

Off to a flying start:
New students from
mainland and other
parts of the world.



Going international on all fronts



PolyU is stepping up its internationalization drive to attract a wider mix of students and staff in the coming years.

Already this year saw more than a three-fold increase in the number of applications from mainland students, at 9,600, compared to 2,700 last year. A total of 237 mainland students were admitted, up from 180 last year. In addition, 11 overseas students from eight countries were admitted to the University's application-oriented programmes.

Internationalization is part of the University's Strategic Plan and in line with the University Grants Committee's policy for cultivating Hong Kong students' whole person development. The efforts to diversify the sources of students also tie in with the Government's goal to develop Hong Kong into a regional education hub.



Prof. Demokan

HK's competitive edge

PolyU Vice President (Academic Development) **Prof. Suleyman Demokan** is confident the goal can be attained, given the high quality of university education in Hong Kong.

“When we advertise our programmes in Asia, the concern of parents is that they want to send their children to a place where English is the teaching medium. At the moment, their main target is the US, the UK, and other English-speaking countries. But I think Hong Kong still has an edge in Southeast Asia and the Pacific Rim, so we have to maintain our campus internationalized in terms of staffing, environment and the student body.”

He added: “The quality of the offerings of universities in the US and the UK may not be higher than ours but they have one huge advantage: they can choose students from all parts of the world; therefore the quality of students is very high. But we are confined to choosing students from a very small pool. Unless we internationalize and start to accept a large number of non-local students, we cannot make a name for ourselves that we think we deserve.”

The University's Academic Exchange and Collaboration Office (AECO) is gearing up for increased promotional efforts on the Chinese mainland and overseas, such as attending international educational fairs, arranging media publicity, conducting information sessions and school visits in recruiting non-local students. The office is now working to set up a portal with the other seven UGC-funded institutions to provide non-local students with information about studying in Hong Kong.

In the mainland, Hong Kong institutions are becoming better and better known. Mainland media reports have helped increase parents', teachers' and students' awareness of the attractive offers here, said Academic Secretary **Mrs Nancy Tong**.

Over the past several years, mainland students have made up the majority of non-local students in Hong Kong's universities. At PolyU, they now account for more than 90 per cent of its non-local student population.



Mrs Tong

Scholarships a big plus

This year PolyU increased its scholarship offers to both local students and students from other places. Form Seven graduates meeting the requirement of having obtained at least 1A and 1B or 3B's or equivalent in the A-Level Examination; and C in AS Chinese and English in the first attempt; or with outstanding achievement in non-academic areas, had their tuition fee of \$42,100 waived.

Students with even more outstanding results were entitled to allowances of up to \$35,000 per year as well.



Full of excitement: mainland students during registration on campus

For mainland students, 63 were awarded scholarships of \$100,000 each this year covering tuitions and living expenses, on the strength of their outstanding results in China's Joint Entrance Examination — the national university entrance examination — and English scores. Each scholarship is tenable for four or five years, provided that the recipients attain a semester GPA of not less than 3.2 continuously during their studies.

All of the mainland students admitted this year were eligible for entry into the best universities in China, said Prof. Demokan. "We have to make sure these brilliant students would not say why did I come here? We will ensure that they will get the best education here."

The scholarships proved to be an incentive for quality mainland students to apply, said Mrs Tong. "We set a very high standard for the minimum benchmark for admissions, but over 70 per cent of the applicants, which comes to nearly 7,000 applications, actually passed the benchmark, not to say those who are way above it."

More than 2,000 of the applications went to the Faculty of Business's accounting and finance programme. In total, the Faculty admitted 127 of the 237 new recruits, while the Faculty of Engineering admitted 58.

A fruitful mix of cultures

The presence of mainland students is strongly believed to have much positive impact on their local counterparts. "The mainland students are very hardworking. They have a very solid secondary school foundation. Our students on the other hand are more internationally exposed and are able to come up with innovative ideas more quickly. It will be beneficial to the two groups of students to learn from each other," Mrs Tong observed.

Although the UGC imposes a 10 per cent cap on the number of non-local student intake at the publicly-funded institutions, PolyU sets no limits on the percentage of students various faculties can recruit from outside Hong Kong. This helps give academic departments incentives to help with the recruitment drive. "With more non-local students come more resources," Prof. Demokan said, while reiterating the University's policy to recruit the best possible staff from anywhere in the world.



A warm welcome to new students

The University welcomed in some 4,500 new full-time first-year undergraduate and higher diploma students on 1 September. Among these new faces are some 4,135 students funded by UGC, including 2,345 undergraduate and 1,790 higher diploma students, and another 400 self-financed undergraduate students.

Besides, the PolyU-affiliated Hong Kong Community College and the School of Professional Education and Executive Development have recruited about 2,400 and 450 students respectively for their self-financed associate degree and top-up degree programmes.

The new academic year also sees the restructuring of the University's Faculty of Communication. The School of Design has been detached from the Faculty to operate as a separate unit, highlighting its special role as the sole provider of tertiary education in design in Hong Kong and design as a niche area of the University.





At a reception held on campus, President Prof. Poon Chung-kwong offers words of encouragement to 94 outstanding new students from Hong Kong, the Chinese mainland and overseas who have been awarded scholarships on joining PolyU. Among them is Lui Suhui (photo on right below), a 15-year-old native from Liaoning Province who is the youngest student ever admitted to PolyU.



Twin sisters Ho Pui-yan and Pui-yi (photo on left below) from the UK are both taking PolyU's fashion and textiles programme. They have different strengths, though: Pui-yan (left) takes to creative fashion design, while Pui-yi is strong in textiles studies.



Prof. Demokan hopes that overseas students who have studied here will spread the word about the quality of education they have received when they return home. "We are arranging more opportunities for local and non-local students to mix and become one student body. This is our main aim now," he said.

But he acknowledged the lack of dormitory places as a major obstacle to internationalization. The University is now pinning its hope on the Government's provision of land for the construction of additional dormitory facilities.

"We are at a disadvantage because Hong Kong is an expensive place; the education fees are expensive, though there is government subsidy," Prof. Demokan said.

But he is expecting a positive response from the Government soon on the supply of land. In any case, additional hostel facilities are needed to accommodate the sharp rise in student number when the four-year undergraduate curriculum is introduced in 2012.

Another aspect of internationalization involves increasing the number of overseas students coming here on exchange, and the number of students sent out for exchange for a minimum period of one semester.



Student exchange on the rise

“We carefully choose institutions that we know can provide the best education to our students,” Prof. Demokan pledged.

For this academic year, PolyU is aiming to receive 500 foreign students and to send out a similar number of students on exchange. The long-term goal is for each student to have a chance to go overseas during their studies either for internship, short-term visit or exchange, said AECO’s Head **Ms Jenny Tang**.

More than 230 students from 81 institutions in 17 countries are currently on exchange for the first semester. Their presence definitely helps to enrich local students’ understanding of overseas cultures, said Ms Tang.

Under a buddy programme run by her office, each exchange student is paired up with a local counterpart who helps him or her settle in Hong Kong. Some PolyU staff have joined a host family scheme taking exchange students out on family outings or other activities.

In terms of academic exchange and research collaboration with overseas institutions, the University’s internationalization efforts have continued to expand in recent years. Last year her office received representatives from 85 universities abroad and 105 delegations from the Chinese mainland as part of the effort to strengthen links outside Hong Kong.

While the student recruitment drive has proven successful in the mainland, Ms Tang and Mrs Tong both agreed a lot more need to be done to spread the net overseas. “I do not think the name of Hong Kong as an education hub is built up yet. That is one of the aims of the local government; it is not only the tertiary sector that needs to do more work, but Hong Kong as a whole,” said Mrs Tong.

“We need to sell the name to other countries, especially in North America, the UK and Europe. The attraction (of Hong Kong institutions there) is still very limited because they are not familiar with the Hong Kong education system and we have not reached the stage whereby they prefer us to universities in other developed countries. There’s a long way to go but we are in the right direction.”



Ms Tang



PolyU’s BBA in Accounting and Finance is one of the most sought-after programmes of its kind in Hong Kong. This year, it ranks among the top in comparable programmes, in terms of the average of the two best HKALE scores of admittees — the standard used by UGC to measure students’ academic quality. The programme attracted more than 2,000 mainland applicants, of whom only 41 top students were admitted. Pictures show the Faculty of Business’s orientation for non-local students (photo on left) and an outstanding new student posing with the Faculty Dean Prof. Judy Tsui (second from right) and faculty members.

理大邁向國際化

理大從多方面推動校園國際化，包括招聘來自世界各地的師生、擴展學生交換計劃及加強國際網路。邁向國際化是理大訂明的策略性目標之一，除了配合教資會鼓勵培育本港大學生作全人發展以外，也正好協助配合政府致力發展香港成為區內教育樞紐的目標。

今年，理大收到約九千六百份內地生的入學申請，比去年的二千七百份申請上升三倍有餘，而本校取錄了當中二百三十七名內地學生，比去年多五十七人。此外，理大還取錄了十一名來自八個國家和地區的海外學生。

理大副校長（學術發展）戴務勤教授表示：「本港大學的教學質素很高，絕不遜於英、美的大學，但英美大學的優勢是它們能從全球各地招收優秀學生，而我們招生的生源就狹窄多了。然而，我相信香港在區內有一定的競爭力，我們需要在教員、學生、校園環境方面進一步推動大學的國際化。」

為此，理大學術交流及合作事務處積極在國內及海外進行宣傳工作，如參加國際教育展覽等，以招募新生。該處也正與本港另外七家政府資助大學合作建立一個網站，專為非本地生提供來港升學的資料。

設立獎學金鼓勵學生

今年，理大頒發獎學金予更多本地、內地及海外的優秀學生。大學按他們的表現頒發不同的獎學金，包括學費豁免及額外津貼。

在內地生方面，六十三名在全國普通高等學校統一考試中獲優異成績的內地生獲頒每年十萬港元獎學金，以支付學費和



在港的生活費等開支。他們必須於每個學期的學業成績平均點數保持在三點二分或以上，才可獲繼續頒發獎學金，直至完成其四年或五年的課程。

在近萬份內地生的入學申請中，逾二千為申請入讀理大工商管理學院的會計及金融課程。最後理大取錄的二百多名內地學生中，獲工商管理學院取錄的有一百二十七名；而獲工程學院取錄的為五十八名。

理大教務長湯劉毓苓女士表示：「招收內地學生對本地同學有正面的影響。內地學生勤奮，又有紮實的中學基礎，本地同學則有更多機會吸收世界資訊及有很多創新意念。所以，他們可以互相學習，這對他們的成長必定大有裨益。」

然而，戴教授表示，宿位不足是大學邁向國際化的一大障礙。理大希望政府能

批撥土地，讓大學興建新宿舍，以應付二零一二年大學推行四年制而學生人數大增的問題。

擴展學生交換計劃

為推動大學國際化，理大亦積極擴展其學生交換計劃。今年，理大計劃安排五百名學生前往世界各地的夥伴大學進行短期學習及交流，同時接待人數相若的海外交換生到理大。在首學期，已有來自十七個國家共八十一家大學逾二百三十名海外交換生到理大作交流學習。

理大學術交流及合作事務處處長鄧潔儀女士表示：「交換生計劃一定有助本地學生瞭解更多其他國家的文化。」該處更為每名交換生安排一名本地生作為學友，以幫助他們適應香港的生活。

部分理大員工更參與招待交換生計劃，為交換生安排活動，讓他們進一步認識香港的生活及文化。

長遠來說，理大希望為每位學生於在學期間提供至少一次出外實習或到外地交流的機會，讓同學能藉此開拓其國際視野。

此外，理大積極透過學術交流及科研合作與國內及海外大學建立夥伴關係，擴大其國際網路。

湯女士表示：「本港政府希望香港發展成教育樞紐，這不單需要高等教育界共同的努力，還需要香港整體的配合。本港大學需要向北美及歐洲等國家加強宣傳，因為它們對香港的教育制度還不熟悉。我們還需要繼續努力，但相信我們已朝著正確的方向邁進。」