

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



Research & Innovation

Securing Personal Data Privacy during Central Bank Digital Currency Adoption

The Department of Computing is collaborating with the Hong Kong Monetary Authority on a Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) project, focusing on advancing privacy protection in digital financial systems. The research examines key aspects of CBDCs, including interoperability, security, and privacy, with the goal of fostering a robust tokenisation market and attracting financial technology talent to Hong Kong. The project explores innovative financial market infrastructure to enable seamless interbank settlement of tokenised money through wholesale CBDC, by focusing on tokenised deposits, which are digital representations of commercial bank deposits issued by banks. Through integrating cutting-edge privacy designs, this collaboration ensures personal information remains secure while advancing the functionality and adoption of digital currencies.

Harnessing Data to Improve Community Support for Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) Survivors

IPV remains a critical public health issue, creating severe physical and mental health challenges while imposing substantial social and economic burdens. A recent study analysed the Allegheny County Health Survey data from over 8,000 adults to investigate the relationships between IPV experiences, psychological distress, and help-seeking behaviours.

The result showed that more than 200 respondents reported IPV experience, with significant differences in age, marital status, education, income, and race compared to those without IPV experience. It also revealed that IPV survivors were more likely to experience hopelessness, restlessness, exhaustion, and feelings of worthlessness. Psychological distress was also strongly associated with help-seeking behaviours, for example, individuals reporting hopelessness were significantly more likely to seek assistance.

The findings underscore the importance of early identification and targeted interventions for IPV survivors. By enhancing professional training and promoting collaboration between healthcare and social support services, communities can better address psychological distress and reduce the occurrence and long-term impact of IPV.



Teaching & Learning

Building Competence in Safeguarding Children

Hosted by the Department of Applied Social Sciences, the subject “Child Maltreatment and Protection” provides students with an in-depth understanding of child abuse and neglect as a public health concern. The subject covers social, legal, and health perspectives, helping students examine the prevalence, risk factors, and consequences of maltreatment. Clinical assessments also allow them to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world situations, focusing on the unique needs of victims and their families. By centring children’s rights as part of human rights, the course encourages the development of effective prevention and intervention strategies, empowering students to contribute meaningfully to protective, child-friendly society and families for child protection.

Enhancing Critical Thinking and Legal Literacy in Business

The School of Accounting and Finance offers the subject “Business Law” to equip students with foundational knowledge of the legal system in Hong Kong and its application in the business context. Through studying sources of law, the court system, and relevant regulatory frameworks, students develop the ability to identify legal issues and apply critical reasoning to resolve practical business problems. The subject covers key areas such as employment law, anti-corruption measures, anti-money laundering, and dispute resolution, while emphasising ethical considerations in business policy initiatives.

With these foundational knowledge and skills in place, students learn to systematically organise written responses to complex legal problems, critically assess alternative arguments, and evaluate the broader implications of legal decisions in business settings. By engaging with real-world case studies and problem-solving exercises, their critical and creative thinking skills could be strengthened. Through these learning experiences, this subject fosters an understanding of the intersections between law, ethics, and business operations, preparing students to navigate the legal dimensions of professional practice with confidence and integrity.

External Engagement

Integrating Practice Research and Community Planning for Social Progress

The Department of Applied Social Sciences co-organised the symposium, entitled “The Transformation of Social Work: From Traditional Practice to Practice Research – Three Years of Implementation Experience”, showcased achievements from the China Social Work Project Fund III (2021–2024). **Over 60 Chinese Mainland social work educators and practitioners** presented how they integrated theory with practice to address diverse challenges across areas such as community development, hospice care, and mental health. By highlighting case studies and research processes, the symposium promoted experiential knowledge, reflective practice, and collaboration, enabling social workers to better advocate for marginalised populations and enhance professional standards. **Over 13,000 beneficiaries** across more than seven project sites in Chinese Mainland have been supported through these initiatives.

Meanwhile, the “International Symposium on New Directions of Urban–Rural Development in China” addressed challenges stemming from rapid urbanisation. With **around 200 participants**, the discussions explored sustainable governance, rural property reforms, and inclusive planning, comparing Chinese Mainland’s experience with global examples. Insights from the event contributed to formulating more equitable policies and fostering collaborations

aimed at poverty alleviation and integrated development. Both symposia can be seen to enrich professional knowledge, foster cross-sector dialogue, and advance innovative solutions for social progress and community well-being in Chinese Mainland.

Strengthening Care and Protection through Social Work Workshops

The Department of Applied Social Sciences, in collaboration with the Hong Kong Academy of Social Work, organised a series of “From Research to Practice” workshops that showcased how academic findings can be translated into actionable tools for frontline practice. Centred on addressing the needs of disadvantaged groups, the workshops covered pressing issues such as preventing online sexual exploitation among children, post-discharge care for young adults at risk of suicide or self-harm, workplace inclusion for employees with disabilities, and the application of mindfulness-based programmes in schools.



By bridging research and professional practice, the workshops equipped social workers with practical knowledge to respond more effectively to real-world challenges, while raising awareness of systemic inequalities faced by vulnerable populations. **Around 300 practitioners** participated, gaining insights and skills to strengthen both preventive and responsive interventions.

It is noteworthy that the initiative not only exemplifies how academia, practice, and community stakeholders can collaborate to foster meaningful social change, but also directly contributes to the advancement of Good Health and Well-being (SDG3) by supporting mental health, suicide prevention, and child protection, while also promoting Reduced Inequalities (SDG10) through advocacy for workplace inclusion and support for disadvantaged groups.

Governance & Operations

Upholding Equity, Accountability, and Participation in University Operations

PolyU encourages open communication channels across the University community to promote inclusive and participatory decision-making. Senior management actively gathers feedback from staff and students through regular President’s Forums, meetings with Staff Association representatives and students, and face-to-face small-group discussions. These engagements enable a better understanding of

issues and concerns, fostering transparency and responsiveness in University governance.

Besides, student representation is well established in the University’s decision-making bodies, including the Council, Senate, and various committees. By serving in these bodies, **over 40 student representatives** contribute to shaping policies, ensuring that diverse perspectives are considered, and strengthening participatory governance within the University.

Furthermore, PolyU maintains rigorous standards of integrity and fairness for all staff members. The Human Resources Office enforces the Code of Ethics to promote ethical behaviour, accountability, and equal opportunities, while Probity Guidelines ensure compliance with the Hong Kong Prevention of Bribery Ordinance. Formal channels, including the Grievance Committee and the Review Committee on Human Resources Decisions, provide staff with access to dispute resolution and appeals, safeguarding fairness and justice in university operations.