

[EDB announces Hong Kong Metropolitan University becomes first university of applied sciences in Hong Kong \(with photos\)](#)

The Education Bureau (EDB) today (March 21) announced that the Hong Kong Metropolitan University (HKMU), having fulfilled the criteria for qualifying as a university of applied sciences (UAS) promulgated in February 2024, has become the first UAS in Hong Kong.

Speaking at a ceremony today, the Secretary for Education, Dr Choi Yuk-lin, said the Chief Executive announced in the 2023 Policy Address that the Government will facilitate the establishment of UASs. The Education Bureau is pleased that the HKMU has met all criteria and become the first UAS in Hong Kong. She highlighted that the HKMU demonstrates its vision, commitment, capabilities and experience in providing high-level vocational and professional education and training (VPET) programmes that blend theory and practice, and having strong recognition and support from industries. It not only represents a milestone for the HKMU but also signifies the Government's commitment to raising the status of VPET at the university degree level, providing young people with an alternative pathway to success.

In assessing the HKMU's application for becoming a UAS, the Government has taken into account relevant factors, including the outcome of the institutional review for UAS by the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ), and the HKMU's experience in operating applied degree programmes and other VPET-oriented programmes. The institutional review by the HKCAAVQ focuses on the commitment and competence of the HKMU to qualify as a UAS at both institutional and programme levels, based on three domains, namely governance, management and quality assurance; learning environment and learner support; and industry collaboration and recognition.

Founded by the Government in 1989 as the Open Learning Institute of Hong Kong, the HKMU became the first self-financing university in 1997, with a mission to advance learning, knowledge, and research that meet students' learning aspirations and society's talent needs, focusing on practical and professional programmes. In the 2023/24 academic year, the HKMU operates more than 140 self-financing post-secondary programmes, primarily focusing on professional and practical disciplines, ranging from Levels 4 to 7 under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (HKQF), with about 13 800 full-time and 6 200 part-time students in total. It currently operates two applied degree programmes.

Institutions that have qualified as a UAS, including the HKMU, are subject to ongoing reviews by the HKCAAVQ to ensure further development of

their maturity and competency. They are also required to submit annual progress reports to the EDB.

To bolster the development of UAS, as announced in the 2024-25 Budget, the Government has granted a start-up fund of \$100 million to support UAS and prospective post-secondary institutions to form an alliance of UAS for joint promotion, including collaboration with UAS on the Mainland and overseas, initiating collaboration and research about applied education at the post-secondary level, and organising joint promotion activities, in order to enhance the status of VPET in society and among parents and students. Priority will be accorded to eligible programmes of UAS for inclusion under the Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors and eligible applications from UAS when considering applications for relevant support measures, including the EDB's Quality Enhancement Support Scheme and Enhancement and Start-up Grant Scheme for Self-financing Post-secondary Education.

Self-financing post-secondary institutions planning to apply for becoming a UAS should have a university title and possess the vision, commitment, capabilities and experience in operating an institution that embodies the key features of a UAS, including:

- (a) the vision, maturity and capability in providing high-level VPET programmes ranging from Levels 5 to 7 under the HKQF, blending theory and practice with substantial workplace learning and assessment, having flexibilities in curriculum design, admission and delivery mode, and having recognition and support from industries and professions; and
- (b) the experience in providing applied degree programme(s) at least in one area of applied sciences for which it has attained the programme area accreditation or self-accrediting status, and the commitment to developing and providing more applied degree programmes.

The relevant criteria and application procedures are set out in the Manual for Institutional Review for UAS on the HKCAAVQ website (www.hkcaavq.edu.hk/en/accreditation/institutional_review/). Applications are accepted all year round. Eligible institutions may apply for combining the institutional review for becoming a private university and that for UAS, subject to the EDB's approval.





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Academic & Vocational Qualifications

香港首間應用科學大學成立儀式

Establishment Ceremony of First University of Applied Sciences in Hong Kong

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