

# UGC supports CityU to run Bachelor's Degree in Veterinary Medicine programme at college of veterinary medicine

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

The University Grants Committee (UGC) announced today (August 20) that the UGC supports the City University of Hong Kong (CityU) to launch a UGC-funded six-year Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine (BVM) programme with effect from the 2019/20 academic year, subject to the approval of the Government. The UGC will submit its funding recommendation for the 2019/20 to 2021/22 triennium, including the recommendation in respect of CityU's BVM programme, to the Government later this year. The Government will consider the UGC's recommendation and announce the student number target for the 2019/20 to 2021/22 triennium according to established procedures.

The Chairman of the UGC, Mr Carlson Tong, said, "The establishment of a veterinary college in Hong Kong to nurture talents in veterinary medicine is an investment that is conducive to people's health and long-term development of Hong Kong. If zoonotic diseases emerge in Hong Kong in the future, a local veterinary college can quickly provide appropriate facilities and manpower support and conduct related research work."

Since 2009, CityU has applied to the UGC three times to introduce a bachelor's degree in veterinary medicine. The final report of the 2013 UGC Task Force concluded that, for strategic development, Hong Kong is well positioned to develop a veterinary school that has a small professional veterinary medicine training programme but a top-heavy research and postgraduate programme for training research talents focusing on relevant areas such as zoonotic infectious diseases and public health. In this connection, after receiving the third proposal from CityU in 2016, the Government advised CityU that there is a prima facie case for Hong Kong to consider introducing a professionally accredited undergraduate programme in veterinary medicine, and the ideal veterinary school for Hong Kong should have a small professional veterinary medicine training programme and a top-heavy postgraduate and research programme.

After actively following up on the recommendations in the 2013 Final Report of the UGC Task Force, CityU submitted the latest proposal in October 2017 to the UGC for consideration in the context of the 2019/20 – 2021/22 Triennium Planning Exercise. The UGC immediately formed a task force to examine CityU's proposal in October 2017. The Task Force, led by Professor Jan Thomas, comprises members who are internationally renowned professionals, local experts and people from different sectors.

Mr Tong said, "The most important consideration for the UGC in reviewing CityU's proposal is to ensure that graduates will be able to practise veterinary medicine in Hong Kong. In addition to making progress in securing international accreditation, CityU's veterinary programme includes a backup plan that fully responds to the requirements of the Task Force."

Professor Thomas said, "The Task Force met with the relevant departmental personnel and management of CityU and other stakeholders to understand various aspects such as the cost and financial needs of the programme, the preparation work in attaining professional accreditation, the role of Cornell University in assisting CityU to run the veterinary programme and the progress of setting up the relevant laboratory and animal clinics. After the review, the Task Force was satisfied with the response and performance of CityU in various aspects. It also appreciated the enthusiasm and determination of CityU in establishing the veterinary college."

The UGC has requested CityU to submit an annual progress report to the UGC before the programme can obtain full accreditation status. In the meantime, the UGC Task Force will continue to assist the UGC in reviewing the progress of the programme.

The final report of the Task Force on the Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine Programme of CityU has been uploaded to the UGC website ([www.ugc.edu.hk](http://www.ugc.edu.hk)).