

**The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Inauguration Ceremony
5 September 2022**

Welcome address to new students

by the Vice-Chancellor and President
Professor Rocky S. Tuan

Dear new students,

A very warm welcome to all of you to The Chinese University of Hong Kong, a place for you to learn, to grow, to explore, to innovate in the coming years, and to call home for the rest of your life.

First of all, I would like to congratulate all of you for embarking on an exciting new journey of your life. I know that the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has meant that for you to get here today, you have required, and in fact acquired, resilience and perseverance like never before. I applaud you for your courage, self-discipline and determination that have brought you to CUHK, and they will serve you very well at the university and throughout your lives.

As you are about to sample and take advantage of the boundless opportunities for whole-person development offered by CUHK, I wish you a wonderful start as you commence your tertiary education and set out on what is about to be a life-transforming journey that will propel you to lifelong success.

Let me share with you some of the exciting and meaningful ventures in your upcoming CUHK journey!

1. Global citizenship

Since its establishment in 1963, CUHK has sought to promote the cross-fertilisation of Chinese and Western academic and cultural traditions. We have our roots in China and we set our eyes on the world. The word ‘global’ has been a buzzword over recent years. But in fact, globalisation is nothing new. Hong Kong has been a global city since its establishment, and much of our historic success has been underwritten by the freedom of movement of people, capital and ideas. The jet age revolutionised global travel, and the internet and the

proliferation of digital technology have made communication and mobility across our planet easier than ever.

With new agendas arising which require global attention and action, such as climate change, sustainable development, inequalities, health inequity, environment, just to mention but a few, there is a growing need for global competence. So what is Global Competence? It refers to the skills, values and behaviours that prepare young people to thrive in a more diverse and interconnected world. Global competence does not stop at being comfortable navigating different cultures, or being aware of global grand challenges. The most critical part is the ability to translate such an understanding into actions that help solve the problems and improve the collective well-being of humanity. This is what cultivation of global, responsible citizenship means to us at CUHK – to help students develop global perspectives and inspire and equip them to become constructive agents of the global village.

Think globally, and act locally. It is fine, and in fact important, to begin your actions at the local level, for no action is too small when it comes to impacting the world. Your small acts will add up and eventually make a mark on the world.

2. The CUHK experience

At CUHK, you will find yourself surrounded by a diverse student and staff population. You will learn and grow with these members of the CUHK community, who are likely to be very different from you. My advice to you is: (1) Be inspired by their new ways of seeing things and handling challenges; and (2) Develop a cosmopolitan outlook and connect with people from different cultures with open arms. By looking for commonalities, you will accommodate, overcome, and learn from encountering differences.

At CUHK, you will also benefit from our flexible credit system and thoughtfully curated curriculum, which allow you to receive holistic education in the broadest sense. You will be able to participate in all sorts of exciting activities, internship and exchange programmes, and community services organised by our Colleges and units both locally and abroad. Step out of your comfort zone and explore new environments. I guarantee that you will gain the knowledge and skills to enable you to excel in the ever-evolving world if you let your learning experience at CUHK transcend borders. By daring to challenge yourself, you will realise that only the sky is the limit.

3. CUHK's diamond anniversary

2023 is a very special year for the CUHK community as the University is celebrating its 60th anniversary. Numerous celebratory events that involve CUHK members and friends from four corners of the globe are waiting to unfold and your participation and support form an important part of our year-long celebrations.

In Chinese culture, turning 60, or 跨越甲子, represents the coming of age, the end of one cycle and the start of a new one. Today, we welcome you as freshmen of this meaningful year, and invite you to take part in this new beginning in CUHK's history. I hope you share my excitement for what lies in front of us. We count on you to exploit and develop your full potential here to maximise our impact on the modern world by addressing its true needs. I pledge that our dedicated faculty and staff will always be there for you throughout your journey of personal growth.

Dear students, seize every opportunity to broaden your horizons. In particular, do not give up when things do not turn out as planned, as they sometimes do. Remember, no experience is a bad experience. A knife is sharpened only by encountering rough edges. Every stumbling block will in fact help you acquire critical expertise and skills and gain valuable wisdom, and become a stepping stone to enable you to leap into success.

When you look back on your university life a few years later, I hope you will feel proud of what you have achieved as a member of the CUHK community. Once again, welcome to the CUHK family.

Thank you.