

## CE meets University Grants Committee members (with photo)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, met members of the University Grants Committee (UGC) today (January 12) in a video conference to exchange views on the latest developments of the higher education sector. This was the second time that this annual meeting between the Chief Executive and the UGC had to be held online because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Secretary for Education, Mr Kevin Yeung, and the Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Alfred Sit, also attended the meeting.

The UGC Chairman, Mr Carlson Tong, briefed the Chief Executive on the progress of the UGC's major initiatives, including the Planning Exercise for the 2022-25 triennium, the Research Assessment Exercise 2020 and the renewal of University Accountability Agreements. He thanked the Government for approving the recurrent grants to the eight UGC-funded universities in the 2022-25 triennium as recommended by the UGC following a constructive process with the eight institutions, taking into account the planning parameters promulgated by the Government. Mr Tong also briefed the Chief Executive on the progress of the various initiatives in strengthening the universities' research capacity under her 2021 Policy Address, including the establishment of a working group by the UGC to review the feasibility of increasing the number of publicly-funded research postgraduate student places. The Research Grants Council of the UGC would also allocate additional funding from the Research Endowment Fund to step up support for research activities in the UGC-funded universities.

Mrs Lam expressed her gratitude to the UGC under the leadership of Mr Tong for serving as an effective communication channel between the Government and the UGC-funded universities over the years. In particular, she commended the eight UGC-funded universities for their outstanding performance in the Research Assessment Exercise 2020 announced by the UGC last year, which had since been publicised through local media to stimulate more interest in quality research in local universities. She was pleased to learn that a great majority of non-local students in the UGC-funded universities had returned to campus through efforts made by the institutions.

Looking ahead, Mrs Lam said that she was confident that Hong Kong's higher education would go from strength to strength, and other than education and technology, could contribute in areas of raising Hong Kong's international profile through networking with overseas and Mainland institutions, enrollment of more students from overseas and participation in regional or international organisations.

This was the fifth annual meeting held by the Chief Executive with the UGC during her term of office and was attended by the Chairman and all local and overseas members.

