

# **The Hong Kong Polytechnic University**

## Executive Summary

The 2016-19 triennium straddles two strategic plan periods at PolyU and the use of the Teaching Development and Language Enhancement Grant (TDLEG) in this triennium reflects this. On the one hand, the TDLEG was used to consolidate the developments made in the previous triennium and address issues emerging from the implementation of the strategic plan for 2012-18. On the other, it was used to launch new initiatives in support of the new strategic plan for 2019-25. The UGC's recommendation to maintain a 25:75 split between Teaching Development Grant (TDG) and Language Enhancement Grant (LEG) was adhered to. This report is organised into two parts focusing on the TDG and LEG respectively.

### **Teaching Development Grant (TDG)**

PolyU continued to maintain a carefully balanced portfolio of teaching development projects in 2016-19 to bring about enhancements and innovations at both the system and the classroom levels. A total of five institutional projects, nine faculty-wide/cross-department projects and 27 small-scale projects were set up. The institutional projects focus on quality assurance (QA) and pedagogical development for wide application. The QA-related projects focus on assessment and eLearning. They involved systematic reviews of institutional, local and international practices to inform policy development and implementation. The pedagogy-related projects focus on learning to learn, out-of-class learning and adaptive learning. These projects are closely related to University's strategic priorities for 2019-25, and their outcomes and deliverables will shape the way the common undergraduate subjects are delivered.

The faculty-wide/cross-department projects and small-scale projects, on the other hand, focus on bringing enhancements and innovations to learning and teaching. An example of the former is the project on international service learning (ISL). This project adopts a collaborative action research approach to review and improve the design and delivery of eight service-learning subjects participated by over 400 students from seven departments, resulting in significant positive impact on student learning and on the participating teachers. The project also produced two toolkits that can be shared with the wider community of university teachers across the sector. Another project, which is smaller in scale, utilises augmented reality (AR) technology to teach orthopaedics and traumatology of spine. The innovation changes the way that

students engage with the materials, leading to overall improvement in student academic performance in those subjects. This project went on to be shortlisted for the Reimagine Education Conference 2018 and obtained additional internal funding to extend its impact.

In addition to project-based activities, a portion of the TDG was used to subsidise other forms of teaching development activities to promote a culture of teaching excellence. The thriving communities of practice (CoP) provide a platform for frontline teachers to share good practice and exchange ideas on learning and teaching. The six thematic CoPs organised 164 activities and generated a wealth of scholarly outputs in 2016-19. The Overseas Scholarship Scheme (OSS) adds an international dimension to our teaching development provision. It enables teachers to explore new pedagogies and technologies at reputable overseas universities and apply them in their own teaching. Sometimes such visits may also lead to collaborations in learning and teaching with other universities. A joint engineering design project between the students at PolyU and Imperial College London is cited as an example in this report.

### **Language Enhancement Grant (LEG)**

The LEG was used primarily to enhance the language provision for nurturing effective communicators and lifelong learners. This was achieved through a wide range of curricular, co-curricular and research activities. The activities were mainly provided by the English Language Centre (ELC) and the Chinese Language Centre (CLC).

The curricular activities included Language and Communication Requirements (LCR) subjects, Discipline-Specific Requirements (DSR) language subjects, Reading and Writing Requirements (R&W) embedded in the Cluster-Area Requirements (CAR), CAR subjects and Service-Learning (SL) subjects. The LCR, R&W requirements, CAR and SL subjects form part of the General University Requirements of PolyU's undergraduate degree framework. On top of these curricular provisions, the language centres operated self-learning centres to facilitate students' independent learning of languages.

The ELC and CLC offered a wide range of co-curricular activities to supplement the curricular activities. Some of these activities were:

- Excel@English Scheme (EES)

- English language eLearning resources
- Diagnostic English Language Tracking Assessment (DELTA)
- Outreach Activities (English and Chinese)
- eLearning for Putonghua and Written Chinese Trainings
- Extra-Curricular Enrichment for Lifelong Learners (EXCELL) Programmes (Chinese)
- Teaching Consultancy for Non-Chinese Speakers
- Graduating Students' Language Proficiency Assessment (Chinese)

PolyU continued to fund the 'English Across the Curriculum (EAC) Project' to raise students' awareness of English when they prepare their assignments in discipline subjects that do not already have English input. In addition, some LEG was set aside to support academics to conduct projects in language enhancement, with the aim of consolidating and deepening our language enhancement provision. A total of 14 larger- scale collaborative projects and 33 smaller-scale projects were funded.

The outcomes and deliverables show that PolyU was effective in conducting the planned language enhancement activities and was able to generate innovative pedagogies in language teaching. With the help of the LEG projects conducted by frontline teachers, we were able to improve the conventional learning environment with the supplement of eLearning and other digital means to arrive at the ultimate aim of nurturing effective communicators and lifelong learners.