

Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors for 2019/20 cohort announced

The Government announced today (August 22) that under the Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors (SSSDP), a total of 3 236 subsidised places in 38 programmes will be provided by six post-secondary institutions for the cohort to be admitted in the 2019/20 academic year.

These 38 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, health care, insurance, logistics, sports and recreation, testing and certification, and tourism and hospitality.

The programmes and number of subsidised places under the SSSDP were determined by the Education Bureau 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.

In the 2019/20 academic year, the annual subsidy amount for laboratory-based programmes will be increased from \$71,700 in the 2018/19 academic year to \$72,800 while that for non-laboratory based programmes will be increased from \$41,000 to \$41,700 according to the movement of the Composite Consumer Price Index.

The adjusted subsidy amounts are applicable to both new and continuing students meeting the criteria. The subsidy is tenable for the normal duration of the programmes concerned. Subsidised students will pay a tuition fee after subsidy. Students in need may still apply for student financial assistance from the Student Finance Office in respect of the actual amount of tuition fee payable.

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. It will be regularised in the 2018/19 academic year with the number of subsidised places increased from about 1 000 per cohort to about 3 000 per cohort. Eligible continuing students of the designated programmes will also receive the subsidy from the 2018/19 academic year onwards. The Scheme aims to achieve the following objectives:

- (1) To increase the supply of subsidised undergraduate places by leveraging the supply of the self-financing sector;
- (2) To nurture talent in support of specific industries with keen demand for human resources;

(3) To encourage the self-financing 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.

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.

For more details of the SSSDP, please visit www.cspe.edu.hk/SSSDP.

SED on school circular on handling suspected cases of child abuse

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Education, Mr Kevin Yeung, at a media session after officiating at the opening ceremony of the 51st Joint School Science Exhibition today (August 22):

Reporter: But if the schools refuse to report those (child abuse) cases immediately, will there be any punishment?

Secretary for Education: I think in the past, we have said it very clearly that if the schools have noticed some abnormalities, they have a duty to report to the relevant authorities. Under the same rationale, if they have noticed cases that are justified for reporting to the Police, they should do so.

Reporter: Why do you think it is necessary for the schools to report the cases immediately even without the parents' consent?

Secretary for Education: It depends on how serious the cases are, and if it is really necessary, and if it is threatening the safety of the children, I think that the schools should take necessary actions.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

Technology Talent Scheme opens for application

The Innovation and Technology Commission today (August 22) launched the Technology Talent Scheme to nurture and bring together more technology talent on a pilot basis for five years. There are two initiatives under the scheme – the Postdoctoral Hub programme and the Reindustrialisation and Technology Training Programme (RTTP).

The Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Nicholas W Yang, said, "Talent is a key factor in the global innovation and technology race. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government has been taking a proactive approach to attracting and nurturing top-notch talent and building a critical talent pool required for driving innovation and technology. Following the Technology Talent Admission Scheme, we are introducing the Technology Talent Scheme to subsidise research institutions and enterprises to recruit talent to carry out research and development activities, and train their existing staff to apply advanced technology for adding value to their businesses. We encourage employers to make good use of the scheme."

The Postdoctoral Hub programme provides funding support to recipients of the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) as well as incubatees and innovation and technology tenants of Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and Hong Kong Cyberport Management Company Limited, to recruit up to two postdoctoral talents for research and development work. The ITF will provide a monthly allowance of \$32,000 for each postdoctoral talent for up to 24 months. The talents concerned must possess a doctoral degree in a science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)-related discipline from either a local university or a well-recognised non-local institution, i.e. one among the top 100 institutions in STEM-related subjects in world university rankings such as the QS World University Rankings, Shanghai Jiao Tong University's Academic Ranking of World Universities and the Times Higher Education World University Rankings.

The RTTP subsidises local companies on a 2:1 matching basis to train their staff in advanced technologies, especially those related to Industry 4.0. The RTTP is administered by the Vocational Training Council. The trainee must be a Hong Kong permanent resident and employed by a non-government and non-subsidised local enterprise.

To implement the measures announced in the Chief Executive's 2017 Policy Address, \$500 million was earmarked under the ITF to launch the Technology Talent Scheme.

More information on the Technology Talent Scheme is available on the ITF website (www.itf.gov.hk). For enquiries, please contact the ITF Secretariat (Tel: 3655 5678; email: enquiry@itf.gov.hk).

Regional flag day today

Three charities have been issued Public Subscription Permits to hold flag sales from 7am to 12.30pm today (August 22). They are, on Hong Kong Island, Giving Love Elderly Charitable Limited; in Kowloon, Kwun Tong Methodist Social Service; and in the New Territories, Pok Oi Hospital, a spokesman for the Social Welfare Department (SWD) said.

Arrangements have been made with the charities to help people distinguish between the three flag-selling activities.

Information on the three flag-selling organisations on August 22 is as follows:

Region	Name of Organisation	Colour of Collection Bag	Colour of Flag
Hong Kong Island	Giving Love Elderly Charitable Limited	Yellow	Yellow
Kowloon	Kwun Tong Methodist Social Service	Green	Light Blue
New Territories	Pok Oi Hospital	Red	White

For enquiries, please call the SWD's hotline at 2343 2255, or the Charitable Fund-raising Control Team at 2832 4311 during office hours. Information on the flag days of the month is available at the SWD's website (www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_whatsnew). Permits for flag days containing contact information of the flag-selling organisations and information on the approved flag-selling activities have also been uploaded to the SWD's website (www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_pubsvc/page_controlofc/sub_recentlyap). For enquiries about the detailed flag-selling arrangements, please contact the individual flag-selling organisations.

Details of the charitable fund-raising activities covered by the Public Subscription Permit issued by the SWD have also been uploaded to the GovHK website (www.gov.hk/fundraising).

In the case of suspected fraudulent flag day activities, people should not make any donation and should immediately report the matter to the Police, the spokesman added.

CHP investigates two additional local cases of dengue fever

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is investigating today (August 21) two additional local cases of dengue fever (DF) and again urged the public to maintain strict environmental hygiene, mosquito control and personal protective measures both locally and during travel.

The first additional case involves a 59-year-old male patient with good past health, who developed fever, headache, retro-orbital pain, myalgia and arthralgia since August 17. He sought medical attention at the Accident and Emergency Department (AED) of St John Hospital as well as Queen Mary Hospital (QMH) on August 20. He is admitted to QMH and has all along been in a stable condition. His blood sample tested positive for dengue virus serotype 1 upon laboratory testing.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient lives alone in San Hing Street in Cheung Chau and recalled history of mosquito bite in Fa Peng Road in Cheung Chau. During the incubation period, the patient had travelled to Shunde and Guangzhou in Guangdong. This case is tentatively classified as a local case.

The second case involves a 43-year-old female patient with good past health, who developed fever, myalgia, arthralgia and rash since August 14. She was admitted to Queen Elizabeth Hospital for treatment on August 20. She has all along been in a stable condition and her blood sample tested positive for dengue virus serotype 1 upon laboratory testing.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient lives in Chuk Yuen (South) Estate in Wong Tai Sin. She had no travel history during the incubation period but had visited Lion Rock Park. She recalled history of recent mosquito bite.

Her home contact has remained asymptomatic and has been put under medical surveillance.

For the remaining two cases among the four local cases of DF recorded on August 18, further laboratory testing revealed that the genetic sequence of the virus of one case (69-year-old female patient) was highly similar to the virus from the majority of Lion Rock Park cases earlier, while the virus of the other case (61-year-old male patient) could not be sequenced.

"We are working closely with the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) to assess and prevent possible spread of infection. The FEHD's vector investigations, surveillance and control are ongoing. Epidemiological investigations are ongoing," a spokesman for the CHP said.

"The CHP, together with the FEHD, will conduct a health talk at 1/F of

Cheung Chau Municipal Services Building at 11am this Thursday (August 23) and another health talk at Chuk Yuen Estate Community Centre at 8pm this Friday (August 24) to deliver health advice. The CHP has also provided [information](#) and details of [geographical distribution](#) on the local DF cases on the CHP's designated webpage for DF to facilitate handy access of information for the public," the spokesman said.

"The CHP appeals to members of the public not to visit Lion Rock Park during the closure period in order to prevent contracting DF. People who had visited Lion Rock Park are advised to apply insect repellent for 14 days upon their last visit, and those with DF symptoms should seek medical advice as early as possible," the spokesman said.

Persons who have been to the vicinity of Wong Tai Sin (particularly Lion Rock Park), Kwai Shing West Estate, Clear Water Bay Second Beach, Cheung Chau (Hillside Road, Tsan Tuen Road, Fa Peng Road and San Hing Street), Highland Park, Sai Tso Wan Recreation Ground, Wing Yiu Street, Tak Long Estate, Portland Street, Shanghai Street and Greenfield Garden with DF symptoms should call the CHP's hotline (2125 1122) for laboratory investigation or referral as appropriate. The hotline operates from 9am to 5.45pm daily.

"We have informed the Guangdong and Macau health authorities to alert them to the latest situation," the spokesman added.

These are the 17th to 18th local cases recorded this year. Excluding the local cases, as of noon today, 61 imported cases had been recorded in 2018. The cases were mainly imported from Thailand (26), the Philippines (12) and Cambodia (seven).

In the rainy season, the public should take heed of the following advice on mosquito control:

- Thoroughly check all gully traps, roof gutters, surface channels and drains to prevent blockage;
- Scrub and clean drains and surface channels with an alkaline detergent compound at least once a week to remove any deposited mosquito eggs;
- Properly dispose of refuse, such as soft drink cans, empty bottles and boxes, in covered litter containers;
- Completely change the water of flowers and plants at least once a week. The use of saucers should be avoided if possible;
- Level irregular ground surfaces before the rainy season;
- Avoid staying in shrubby areas; and
- Take personal protective measures such as wearing light-coloured long-sleeved clothes and trousers and apply insect repellent containing DEET to clothing or uncovered areas of the body when doing outdoor activities.

To reduce the risk of infections spread by mosquitoes, apart from [general measures](#), travellers returning from affected areas should apply insect repellent for 14 days (DF) or at least 21 days (Zika Virus Infection) upon arrival in Hong Kong. If feeling unwell, seek medical advice promptly

and provide travel details to the doctor. DEET-containing insect repellents are effective and the public should take heed of the tips below:

- Read the label instructions carefully first;
- Apply right before entering an area with risk of mosquito bites;
- Apply on exposed skin and clothing;
- Use DEET of up to 30 per cent for pregnant women and up to 10 per cent for children*;
- Apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent; and
- Re-apply only when needed and follow the instructions.

* For children who travel to countries or areas where mosquito-borne diseases are endemic or epidemic and where exposure is likely, those aged 2 months or above can use DEET-containing insect repellents with a DEET concentration of up to 30 per cent.

The public should call 1823 in case of mosquito problems and may visit the DF pages of the [CHP](#) and its [Travel Health Service](#), the latest [Travel Health News](#), [tips for using insect repellents](#), the CHP [Facebook Page](#) and [YouTube Channel](#), and the FEHD's [Guidebook on Control and Prevention of Mosquito Breeding](#) for more information.