

UGC Secretary-General visits US and UK

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

The Secretary-General of the University Grants Committee (UGC), Professor James Tang, led a delegation to visit the United States and the United Kingdom from May 25 (San Diego time) to June 6 (Birmingham time) as part of the effort to promote Hong Kong's development into an international hub for post-secondary education.

Together with the delegation comprising all eight UGC-funded universities under the aegis of the Heads of Universities Committee's Standing Committee on Internationalisation (HUCOMSCI), Professor Tang attended the NAFSA Annual Conference and Expo 2025 held in San Diego, the United States, where he spoke at a dedicated session on the strengths of Hong Kong's higher education sector and the opportunities presented to students from around the world. With funding support from the UGC, the HUCOMSCI also set up a Hong Kong Pavilion to showcase Hong Kong's internationalised and diversified higher education environment that welcomes academics and students from around the world to realise their aspirations.

"Over the years, with the substantial investment by the Government in higher education, the eight UGC-funded universities have continued to grow, with five ranked among the world's top 100, six within Asia's top 50, and four as the top most international universities in the world. Some 70 per cent of our research outputs are assessed as internationally excellent, while the most recent round of quality audits also reaffirms the quality of educational experience that our universities offer to students. Hong Kong is indeed the ideal destination for students to pursue their further studies and achieve greater success," said Professor Tang at the session at the NAFSA Conference and Expo.

For the first time, the UGC also supported the Hong Kong Teaching Excellence Alliance and the HUCOMSCI to share with the international audience on how the UGC-funded universities have grasped the immense potential brought by artificial intelligence in enhancing students' learning experiences. This has once again demonstrated Hong Kong's leadership in quality education through investment and innovation.

Professor Tang then attended the International Higher Education Forum 2025 held on June 4 (Birmingham time) in Birmingham, the United Kingdom, to share the factors underpinning Hong Kong's success as an international hub for post-secondary education. He stressed that academic freedom and institutional autonomy have been the cornerstones of Hong Kong's success, while highlighting the diversified composition of Hong Kong's academic staff. Hong Kong universities attract a strong pool of distinguished scholars with a rich repertoire of international experience, and indeed some 70 per cent of them come from outside Hong Kong.

In the 2024 Policy Address, the Government announced its support for establishing the "Study in Hong Kong" brand in order to attract more meritorious students to pursue their studies in Hong Kong. Through participation in international conferences and exhibitions, Hong Kong has continued to expand its network for student mobility and research collaboration. As of November 2024, the eight UGC-funded universities have jointly signed 2 660 student exchange agreements with universities from around the world, and engaged in over 6 800 active research collaborations with other institutions. At present, around one out of four students in UGC-funded universities are from outside Hong Kong. The Government will continue to support universities to strive for further internationalisation, thereby reinforcing their global reputation and scaling new heights.

During the visit, Professor Tang also met with senior management and prominent scholars from top-tier higher education institutions in the United States and the United Kingdom to exchange views on the latest developments in higher education. He also highlighted that Hong Kong's outstanding universities have been a welcoming academic home for top scholars and talented students from around the world. As an international hub for higher education, Hong Kong's doors are always open to all who want to realise their academic pursuits and explore the exciting opportunities offered by one of the world's most dynamic cities.