



For release
11 August 1998

University Projects Promote Closer Links With Hong Kong Schools

Three projects launched by the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology to forge closer links between universities and schools have been awarded \$5.5 million in funding by the University Grants Committee (UGC) and the government's Quality Education Fund (QEF).

One project will provide schoolteachers with a new perspective and some practical help on a subject being introduced for the first time to the secondary curriculum--Hong Kong history. The other two projects aim to strengthen cooperation between the tertiary and the primary and secondary school sectors in the teaching of science.

Providing assistance to history teachers is the brainchild of three faculty members in HKUST's Division of Humanities: Drs Choi Chi-Cheung, Siu-woo Cheung and Tik-sang Liu, who specialize in social history and cultural anthropology.

"In the early stages of teaching this new subject, secondary school teachers will face the urgency of acquiring teaching materials, mastering teaching methodology and designing teaching plans," says Dr Choi. "This project will help them. We also want to foster exposure to forefront ideas, theories, research methodologies and source materials related to Hong Kong's history."

The project stresses the importance of fieldwork and has received a grant of more than \$1 million. "One cannot understand history without referring to culture and society," says Dr Liu. "By organizing talks, workshops, discussions and fieldwork, we seek to foster a sensitivity to local culture and society in the teaching of Hong Kong's history," adds Dr Cheung.

The other two projects, which have been awarded \$1.5 million by UGC and \$3 million by QEF, aim to strengthen links between the tertiary and the primary and secondary school sectors in science subjects such as biology, chemistry, physics and mathematics.

Prof Shiu-yuen Cheng, associate dean of science at HKUST, says, "Improved interface and linkage between tertiary and school sectors will help the development of new school science curricula for the 21st century and will also greatly enhance efforts to introduce information

technology and teaching innovations in schools."

Project workshops will emphasize the development of teaching materials, and new teaching software relevant to Hong Kong's Advanced Level syllabuses will be introduced. The plan is to publicize and share innovations in teaching and to strengthen the link between Form 6 and university curricula. Secondary teachers will also have access to equipment at HKUST, enabling them to better prepare their students in experimental science subjects.

The third project goes a step further by providing training for teachers and setting up student enrichment programs, including a dedicated web site and science summer camps. "What is special about this project is that it provides for frontline teachers and researchers in the university sector to play a leading role in the enhancement of teaching and learning in science subjects in the school sector," says Prof Cheng. Training classes will be provided for secondary teachers in each science subject.

Note to Editors:

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