

Non-local student jailed for causing to be made false statement

A 24-year-old female Mainland student was charged at the Eastern Magistrates' Court with one count of causing to be made a false statement for the purpose of obtaining an entry permit and was sentenced to 17 weeks' imprisonment today (October 17).

In May 2024, the Immigration Department (ImmD) and the Police conducted a joint investigation into a case regarding a person who had submitted a false academic certificate to a university. The defendant was suspected of providing a false graduation certificate from an overseas university upon admission to a master's programme at a local university. After reviewing the defendant's application for an entry permit to study in Hong Kong, the ImmD found that the defendant, upon her application for an entry permit, had reported the same false academic qualifications on the application form in order to obtain an entry permit to study in Hong Kong.

The defendant was intercepted by ImmD staff upon her departure via the Lo Wu Control Point on June 22. After a joint investigation by the ImmD and the Police, it was determined that the defendant had not taken up studies in the overseas university concerned. The defendant was charged with one count of causing to be made a false statement for the purpose of obtaining an entry permit. The defendant pleaded guilty to the charge at the Eastern Magistrates' Courts today and was sentenced to 17 weeks' imprisonment.

"Under the laws of Hong Kong, any person who makes or causes to be made a false statement to an Immigration officer commits an offence. Offenders are liable to prosecution and, upon conviction, subject to the maximum penalty of a fine of \$150,000 and imprisonment for 14 years. Aiders and abettors are also liable to prosecution and penalties. Moreover, any person who makes, uses or has in his custody a false instrument commits an offence and is liable to prosecution and, upon conviction, subject to imprisonment for 14 years," an ImmD spokesman said.

The ImmD and the Police urge applicants not to defy the law or be misled into believing that study or residence can be obtained by fraudulent means or false information. The ImmD reiterates that if any person is found to have obtained their student visa/permit or residence status in Hong Kong by fraudulent means, such visa or residence status will be declared invalid according to the laws of Hong Kong, and they will be subject to criminal liability. They will also be subject to removal back to their place of origin.