

# Government announces establishment of investigation and study group on recent internal operational affairs of HKU

The Government today (June 11) announced the establishment of an investigation and study group (the group) on the recent internal operational affairs of the University of Hong Kong (HKU).

ã€€

Recently, there have been wide media coverage and discussions on the HKU's internal operational affairs. The Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, has tasked the Education Bureau (EDB) to learn about the matter and report to him.ã€€

As the EDB has gathered from relevant parties, there is inconsistency in the information provided by different parties and a need to clarify the facts and study how to deal with the matter. The Government and the public have high expectations of universities. The Government provides funding for their operations every year and has to ensure their proper use of public funds.

Under the existing mechanism, the University Grants Committee (UGC) plays an important role in the governance, funding allocation arrangements and strategic development of all funded universities. When providing funding, the UGC signs a University Accountability Agreement with each funded university, setting out requirements on governance, accountability and resource utilisation of the universities to ensure that their operations are in line with the interests and development of Hong Kong. At the institutional level, apart from providing resources, the EDB is responsible for formulating Hong Kong's overall education policy and development strategy. The funding allocation arrangements of the UGC and operations of the UGC-funded universities should tie in with the Government's overall education policy direction.

ã€€

The EDB has proposed to the Chief Executive to establish the group to conduct investigations and studies on the recent controversies relating to the HKU's internal operations. The goals of the group are: 1) to clarify facts and understand issues of all parties; 2) to facilitate internal co-ordination, assist various parties to work together and strengthen mutual co-operation; and 3) to provide advice based on the investigations and studies, and propose recommendations regarding the improvement measures and good practices to ensure that the HKU operates in accordance with the requirements of the University Accountability Agreement and uses public funds properly. The Chief Executive has accepted the proposal.

The group is composed of the Permanent Secretary for Education, Ms Michelle Li, and the Chairman of the UGC, Mr Tim Lui, and will commence work

as soon as possible. A support team will be formed by the EDB and the UGC Secretariat.ã€ã€

A Government spokesman said, "Society has high expectations of UGC-funded universities to enhance their institutional governance effectively. We particularly cherish the HKU's hard-won, remarkable achievements thanks to both the hard work of generations and the teamwork of the university community. We believe that establishing the group will help the HKU raise its governance effectiveness and scale new heights with concerted efforts."