

Research Grants Council releases report on Phase II Review

The following is issued on behalf of the University Grants Committee:

The Research Grants Council (RGC) released today (October 30) the final report of the Working Group on the Review of the RGC (Phase II).

The Phase II review aimed to examine the operation of the RGC and covered issues including the quality of assessment and monitoring processes, the means of communication among members of the panels/committees, the timeline for funding schemes, and arrangements guarding against conflicts of interest.

The RGC set up a working group to oversee the implementation of the Phase II review. A consultation exercise was held from early July to mid-August 2019, including a symposium for frontline researchers on July 15, to collect stakeholders' views on the interim recommendations of the working group.

The Chairman of the University Grants Committee (UGC), Mr Carlson Tong, said, "The UGC is pleased to accept the final review report, which is most comprehensive and has endeavoured to address the concerns of the research community. I am also pleased that the calls for more funding support for RGC-funded research projects were met by the Government's injection of \$20 billion into the Research Endowment Fund. The injection will enable the RGC to enrich its entire portfolio of funding schemes, and we will increase research funding for universities as soon as possible."

The Chairman of the RGC, Professor Benjamin Wah, thanked the working group for its contributions. "We have received invaluable comments and suggestions from colleagues of the academic community. We will take these comments into consideration in RGC's ongoing efforts. The outcome of the review will assist the RGC in further streamlining its operation and enhance its efficiency and effectiveness," Professor Wah said.

The report is available on the RGC website: www.ugc.edu.hk.

Background

The review of the RGC was conducted in two phases: Phase I, completed in 2017, examined macro issues such as the portfolio balance of the research funding schemes, the RGC's structure and good practices in overseas funding agencies; Phase II examined in further detail the operation of the RGC.