

## THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

### Committee on Halls

#### New Hall Admission Scheme

1. The Committee on Halls set up a Task Force on Hall Admission Quotas to undertake a widespread consultation with relevant stakeholders with the brief to “develop a new admission scheme”. The Task Force undertook its work from March 2007 to May 2008 with its Final Report endorsed by the Committee on Halls (CoH) on June 25, 2008 and the Committee on Student Affairs (CSA) on September 26, 2008.
2. During its investigation and consultation across the University and in formulating its recommendations for a new system to distribute admission quotas for residential halls, the Task Force has taken into consideration a number of issues of concerns including the balance between hall education and the absolute need of the students, the need for a uniform admission policy for all student halls while maintaining a certain degree of flexibility, the accommodation of non-local students in halls, the need to increase the transparency of the procedure and criteria of hall admission, re-admission and appeal system, etc.
3. The Final Report of the Task Force on Hall Admission Quotas was discussed by the Senate at its meeting on November 4, 2008. The Senate agreed to adopt a new hall admission scheme with effect from the academic year 2009-2010, with the principles of allocation and operational guidelines detailed in the Final Report.
4. The principles of allocation govern the basic rationale of the system which is to be realized through the “operational guidelines”. The operational guidelines are more flexible and may be changed by the Committee on Student Affairs upon recommendation from the Committee on Halls.
5. Principles of allocation
  - (1) The relative importance of need (N) and merit (M) factors in the consideration of hall admission should be reflected by the relative weightings (n and m respectively) assigned to these two types of factors rather than quotas.
  - (2) Define absolute need for local undergraduate students. Local undergraduate students with absolute need and nonlocal undergraduate students are guaranteed one year of hall residence.
  - (3) The same weightings (m and n in Principle 1) will be applied to all undergraduate students after one year of hall experience except those specified in Principle 5 below.
  - (4) Non-freshman undergraduate students who do not have any hall experience should have a reasonable chance of successfully applying for a hall place.
  - (5) Halls set aside a small percentage of places for undergraduate students without taking into consideration of the need factors and another small

percentage of places for undergraduate students with proven special physical or psychological needs.

- (6) The overall percentage of non-local undergraduate students in all residential halls taken together should be capped at a figure to be reviewed when new halls are built or when there is a major change in the University's policy of admitting non-local students. Currently, the overall percentage of non-local students in all residential halls is about 30%.
- (7) There should be a small percentage of postgraduate students in undergraduate halls.
- (8) There should be a high degree of transparency and accountability in the hall admission (including re-admission) system (including both the criteria and procedures).

## 6. Operational guidelines

### Principle (1)

*The relative importance of need (N) and merit (M) factors in the consideration of hall admission should be reflected by the relative weightings (n, m) assigned to these two types of factors rather than quotas.*

- a) Each hall applicant is assigned an admission score according to the following formula:  
Admission Score =  $n * N + m * M$   
(N: need score 0 -100, M: merit score 0 – 100;  
m,n: weightings, 0 – 1)
- b) The need score includes travel time, usable area per person at home and type of housing. It will be computed using a scheme similar to the existing formula for the Joint-Hall Admission Scheme. However, there is new category of “absolute need” students (Please see point (d) below).
- c) Each individual hall may decide how the merit score is computed but the calculation must be widely publicized. For students with no prior hall experience (including new HKU entrants), the merit score takes into consideration of academic and non-academic achievements, expected contribution to hall life, match with the style of the hall, and performance interview. For students with prior hall experience, additional criteria will be considered: observation of hall rules, responsible and respectful behavior, and other factors the hall may deem fit.
- d) The Committee on Halls further agreed at its meeting held on April 3, 2009 that students who were admitted into the halls on or after February 1 of the academic year concerned would be considered as “students with no prior hall experience”.

Principle (2)

*Define absolute need for local undergraduate students. Local undergraduate students with absolute need and nonlocal undergraduate students are guaranteed one year of hall residence.*

- e) Local students who need to travel more than 3 hours per day are considered to have “absolute need”. Their need score is 100.

Principle (3)

*The same weightings (m and n in Principle 1) will be applied to all undergraduate students after one year of hall experience except those specified in Principle 5 below.*

- f) As senior students have more knowledge about Hong Kong which puts them in a better position in finding their own accommodation in the community, the relative weighting of need, n in the equation, should diminish as the student progresses. The following tables shows the relative weightings over the study period of various types of students:

	Year of Hall Experience			
	0		1+	
	$m^{1,2}$	$n^1$	$m^1$	$n^1$
Nonlocal students	0	1	0.5	0.5
Local students with absolute need	0	1	0.5	0.5
Other local students	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5

<sup>1</sup> m = weighting of merit; n = weighting of need.

<sup>2</sup> Principle 5 effectively specifies two small percentages for assigning  $m = 1$  &  $n = 0$ , and  $m = 0$  &  $n = 1$  to small percentages of students.

Principles (4) and (6)

*Non-freshman undergraduate students who do not have any hall experience should have a fair chance of successfully applying for a hall place.*

*The overall percentage of non-local undergraduate students in all residential halls taken together should be capped at a figure to be reviewed when new halls are built or when there is a major change in the University's policy of admitting non-local students. Currently, the overall percentage of non-local students in all residential halls is about 30%.*

- g) Each hall may decide to assign 1/3 to 2/3 of its intake of students with 0 year of hall experience at the beginning of each academic year to nonlocal students (with ‘n’ equal to 1) depending on its circumstances, with the constraint that the overall percentage of nonlocal students in halls at 30%-33%, and the overall percentage of students with ‘n’ equal to 1 in the intake of each year across all halls at 70%. If the number of local students with ‘n’ equal to 1 exceeds the number of places for them, then admission of such students would be decided by lottery. Students who do not get a hall place in the lottery will be considered in the  $m = 0.5, n = 0.5$  category with the need score (N) kept at 100.

#### Principle 5

*Halls set aside a small percentage of places for undergraduate students without taking into consideration of the need factors and another small percentage of places for undergraduate students with proven special physical or psychological needs.*

- h) Halls set aside 3% of places for undergraduate students without taking into consideration of the need factors and 3% of places for undergraduate students with proven special physical or psychological needs.

#### Principle 7

*There should be a small percentage of postgraduate students in undergraduate halls.*

- i) The minimum quota for postgraduate students in undergraduate halls should be kept at 2%.
- j) Selection of postgraduate students in undergraduate halls should be performed by halls.

#### Principle 8

*There should be a high degree of transparency and accountability in the hall admission (including re-admission) system (including both the criteria and procedures).*

- k) The following accountability measures should be implemented in the hall admission system:
  - i. All admission/re-admission interviews must be conducted in the presence of a tutor/senior tutor/warden.
  - ii. There should be one to three current residents (e.g., members of the executive committee of the hall association) in each admission or re-admission interview.
  - iii. All appeals must be considered by the warden.
  - iv. A written letter should be issued by the warden to every unsuccessful appeal applicant to state the reasons of rejection, copied to the Committee on Halls or the Dean of Student Affairs.
  - v. Halls should submit their admission and re-admission criteria and procedures, including those of the floors, to the Committee on Halls for endorsement; and widely publicize them.
  - vi. Upon request by an applicant, halls must provide him/her with his/her personal information used in the admission/re-admission.
  - vii. Students should provide proof of residential status/travelling time, achievement etc. at the interview.