

Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors for 2023/24 cohort announced

The Government announced today (September 20) that the Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors (SSSDP) will subsidise a total of 3 265 places in 47 undergraduate programmes of eight post-secondary institutions for the cohort to be admitted in the 2023/24 academic year.

These 47 designated programmes 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 four applied degrees selected for the Pilot Project on the Development of Applied Degree Programmes.

The programmes and number of subsidised places under the SSSDP are determined by the Education Bureau (EDB) in consultation with relevant policy bureaux and departments. Details of the participating institutions, the programmes and the number 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.

In the 2023/24 academic year, the annual subsidy amount for laboratory-based programmes will be increased from \$77,040 in the 2022/23 academic year to \$78,280, while that for non-laboratory-based programmes will be increased from \$44,240 to \$44,950 according to the movement of the Composite Consumer Price Index.

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.

Allocation of the subsidised first-year intake places will mainly go through the Joint University Programmes Admissions System to ensure that eligible students are selected on a merit basis.

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 scope of the SSSDP was expanded with effect from the 2019/20 academic year to benefit students enrolling in designated sub-degree programmes. The relevant details for the 2023/24 cohort, including the participating institutions, the sub-degree programmes, the number of subsidised places, the subsidy amounts and more, will be announced in due course.

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

For information about the Pilot Project on the Development of Applied Degree Programmes, please refer to the EDB press release (www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202106/28/P2021062800464.htm).