

**The Chinese University of Hong Kong  
Inauguration Ceremony  
2 September 2024**

**Welcome address to new students  
by the Vice-Chancellor and President  
Professor Rocky S. Tuan**

Dear students,

I am truly delighted to welcome you to The Chinese University of Hong Kong as you begin your journey of knowledge, growth and discovery with us.

**Legacy of excellence**

CUHK has a proud legacy of academic excellence and a steadfast commitment to social well-being that spans over six decades. As we just concluded our year-long diamond jubilee celebrations in June, we now officially stride into our next decade of development. Your arrival marks a critical juncture in the University's history, and you, the newest members of the CUHK community, bear the important mission of carrying on the University's proud legacy.

Dedicated to combining tradition with modernity, CUHK strives to cultivate in its students a deep respect and appreciation for the old and the new. The pace of technological development can be dizzying, and the knowledge you acquire today may become obsolete tomorrow. However, it is the process of learning, critical inquiry, discovery, and thinking that will serve you well no matter how and where the future takes us.

In this rapidly evolving world, my advice to you is to remain curious, continuously explore new areas, and never cease learning. The General Education programme at CUHK will be a crucial platform that will guide you in pushing the boundaries of knowledge and intellectual discovery. Embrace this opportunity to broaden your horizons and deepen your understanding of the world around you.

**Knowledge comes with responsibility**

Dear students, you have been granted an incredible privilege to pursue higher education and expand your intellectual horizons. With this privilege comes a profound obligation. The knowledge and skills you gain during your

university years do not exist in a vacuum, but rather come with a responsibility to apply them in service of the greater good.

The University's 5-year strategic plan carries the theme – "*Excellence with Purpose and Responsibility*". Today, I would like to share my thoughts with you about what "responsibility" means.

Responsibility encompasses not only your duties and obligations, but also the love and care you cultivate for the various roles you will play in society. As students, you have the responsibility to show passion for your studies, set ambitious goals for yourselves, and prioritise your physical and mental well-being.

Your responsibility also extends to others. You are fortunate to study at a diverse, multicultural, and innovative university where all members are provided with equal opportunities to rise to their highest potential. Treat everyone with dignity and respect. Be mindful of the impact of your words and actions. Embrace the richness of diversity on and off campus. You have the responsibility to help build a fair and inclusive society that values each individual's unique contributions.

Your responsibility also encompasses your love for your country and the world. Through specially designed General Education courses at CUHK, you will gain a deep understanding of Hong Kong's position within the broader national context, as well as the importance of safeguarding national security. I invite you to attend our weekly flag-raising ceremonies throughout term time, as well as on major holidays and University event days, on our Main Campus, to pay tribute to the nation and foster a strong sense of belonging.

Last but not least, I urge you to acknowledge your responsibility as stewards of the planet. There is a quote which I love to borrow, "*We don't inherit the Earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children.*" Our actions, both individually and collectively, can have a profound impact on the environment and the future of our world. CUHK is the co-host of the Hong Kong Chapter of the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), we are dedicated to advancing the 17 United Nations sustainable development goals, and we house the world's first museum dedicated to climate change. I invite you to make good use of all the resources and knowledge available through our various platforms, to develop a global mindset and a deep care for a more sustainable future.

In addition to our robust academic curriculum, CUHK places great emphasis on experiential learning and community engagement. Our service learning programmes provide you with valuable opportunities to apply your

knowledge and skills towards addressing real-world challenges in the local and global communities. Through partnerships with various non-profit organisations and social enterprises, you will have the chance to volunteer your time and expertise to make a tangible difference. These immersive experiences will not only deepen your understanding of societal issues, but also cultivate a stronger sense of social responsibility and civic-mindedness.

In addition, our flagship Cooperative Education Programme (Co-op@CUHK) offers you the chance to gain practical work experience and professional skills development. By integrating academic study with paid work placements, you will be able to directly apply the concepts learned in the classroom and gain valuable industry exposure. The placement opportunities cover a wide range of sectors, from finance and technology to public policy and healthcare. The opportunity to work alongside experienced professionals will equip you with the competencies and industry know-how to seamlessly transition into the workforce upon graduation.

I strongly encourage you to explore and actively participate in the service learning offerings at CUHK. I am sure that these experiential learning components will enrich your university journey and prepare you to become well-rounded, socially conscious leaders of tomorrow, in other words, future-ready.

### **Through Learning and Temperance to Virtue**

Dear students, your education at CUHK is not just about what you learn in the classroom. It is also about who you will become along the way. As you navigate the exciting opportunities and challenges that lie ahead, I encourage you to always remember the University motto: “***Through Learning and Temperance to Virtue***”. Yes, virtue is a dynamic quality; it is achieved via learning and life experience. Aspiring for scholarly and moral enrichment will enable you to mature as individuals of integrity, compassion, and responsibility in everything that you do.

Whether you go on to become a pioneering scientist, a visionary entrepreneur, a compassionate public servant, or anything in between, I implore you to always keep in mind that your knowledge is a sacred trust. It is a tool that you must use judiciously, with a constant awareness of its potential to uplift or to harm.

Once again, welcome to CUHK! I wish you all the best on this exciting journey. Together, let us demonstrate the power of knowledge in service of the greater good.