Grants Committee in the United Kingdom; in Hong Kong they are embodied in the University's charter, and have been openly acknowledged by the University and Polytechnic Grants Committee, both in its "Notes on Procedures" and through its Chairman on important public occasions. If the recommendations were adopted by the Government as POLICY without examination in detail of their implementation practicability, the University would have to interpret this as a violation of university autonomy by means of administrative fiat. Under such circumstances, the University will not be able to co-operate in the implementation of the proposals and will, in fact, do everything possible to make the University's case.

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June 16, 1988