

EDB responds to media enquiries on arrangement for university admission

In response to media enquiries arising from recent concern about university admission, a spokesperson for the Education Bureau today (September 4) replied as follows:

Through the eight University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded universities, the Government currently provides around 15 000 publicly-funded first-year-first-degree intake places for local students every year. With the Government's respect for the principle of academic freedom and institutional autonomy, universities can decide on its own arrangements for admission, and can admit local students via the Joint University Programmes Admission System (JUPAS) or non-JUPAS route. Neither the Government nor the UGC would require UGC-funded universities to specify a particular ratio of local students admitted through the JUPAS or non-JUPAS routes.

Generally speaking, the share of students who gained admission to UGC-funded places intake via JUPAS route stood at about 83% in the past three years without much fluctuation. Among local students admitted via non-JUPAS routes, over half are sub-degree or degree holders. For the remainder, less than half hold non-local qualifications when applying for admission. The statistics prove that candidates of the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE) have all along been the major source of local students for UGC-funded undergraduate programmes.

The UGC Notes on Procedures clearly state that UGC-funded universities enjoy autonomy in selection of students and they are accountable for their decisions in the matter. Regardless of whether the applications were submitted by JUPAS or non-JUPAS applicants, each university has its admission policy and criteria based on the principles of fairness and merit-based selection. All the universities shall endeavour to ensure that only the most suitable and deserving applicants are offered admission. Universities would assess the applicants in a variety of aspects, including their academic qualifications and results, interview performance, personal attributes, non-academic achievements, interests and experiences, programme preferences, etc. Examination results alone are not a comprehensive basis for comparison. All universities have accumulated a wealth of experience in assessing applicants with different academic qualifications and would ensure that the admission thresholds are consistently applied to applicants holding different types of academic qualifications on a merit-based principle.

The Education Bureau understands that universities are committed to selecting the most deserving students among numerous applications, irrespective of the academic qualifications held by local applicants. International score comparison system (such as the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) also shows that elite students of the HKDSE and other international examinations (such as the International Baccalaureate and the General Certificate of Education A Level) are equally outstanding. The

Education Bureau is of the view that there is no evidence showing that it is easier for local students taking international examination to be admitted to the UGC-funded undergraduate programmes.