

Foreword from the Chairman 主席序言





Mr Carlson TONG, GBS, JP
(Appointed as Chairman on 1 January 2016)

The year 2019-20 was extremely challenging for Hong Kong, and the higher education sector was no exception. The social unrest, followed by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, have been highly disruptive to teaching and research activities across all universities in Hong Kong. Many universities had to end their semester early and suspend face-to-face teaching. With such unprecedented circumstances, our universities were being tested on their resilience and resourcefulness in responding promptly to the teaching and learning challenges posed by the new environment. I am pleased to see that the universities have spared no time in employing technological solutions to meet the new challenges and in exploring new ways to move ahead under the “new normal”.

Notwithstanding these challenges, the year 2019-20 remained a fruitful year to the UGC and our funded universities. We deeply appreciate the support from the Government and the Legislative Council for approving the \$20 billion injection into the Research Endowment Fund in June 2019 which almost doubles the annual return from its placements with the Exchange Fund available for research funding for our universities. Together with the \$10.3 billion Hostel

2019-20年對香港而言是極具挑戰的一年，高等教育界亦毫不例外。社會動盪、2019冠狀病毒病疫情接踵而至，對本港大學的教學及研究活動造成嚴重影響。多間大學需要提早結束學期及停止面授課堂。面對前所未見的局面和新環境為教學帶來的挑戰，大學的應變能力備受考驗。我相當高興大學能夠迅速利用先進科技克服困難，並不斷探索新方法，以期在「新常態」下迎難而上，繼續前行。

雖然面對各種挑戰，2019-20年對教資會及其資助大學來說，仍然是碩果豐收的一年。我們衷心感謝政府和立法會的支持，於2019年6月通過向研究基金注資200億元，令研究基金在外匯基金的投資年收益得以翻倍，為大學提供更充裕的研究經費。此外，在2018年6月設立的103億元宿舍發展基金，以及財



Development Fund established in June 2018 and the pledge by the Financial Secretary to set aside \$16 billion for the upgrading of campuses in his Budget Speech in February 2019, our Government's commitment and support for the evolving needs of the higher education sector are fully demonstrated.

2019-20 is also the year when we successfully concluded and delivered on a number of our work in progress. It marked the commencement of the 2019-22 triennium, which is also the first funding cycle under the University Accountability Agreement (UAA), one of the key recommendations put forward by Sir Howard Newby, the former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Liverpool in the United Kingdom, in the Governance review report published in September 2015. Following the signing of the UAAs with the universities in May 2019, we received the first progress reports from the universities in late-2019. We also launched the Targeted Taught Postgraduate Programmes Fellowships Scheme, a pilot initiative announced by the Chief Executive in her 2019 Policy Address, to support local meritorious students to pursue further studies in areas of strategic importance to Hong Kong's future development. The new scheme proved to be very attractive to local students and the UGC was greatly encouraged by the positive feedback from all universities. I am pleased to note the success achieved.

We have also started the preparation of a number of major exercises that are important to the future of the higher education sector in the next three to five years. Preparation work for the Planning Exercise for the 2022-25 triennium has also begun by adopting a "3+3" planning cycle. Following the conclusion of the sub-degree audit cycle in 2019, the Quality Assurance Council will conduct the third audit cycle in 2022-23 that focuses on systemic improvements to the quality of teaching and learning.

政司司長在2019年2月的財政預算案中宣佈預留160億元用作提升校舍設施，亦充分展示政府對高等教育界持續發展的投入和支持。

2019-20年亦是我們完成多項工作並穩步向前的一年，標誌著2019-22三年期正式展開，亦是訂立《大學問責協議》後的第一個經常補助金週期。訂立《大學問責協議》乃英國利物浦大學前校長Howard Newby爵士於2015年9月發表的管治報告中的一項主要建議。我們於2019年5月與大學簽訂《大學問責協議》，並已在2019年底收到大學的第一份進度報告。我們亦推出了指定研究院修課課程獎學金計劃，此為行政長官在2019年施政報告中宣佈的一項先導計劃，旨在支持優秀的本地學生於有利香港發展的優先範疇深造。新計劃深受本地學生歡迎，各大學反應正面，著實令我們感到鼓舞。我對過去一年所取得的成果感到欣慰。

我們亦正密鑼緊鼓，籌備展開多項對高等教育界在未來三到五年的發展至關重要的工作。我們正籌備以「3 + 3」規劃週期的模式，展開2022-25三年期規劃工作。另一方面，繼2019年底副學位質素核證週期結束後，質素保證局（質保局）將在2022-23年進行第三輪質素核證工作，致力令大學有系統地提升教與學的質素。



Closing Remarks

With the COVID-19 pandemic evolving and the threat of further waves of infection cases, the UGC is staying in close touch with the Government and the universities to ensure that the sector is fully prepared for further rounds of outbreak. As we face challenges on many fronts, the UGC will remain dedicated and professional in promoting the development of higher education in Hong Kong, and will spare no efforts in performing our role as a bridge between the Government and the universities. We will continue to strive for excellence and maintain the momentum moving forward as always, by closely working with the UGC-funded universities together with our counterparts and stakeholders in the sector.

I would like to give a special vote of thanks to Mr Lincoln Leong, who had retired as the Chairman of QAC, for his exemplary leadership and valuable contributions over the past years. Please also join me in welcoming Professor Jan Thomas who assumed Chairmanship of the QAC.

Last but not least, I would like to thank all our Members on the UGC and its sub-committees and task forces as well as RGC and QAC for their wholehearted guidance, valuable advice and continued support to the Committee.

Please stay safe!

Carlson Tong, GBS, JP
Chairman

結語

2019冠狀病毒病疫情反覆不定，新一波疫情來勢洶洶。教資會定必與政府和大學保持密切聯繫，確保整個界別為應對疫情做好充分準備。面對各方挑戰，教資會將一如既往地專注和專業的態度，繼續推動香港高等教育的發展，並不遺餘力地擔當政府與大學之間的橋樑。我們將繼續與各教資會資助大學、我們的合作伙伴和持份者緊密合作，精益求精，邁步向前。

我要特別感謝卸任質保局主席的梁國權先生，在過去幾年的英明領導和傑出貢獻。同時，讓我們歡迎新接任的Jan Thomas教授。

最後，我要感謝所有教資會成員，各小組委員會、工作小組、以及研資局和質保局真摯誠懇的指導、寶貴的建議以及對教資會一直以來的支持。

祝大家健康安好!

主席
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