

For Release
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MICROSOFT AND HKUST JOIN FORCES TO PROMOTE IT EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Launch of Microsoft Authorized Academic Training Program

Students at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) can acquire the latest information technology (IT) skills and professional qualifications through the Authorized Academic Training Program (AATP) launched by Microsoft, the world's leading software provider. HKUST is the first university in Hong Kong to become a partner of AATP.

Mr K. C. Kwong, Secretary for Information Technology and Broadcasting, officiated today (Monday) at the signing ceremony of the first AATP in Hong Kong. The agreement was signed by Mr Graham Brant, General Manager of Microsoft Hong Kong Limited, and Prof Chia-Wei Woo, President of HKUST.

The Microsoft AATP allows academic institutions to deliver training in information technology to their student community. Starting this September, HKUST students have been able to learn on-line a large number of IT subjects from anywhere, at anytime, and at their own pace, interactively. This will equip them with marketable and industry-recognized skills essential for the advancement of their professional careers in IT.

"We are very pleased to have HKUST join the AATP program. Nowadays, we are seeing a growing demand for IT talents. To address this, Microsoft and HKUST have this joint mission and initiative to further enhance IT education and skills of university students," said Mr Graham Brant. "Through AATP, students will be well-prepared for jobs such as network administrators, technical support representatives, programmers/ analysts and database administrators," he said.

"As the IT revolution accelerates, our graduates will take on jobs that are increasingly IT-based, and they'll also need to upgrade their knowledge continually," said Prof Ping Ko, Dean of Engineering of HKUST. "Through on-line IT training, our students will be able to improve their ability to self-learn, and at the same time acquire the latest marketable IT skills, thus enhancing their competitiveness," he said.

IT research is another important aspect of the extensive collaboration between Microsoft and HKUST. Joint research projects have been conducted in artificial intelligence and graphics, supported by exchanges between students and researchers in Microsoft Research, China and HKUST. In this context, Dr Harry Shum from Microsoft Research, China has been appointed Adjunct Associate Professor of Computer Science at HKUST. A world-class researcher in virtual reality, Dr Shum will contribute to teaching and collaborative research projects. He was presented a letter of appointment today by Prof Woo.

In addition to this faculty appointment, HKUST students will also benefit from the Microsoft-HKUST partnership as eligible candidates for the Microsoft Fellowship Program. The program will award top students to support their studies, research and academic exchange. Also included on the Fellowship Program are a dozen top universities and research institutes on the Chinese Mainland.

Note to Editor:

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