

Messages from Institutions



Together as One



The 50th birthday of the UGC is indeed a perfect opportunity to reflect on the remarkable progress that has been achieved in the higher education sector in Hong Kong. This great city of ours now boasts first-rate students, top-notch graduates, enterprising faculty, a robust alumni network and strong support throughout the community. To put it in plain English, Hong Kong offers genuinely world-class opportunities in higher education.

The story of the development of CityU reflects much of what has been so fruitful in the development of the sector. Without wanting to simply promote my own institution for the sake of promotion, I do feel that CityU's achievements mirror the overall success of our city's institutions.

It is worth noting that CityU has only enjoyed university status since 1994, yet we have taken great strides since then in terms of performance in a suite of international ranking exercise, setting up new units at the school and department level, attracting great students and notable researchers, and building a strong foundation for donors.

Among the many achievements of which I am particularly proud is our performance in the UGC's Teaching Award. Our faculty members have won

the award three times, in 2012, 2013 and 2014. This level of acknowledgement of the quality of our teaching not only boosts morale on campus, it spotlights the high level of education that our students are receiving, which of course means that Hong Kong and the region are benefiting in the long run as more and more well-trained professionals are entering the job market.

The whole point of higher education is to make life better for everyone in our society. CityU plays its part, as do our entire band of sister institutions, and the UGC, like the conductor of a philharmonic orchestra, maintains the tempo and brings us together as one.

We should all be immensely proud of what we have achieved in Hong Kong in terms of the development of higher education: we could never have reached this point without each other.

And so, congratulations to higher education in Hong Kong!

Professor Way KUO, JP
President
City University of Hong Kong

New Stage of Development



It gives me great pleasure to congratulate the UGC on its 50th anniversary. Since its establishment in 1965, the Committee has evolved and grown immensely, together with the higher education sector. Today, Hong Kong is home to eight institutions that are funded through the UGC, with Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU, then Hong Kong Baptist College) being brought under its ambit in 1983.

The advances of the whole sector are remarkable, especially given the short span of time these were achieved. These spectacular accomplishments are in no small measure a result of the UGC's initiatives as well as a clear strategic approach which ensures that each institute fulfils a distinctive role and excels in its areas of strength.

It is my honour to have led HKBU through a new stage of development. The University community is extremely grateful to have received the UGC's support, enabling HKBU to attain stunning progress in the three focus areas of Quality Teaching and Learning, Innovative Research and Community Engagement. We have also been making dedicated efforts in the areas of internationalisation and cooperation with the Chinese mainland, in line with the UGC's emphasis

on strengthening the ability of Hong Kong's higher education sector to maintain its role in the globalised world and make its contribution to the development of Mainland China.

Another key development was the new four-year academic structure and it was with the UGC's support that we saw its smooth implementation at HKBU. Complementing HKBU's ethos of whole person education, it has brought about a wealth of opportunities for us to provide a more well-rounded education to our students.

Higher education plays a vital role in ensuring our graduates are prepared and equipped to take their place in the world. I have every confidence that the UGC will continue to help the higher education sector attune to the needs of our next generations and develop Hong Kong as the regional education hub.

Professor Albert CHAN, JP
President and Vice-Chancellor
Hong Kong Baptist University

Valuable Partnership



Over the past five decades, the UGC has played a crucial role in fostering the development of Hong Kong's higher education sector, with a view to establishing our city as an outstanding education hub of the region. It has offered expert, system-wide advice to the Government on the sector's strategic development and resource requirements, and developmental and academic advice to the eight UGC-funded institutions. Under its guidance, important recent initiatives such as internationalisation, engagement with Mainland China, knowledge exchange and, notably, the "3+3+4" new academic structure, have been successfully implemented. Its commitment to quality assurance is instrumental to the institutions' continued efforts and achievements in attaining world class academic standards.

While established universities in North America and Western Europe – with bases in their home campuses and new offshoots in China and other cities of Asia – will continue to remain strong, institutions in other parts of the world are catching up fast. In this environment, the UGC institutions will face increasingly intense international competition and serious challenges ahead. To cope with these challenges, it is important that higher

education institutions in Hong Kong continue to enhance their international reputation by building strong study programmes and top-notch research. Collaboration with peer institutions around the world in developing study programmes will help to meet the demands of both local and international students. Our proximity to the booming Asian market is an advantage for attracting academic talents from around the world, especially those who pursue research programmes to meet the needs of the region. With the continued support of the UGC and by working together, we are confident that we can make use of these new opportunities and enhance Hong Kong's role as a sustainable regional education hub.

On its golden jubilee, I congratulate the UGC for its extensive contributions to the higher education sector and look forward to continuing our partnership in the pursuit of excellence in teaching and research for the benefit of Hong Kong and the region.

Professor Leonard K CHENG, JP
President
Lingnan University

Source of Inspiration



It is my great pleasure and privilege to write in the fiftieth anniversary commemorative book of the UGC. On behalf of The Chinese University of Hong Kong, I would like to extend our hearty congratulations and good wishes to the Chairman and members of the UGC, and the Secretary-General and his colleagues, for 50 years of work of unparalleled importance in the advancement of higher education in Hong Kong.

When the UGC, in its former guise as the UPGC, was first instituted half a century ago to be the Government's principal advisory body on tertiary education development, access to university places in Hong Kong was still elitist and restricted, and postgraduate research was, in comparison to today, relatively limited in scope and depth. While the splendid and multifarious higher education landscape that we witness nowadays must be attributed to the indefatigable efforts and perseverance of local academics, educationists and students who are firmly committed to the cause, the UGC, as supporter and facilitator over all these years, must be given due recognition and praise for its broad-minded foresight and benevolent policies. During these most crucial years in the chronicles of Hong Kong, the UGC, with a firm hand and

robust resources, has guided and sustained the growth of tertiary institutions in our city, and no other organisation may claim to have a history so intertwined with our higher education system, and therefore the academic and professional formation of successive generations of our young men and women.

During the past 50 years, the UGC fulfilled its role exceedingly well not only as the provider of financial support for local universities, but, much more importantly, it has always been a fountainhead of inspiration and encouragement for growth, expansion and renewal of the universities. As the Committee recounts its achievements during its first 50 years, let us all wish it prosperity and success in the days to come, to the greater benefit of the community of Hong Kong and beyond.

Professor Joseph J Y SUNG, SBS, JP
Vice-Chancellor and President
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Shared Vision



Over the past five decades, the UGC has played a pivotal role in upholding the quality of higher education in Hong Kong, with institutions thriving according to their distinctive missions. Its unwavering commitment in the pursuit of excellence enables Hong Kong to emerge as a key player in the international higher education arena, recognised for our achievements in many areas, from teaching and research to the grooming of graduates and internationalisation.

As an institution with a rich heritage in teacher education, The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd) has greatly benefited from the Committee's support, making significant transformation since it came under the aegis of the UGC in 1996. In a similar vein, the "3+3+4" academic structure implemented in 2012 would not have been so smooth and successful without the staunch support from the UGC.

The UGC is keen to advance research excellence benchmarked against international standards. Through its many funding schemes and collaboration with international partners, the UGC contributes to spur the development of an active research culture in Hong Kong. With the increasing importance that the UGC places on knowledge

transfer, local universities are fully committed to ensuring that their research work is relevant to the community and of genuine application value, a vision shared passionately by HKIEd.

Foreseeing internationalisation would become an increasingly important trend worldwide, the UGC has long advocated and facilitated local universities in creating multicultural environments and admitting students from various parts of the globe. Despite very keen competitions from other cities, Hong Kong has been ranked as one of the most popular destinations for international students. Our success in standing out from the crowd is, in no small measure, due to the UGC's strong steer and visionary leadership.

May I extend my warmest congratulations to the UGC for its achievements, and my best wishes to all of its future endeavours.

Professor Stephen Y L CHEUNG, BBS, JP
President
The Hong Kong Institute of Education

United. Growth. Collaboration

Our warmest congratulations to the UGC on its 50th anniversary, and I am pleased to note the special tie between the establishment of the UGC and our institution.

In 1965, the UGC was established to advise the Government on the development and funding of the only two local universities at that time. In the same year, Dr the Honourable Chung Sze-yuen came up with the visionary idea of founding a “polytechnic-type institution” in Hong Kong and addressed the Legislative Council on the then fairly radical topic.

At present, the UGC, with its funding mission and advisory role, has become the central pillar of Hong Kong’s higher education sector, and our institution has evolved into The Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

Over the years, the eight funded institutions, with our distinctive roles defined by the UGC, have worked together with the Committee, the government and the community towards achieving a common goal: nurturing quality graduates to promote the economic and social development of Hong Kong. This is the foremost responsibility on the shoulders of the higher education sector.

Recently in 2012, the UGC oversaw a significant and fundamental reform of the Hong Kong education system – implementation of a four-year academic structure in the higher education sector. During the years-long preparation period, it has

rendered PolyU and the other institutions valuable guidance and support to ensure a smooth transition and that we stand ready to cope with subsequent challenges. With the new academic structure, the sector is now better connected with other major education systems in the world, and our students can enjoy a more balanced and comprehensive learning experience.

As we enter an age of rapid globalisation, the sector must address shifts in the political, economic, social and environmental landscape in order to excel amid intensifying global competition. In this respect, the UGC has been steering our way forward with priorities set for internationalisation and engagement with the Chinese mainland. We believe that with our **united** efforts, the higher education sector will continue to achieve **growth** and glory through **collaboration**.

PolyU salutes the impressive contribution the UGC has made over the past 50 years. As manifested in our University Promise for education and research, PolyU is dedicated to “Opening Minds • Shaping the Future”. We look forward to doing so in partnership with the UGC in the coming 50 years and beyond.

Professor Timothy W TONG, JP
President
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University



The Engine to Growth



It is indeed my pleasure to contribute this message to the 50th Anniversary publication of the UGC.

I would like to begin by reiterating our heartfelt gratitude to the Committee for its significant contributions to the continuous advancement of Hong Kong's higher education sector over the past five decades. Established with an initial role to advise the Government on the development and funding needs of the then two local universities, the UGC's principles and practices have been modified and adapted to cope with the rapid expansion of the higher education sector. The UGC now plays a vital and proactive role in strategic planning and policy development for the whole sector. I personally wish to stress that the UGC's visionary planning on the development of higher education and its succinct advice and guidance extended to the institutions under its remit have not only facilitated the institutions to continue to grow and develop, but, to a large extent, also safeguarded the institutions' autonomy and more importantly, their academic freedom.

HKUST, which positions itself as an international research university, has benefitted substantially from the many forward-looking initiatives launched by the UGC over the years, particularly those focused on

research and education, quality assurance and internationalisation. HKUST's research prowess is well recognised around the globe—as demonstrated in the most recent Research Assessment Exercise. The University is keen on bringing in the best students across different disciplines, and is committed to becoming the education hub of the region, grooming new leaders with an emphasis on innovation and academic excellence. The UGC's unwavering support will be instrumental for HKUST to achieve these objectives.

Hong Kong's higher education sector is enjoying unprecedented success right now—HKUST, and our sister institutions, are consistently ranked among the top in the world every year. To maintain our high standards, we must nurture even more human capital, the engine to growth. As HKUST continues its quest for excellence in both education and research and expands internationalisation further in the years ahead, we are fully committed to work closely with the UGC in realising our shared vision — and we will do so with dedication, confidence and pride.

Professor Tony F CHAN, JP
President
The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

Further Advancement

My congratulations to the UGC as it celebrates its 50th Anniversary. As the territory's oldest university, The University of Hong Kong has worked with the UGC from its inception, partnering with it in its mission to promote excellence in the higher education sector.

Over the past five decades, there have been momentous changes in both Hong Kong and its higher education sector. Throughout it all, the UGC has provided the Government with strategic recommendations on the growth and funding needs of local higher education institutions.

Together, the UGC and the funded institutions are committed to safeguarding academic freedom and institutional autonomy, while ensuring that public funds are used with astuteness and accountability.



The future of Hong Kong's higher education system will depend on its ability to stay ahead of the curve in an era of globalisation and to remain engaged with China's progress.

The University looks forward to continuing its successful working partnership with the UGC to strengthen its differentiated role amongst local institutions and to work with colleagues across Hong Kong to ensure the advancement of our higher education sector.

Professor Peter MATHIESON
President and Vice-Chancellor
The University of Hong Kong