

EDB announces Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors for 2025/26 cohort – undergraduate programmes

The Education Bureau (EDB) announced today (September 10) that the Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors (SSSDP) will subsidise a total of 4 916 places in 55 undergraduate programmes, covering 3 365 places in 55 first-year-first-degree (FYFD) programmes and 1 551 places in 44 top-up degree (TUD) programmes of eight post-secondary institutions for the cohort to be admitted in the 2025/26 academic year.

The programmes of the SSSDP fall under 10 disciplines that have been identified as having keen manpower demand, namely architecture and engineering, computer science, creative industries, financial technology, healthcare, insurance, logistics, sports and recreation, testing and certification, and tourism and hospitality. The programmes include the eight applied degrees introduced under the Pilot Project on the Development of Applied Degree Programmes, which will receive additional subsidies, with a view to further strengthening the vocational and professional education and training progression pathway at the post-secondary level.

The programmes and numbers of subsidised places under the SSSDP are determined by the EDB in consultation with relevant policy bureaux and departments. Details of the participating institutions, the programmes and the numbers of subsidised places are listed in the Annex. The EDB will continue to work together with relevant policy bureaux and departments to explore covering more suitable programmes in the SSSDP.

The annual subsidy amount for laboratory-based programmes in the 2025/26 academic year will be increased from \$79,770 in the 2024/25 academic year to \$81,450, while that for non-laboratory-based programmes will be increased from \$45,810 to \$46,780 in accordance with the movement of the Composite Consumer Price Index. For applied degree programmes, with the additional annual subsidies, the total annual subsidy amounts will be adjusted upward from \$87,770 to \$89,620 for laboratory-based applied degree programmes and from \$50,810 to \$51,880 for non-laboratory-based applied degree programmes.

The adjusted subsidy amounts are applicable to both new and continuing eligible students. The subsidy is tenable for the normal duration of the programmes concerned. Subsidised students will pay a tuition fee with the subsidy applied. Students in need may still apply for student financial assistance from the Student Finance Office of the Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency in respect of the actual amount of tuition fee payable.

The subsidised FYFD intake places are allocated mainly through the Joint University Programmes Admissions System to ensure that eligible students are selected on a merit basis, whereas the subsidised places of the TUD programmes are allocated in accordance with the existing admission arrangements of the self-financing TUD programmes, i.e. through direct admission by institutions. Students can apply for admission to the programmes directly through the institutions concerned.

The SSSDP was launched in the 2015/16 academic year to subsidise students to pursue designated full-time locally accredited self-financing undergraduate programmes in selected disciplines. The objectives are as follows:

- (1) To increase the supply of subsidised undergraduate places by leveraging the supply of the self-financing post-secondary education sector;
- (2) To nurture talent in support of specific industries with keen demand for human resources;
- (3) To encourage the self-financing post-secondary education sector to offer programmes in selected disciplines that meet Hong Kong's social and economic needs by providing targeted financial support; and
- (4) To support the healthy and sustainable development of the self-financing post-secondary education sector to complement the University Grants Committee-funded sector in broadening and diversifying study opportunities.

The SSSDP has been expanded to include TUD programmes with effect from the 2023/24 academic year. As for the designated sub-degree programmes, the relevant details for the 2025/26 cohort, including the participating institutions, the sub-degree programmes, the numbers of subsidised places and the subsidy amounts, will be announced in due course.

Details of the SSSDP are available on the EDB website (www.cspe.edu.hk/sssdp).