Change of Study Status for Non-local Students

According to stipulations of the Hong Kong Immigration Department (ID), non-local students (NLSs) are required to hold a valid student visa during their period of study in Hong Kong. In addition, any changes in the study status of individual NLSs during their stay in Hong Kong also require the prior approval of the ID – e.g. changes in the mode, program or field of study.

Until now, NLSs wishing to obtain or renew their student visa are required to pursue full-time study in Hong Kong.

From time to time, an NLS may need to take Leave from Study to do field research, or attend to urgent family or health matters outside Hong Kong. The University is required to inform ID of any extended periods of Leave from Study taken by NLSs. These students should not remain in or enter Hong Kong using their still valid student visa. The onus is on the student involved to seek advice from the ID prior to their leaving Hong Kong to ensure smooth re-entry to Hong Kong.

In recent months, the ID had expressed their concern over a small number of cases where the students involved had changed their study status without the prior approval given by the ID. The ID had indicated that NLSs should be reminded about the requirement for prior approval to be sought from the ID before NLSs could change their study status. Any deviation from the required procedures may affect their visa status or renewal.

Postgraduate Studentship (PGS) for 2005/06

For 2005/06, the Postgraduate Administrators’ Circle (PAC) has agreed that the monthly PG studentship rates should remain unchanged from those in use for the current year, which is in the range of 5% above or below $12,250.

Currently, the PGS rates the University adopts fall within the higher end of the agreed range.

In view of the decision of PAC, the PGS rates for 2004/05 will continue to be used for 2005/06. RPgs admitted from the 2004/05 academic year onward may receive a monthly PGS up to $12,500. RPgs admitted before 2004/05 may receive a monthly PGS ranging from $12,500 to $13,500. The actual amount of a studentship award will be determined by the home department.

The Terms and Conditions of Postgraduate Studentships 2005/06 can be viewed and downloaded from the PG Studies homepage.

Other Topics on P.2

- Student Academic Discipline Strengthened
- Uniform Tuition Fee Deposit for UGC-funded PG Programs
- New Self-financing PG Programs
Student Academic Discipline Strengthened

The University has always regarded cheating and other forms of academic dishonesty as very serious matters. The Senate has recently discussed and endorsed a revision of policies and procedures on academic integrity and discipline. The revisions aim at providing clearer guidance to instructors and units on how academic misconduct found among students can be dealt with. The revised policies also give a strong signal to students that the University does not tolerate any form of academic misconduct.

The new policy will require dismissal from the University after a second cheating offense. However, the new policy will not be in effect until proper guidelines for both students and teachers have been developed. The University is also developing an honor code statement for the students to pledge that they will observe academic integrity code in their work during their stay with the University. Students may be asked to sign similar statements on their assignments or examination answer books. In the meantime, the existing regulations will remain in force. These are set out in Section 12 of the Academic Regulations which may be viewed on line at:


Uniform Tuition Fee Deposit for UGC-funded PG Programs

As endorsed by the Senate at its 73rd meeting of 12 October 2004, the tuition fee deposit required of new students admitted to the UGC-funded postgraduate programs of the University from Fall Semester, 2005/06 onward, regardless of their mode of study, will be adjusted downward to a standard rate of HK$5,000.

Following the downward adjustment of the tuition fee deposit amount, departments and program offices should tighten approvals given to requests for deferred tuition deposit payment.

Self-financing postgraduate programs may set their own tuition fee deposit amounts since there are great variations in the tuition fees charged.

New Self-financing PG Programs

The following self-financing programs will be introduced in 2005/06:

- MA program in China Studies
- MA and Graduate Diploma programs in Humanities
- MA and Graduate Diploma programs in Social Science

COMMENTS?

This newsletter has been prepared by the PG Secretariat of the VP-AA Office. Feedback or suggestions on this newsletter can be emailed to pgsec@ust.hk.