

Notice on Response Actions for the Novel Coronavirus (16): An Update on Arrangements for Learning and Teaching Activities for the Remainder of Semester 2 of 2019/2020

Task Force on the Delivery of Online Teaching

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Dear Students and Staff,

After reviewing the latest situation of the COVID-19 outbreak in Hong Kong, we consider it unlikely that face-to-face teaching can resume anytime soon. To minimize the impact on students' academic progression and graduation while safeguarding the health and safety of students and staff and learning outcomes, the University has revisited the learning and teaching arrangement announced on 4 February 2020. We solicited feedback from students, departments/schools, and programme leaders through surveys and discussions. The revised learning and teaching arrangements for the rest of the semester are as follows:

Online learning and teaching (10 February - 14 March 2020)

Online learning and teaching will continue until 14 March 2020.

Recess period (16 – 21 March 2020)

The recess period will be shortened to one week. No formal lecture or assessment will be conducted in this week. Students should use this period to consolidate their learning through self-revision and/or consultation with subject lecturers. Subject lecturers should also make use of this period to adjust and prepare their online teaching materials for the rest of the semester.

Online learning and teaching will continue before the resumption of face-to-face teaching (23 March – 16 May 2020)

Online learning and teaching activities will continue after the recess period to avoid further delays to the progression pattern or student graduation. Face-to-face teaching will resume as soon as the situation allows and students will be informed in advance.

We are aware that the learning outcomes for certain types of programme/subject, such as research postgraduate programmes, allied health and social work programmes, final year projects, practicum and clinical skills training, cannot be fully achieved by online learning and teaching. Therefore, the University will adopt a flexible approach to allow the conduct of limited on-campus activities during the online teaching period.

- **For research postgraduate students**

The University strongly encourages research postgraduate (RPg) students to undertake their research remotely as much as possible. If students have urgent and immediate needs to conduct their research on campus, they should discuss their study plans with the Chief Supervisor and obtain approval from the Head of Department/School via their Chief Supervisor before returning to campus.

- **For undergraduate/sub-degree students taking final year projects**

The University strongly advises students to make use of online resources to conduct their final year projects, although we understand that some students may need to use laboratories for their final year projects. Students should seek advice on their work plans from their final year project supervisor, and obtain approval from the Head of Department/School via the project supervisor and programme leader/final year project coordinator before returning to campus.

- **For students taking practicum and training subjects and group projects**

Since group discussions in physical settings are currently discouraged, students are strongly recommended to use electronic means to conduct their discussions. Nevertheless, the University is aware of the need for students of allied health programmes and other programmes to take practicum subjects and/or to meet training requirements. The University is considering alternative arrangements and precautionary measures before advising students to return to campus for practicum and training subjects. For students who are required to take practicums outside campus, such as clinical placements, the University is working with external organisations and professional bodies to determine the earliest time when such practicums can be resumed. Students who are

abroad will be given enough time to travel back to Hong Kong and undertake the quarantine requirement, if applicable.

Students and staff who are currently outside of Hong Kong must adhere to the HKSAR Government's mandatory quarantine requirement and the University's self-quarantine requirement if they return to Hong Kong. Please note that students and staff are not allowed to undertake the 14-day mandatory/self-quarantine in PolyU student hostels or to return to campus before completion of the 14-day quarantine requirement imposed by the HKSAR government or as required by the University. Violation of the above conditions will result in disciplinary action.

Students should avoid on-campus social gatherings and must take necessary precautionary measures, e.g., wearing surgical masks and/or glasses/goggles and undergoing body temperature screening at the entrances, before entering the campus.

Late drop (until 30 April 2020)

The University strives to ensure the quality of online learning and teaching and we understand that students are eager to learn via the online mode, although some students have concerns about achieving some of the learning outcomes. Extra efforts will be made to ensure academic integrity when conducting online assessment. Should students have any query regarding their study, they are advised to approach their programme leader and academic advisor to discuss their study plans. The University will allow students to drop subject(s) until 30 April 2020.

Graduation requirements of bachelor's degree programmes

Concerning the Work-Integrated Education (WIE), Service-Learning, and Healthy Life Style graduation requirements for bachelor's degree programmes, please approach the following staff for advice:

- For Work-Integrated Education (WIE), contact your programme leader and/or academic advisor.
- For Service-Learning and Healthy Life Style requirements, contact your designated OGUR academic counsellor and colleagues in SLLO.

Examination/assessments and examination period (18 – 30 May 2020)

The University intends to conduct on-campus examination and will require students to be present in the examination hall if the situation allows. Nevertheless, subject lecturers will also consider how other forms of assessment, such as assignments, projects, presentations, and online assessment can be adopted in lieu of proctored assessments. If on-campus examinations are required for some core subjects, e.g., owing to the accreditation requirements of the professional bodies, the University will announce the arrangements in due course.

Students should take note that the University has no plan to offer a pass/fail option for letter-grade subjects in Semester 2. All subjects will be graded as usual. It is a matter of maintaining academic standards: with the reduced number of graded subjects, award classifications may not accurately reflect actual student achievement.

Please note that the revision days for Semester 2 prior to the examination period has been removed in order not to further delay the end date of examination.

Make-up class arrangement (1 – 20 June 2020)

Make-up classes will be arranged for certain subjects, such as those with practicum, laboratory and practical training sessions, for which not all learning outcomes can be fully achieved via online learning and teaching. Departments and subject lecturers will announce the detailed arrangements, if any, in the near future. Flexibility can be given to some programmes to conduct their practical tests and related assessment components after completion of practical classes.

Summer term (Tentative commencement date: 15 June 2020)

With the examination period ending on 30 May, the University will be able to maintain the Summer Term. The Summer Term will tentatively commence on 15 June 2020. Further details of the Summer Term arrangements will be announced later.

If you have any questions, please contact the Academic Registry (hotline: 2333 0600 or email: ar.dept@polyu.edu.hk).

Once again, thank you for your understanding and cooperation in these unprecedented and challenging circumstances. Please take care and stay vigilant to ensure good hygiene habits and personal health!

Best regards,

Ping-kong Alexander Wai
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