

# Learning Outcomes for PolyU Graduates at Undergraduate Degree Level: Policy and Guidelines (June 2012)

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## 1 Background

- 1.1 PolyU commits to fostering all-round students with professional competence. As the starting point for achieving this overarching objective, the University identifies the desired attributes of an ideal PolyU graduate and articulates the learning outcomes for these attributes to serve as a common reference for strategic planning, programme design, co- and extra-curricular activity planning, and learning outcomes assessment.
- 1.2 In order that the desired graduate attributes remain current, the University reviews them as part of the strategic planning process. The most recent review took place in 2011 in conjunction with the review of the University's Vision and Mission Statements. The set of attributes described in the new Vision and Mission Statements approved by the Council will supersede the previous set identified in the 2008/9-2011/12 Strategic Plan to represent the attributes that characterise future PolyU graduates.
- 1.3 This document specifies the institutional learning outcomes for the graduate attributes and clarifies the expectation of departments and academic support units in addressing the institutional learning outcomes.

## 2 Policy and Guidelines

- 2.1 It is PolyU's educational mission to nurture competent professionals who are also critical thinkers, effective communicators, innovative problem solvers, lifelong learners, and ethical leaders. The institutional learning outcomes for these attributes are provided in **Annex 1**.
- 2.2 In the formulation or review of programme outcomes, departments should consider the institutional learning outcomes alongside the programme's aims, accreditation requirements, and industry's expectations. The resulting programme outcomes should be a single, integrated and succinct set of outcomes descriptive of the qualities and abilities that a typical graduate from the particular programme should possess and be able to demonstrate.
- 2.3 **All** institutional learning outcomes should be adequately addressed within the formal curriculum of a study programme (i.e., the totality of the Discipline-Specific Requirements and the General University Requirements). Departments should indicate the correspondence between the programme learning outcomes and the institutional learning outcomes in relevant programme documents.
- 2.4 Co- and extra-curricular activities will continue to form an important part of students' learning experience. Units offering co- and extra-curricular activities should plan their activities with reference to the institutional learning outcomes so as to create a coherent and enriching learning environment for students. Departments should encourage students to make the best use of such out-of-classroom learning opportunities.

### **3 Effective Date and Scope**

- 3.1 This policy will take effect from June 2012, superseding the preceding policy paper “*Learning Outcomes for PolyU Graduates at Undergraduate Level: Policy and Guidelines*” issued in February 2009. It will affect all undergraduate degree programmes, irrespective of the programme’s mode of delivery, funding basis, and offering location.

### **4 Implementation**

- 4.1 The institutional learning outcomes presented in this document are a refinement of existing graduate attributes rather than any fundamental change in the educational objectives. Programmes that are already addressing the institutional learning outcomes listed in the previous version (February 2009) will have little difficulty in meeting the outcomes presented in this version. Therefore, immediate review and revision of programme documents and curricula are not required.
- 4.2 However, departments are encouraged to edit their programme documents to remove references that may be inconsistent with the updated version of graduate attributes (e.g., reference to the four broad qualities of PolyU graduates articulated in the February 2009 version, note on attributes to be addressed through co-curricular activities) to avoid unnecessary confusion.
- 4.3 The Academic Secretariat shall make corresponding changes to the 2012 version of the “*Guidelines and Regulations for Programme Planning, Validation and Management*”. Departments are advised to make reference to both this policy paper and the AS Guidelines in future validation/re-validation/review of undergraduate degree programmes.

June 2012

## Annex 1: Definitions of Undergraduate Degree Level Learning Outcomes

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Note: In the formulation or review of programme outcomes, departments should consider the institutional learning outcomes alongside the programme's aims, accreditation requirements, and industry's expectations. The resulting programme outcomes should be a single, integrated and succinct set of outcomes descriptive of the qualities and abilities that a typical graduate from the particular programme should possess and be able to demonstrate.

**Competent professional:** Graduates should be able to integrate and apply in practice the fundamental knowledge and skills required for functioning effectively as an entry-level professional.

**Critical thinker:** Graduates should be able to examine and critique the validity of information, arguments, and different viewpoints, and reach a sound judgment on the basis of credible evidence and logical reasoning.

**Effective communicator:** Graduates should be able to comprehend and communicate effectively in English and Chinese, orally and in writing, in professional and daily contexts.

**Innovative problem solver:** Graduates should be able to identify and define problems in professional and daily contexts, and produce creative and workable solutions to the problems.

**Lifelong learner:** Graduates should recognise the need for continual learning and self-development, and be able to plan, manage and improve their own learning in pursuit of self-determined development goals.

**Ethical leader:** Graduates should have an understanding of leadership and be prepared to lead a team, and should acknowledge their responsibilities as professionals and citizens to the society and their own nation, and be able to demonstrate ethical reasoning in professional and daily contexts.