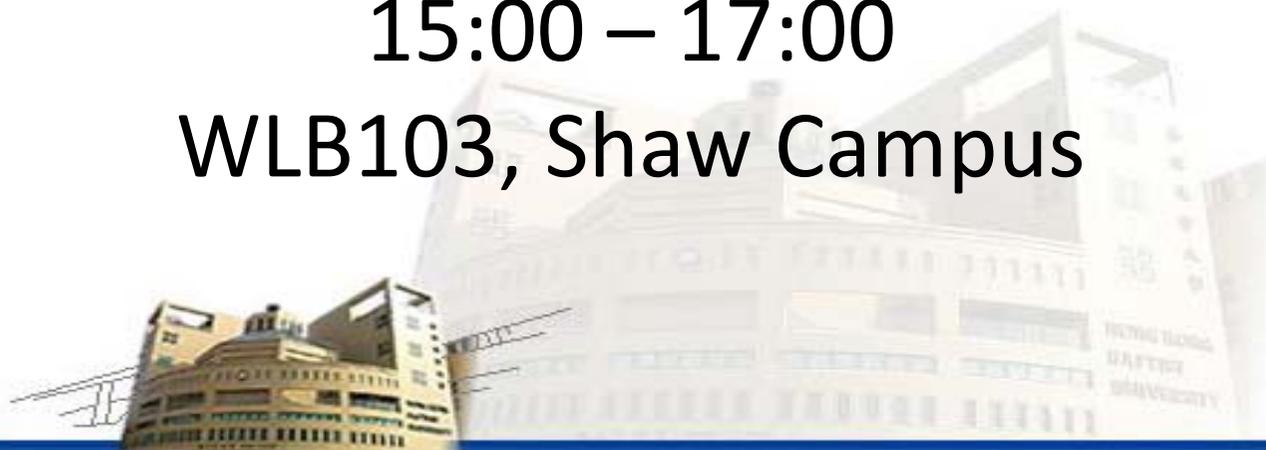


University Language Policy Town Hall Meeting

28 February 2017

15:00 – 17:00

WLB103, Shaw Campus



Rundown

- ❖ Opening Remarks
- ❖ Background of ULP
- ❖ ULP Proposal
- ❖ Open Forum – Q & A

Current ULP

*The medium of instruction (MOI) for formal classroom teaching at HKBU is **English**, except for those courses that are granted exemption*

- ❖ Implemented in 2003
- ❖ Re-affirmed in 2011-2

This Review

- ❖ **HKBUSU** proposed that the University should consider **revoking the Putonghua requirement for graduation** in response to the result of a student referendum.
- ❖ **Task Force** established in Sept 2016 to review the ULP
- ❖ **Process:**
 - Nov – Dec 2016: Focus group discussions and a Town Hall Meeting
 - Jan – Feb 2017: TF drafted recommendations
 - March – May: Revision and approval
 - Target implementation date: 2017/18

Main Views Collected

Staff

- ❖ There are **diverse views** on the bi-literate and tri-lingual policy (i.e. with English or Chinese as MOI). A **balance** is to be struck between the two with reference to the language demands of courses of different disciplines.
- ❖ The objective of the ULP is to **ensure** the **language proficiency** of students.
- ❖ Students should be able to communicate effectively in **English** to prepare themselves for their future **career** and/or **study** needs.
- ❖ **Putonghua** as a **core course** rather than a graduation requirement.
- ❖ It is important to ensure the **language proficiency** of **faculty members**.

Students

- ❖ **Cantonese** is being **neglected** under the bi-literate and tri-lingual policy.
- ❖ There are **disciplines** that students may learn more **effectively** in Chinese.
- ❖ The University Language courses (**UE & UC**) should have more emphasis on **application** (i.e. workplace English).
- ❖ The 3-unit **PTH course** is **too academic** and the emphasis is on language accuracy and **pinyin** rather than application.



Preliminary Proposal

Rationale

The University Language Policy is proposed in the interest of **students' learning experience** with a view to enhancing the **quality** and **educational value** of their learning.

ULP Statement

The over-arching mission and aims of the University are best achieved in the **education of students** to reach the highest **intellectual, academic, and workplace standards** in broader national and international contexts.

Within China, internationally, as well as in service to the local community in Hong Kong, our graduates' **employment prospects** and meaningful achievement of **life opportunities** increasingly depend upon **language competencies** in Putonghua and in English **complementing native fluency in Cantonese.**

Justification

On a gradual approach, graduates may **achieve mastery in the two world languages** (English and Putonghua) which allow them not only to communicate more effectively as proud inheritors of the Chinese origins of humanistic learning **locally** but also as whole persons contributing to the knowledge-based economy **on the global stage** where **international perspectives** and **intercultural awareness** remain crucial to the fulfilment of our University's mission.

Justification (cont'd)

There should be a strong commitment to Cantonese language, literature, and cultural heritage.

The ULP Proposal – Affirmations

1. The “**biliterate and trilingual**” policy (兩文三語) offers a flexible and sufficient basis for the present review of the **scope, efficacy, and proposed changes** to the current ULP;
2. **English** is the **MOI** for the University as a whole;
3. Students should graduate with a **desired level of proficiency in Putonghua** for communicative purposes, career training, and intercultural awareness; and
4. While perhaps assumed, the pride in and **commitment to Cantonese** language, literature, and cultural heritage should be addressed and strengthened in the ULP.

The ULP Proposal – Recommendations

1. Greater opportunities be provided for the learning of English, Putonghua, and other (non-Chinese) languages in immersion learning environments.
2. Local Cantonese-speaking Chinese-proficient learners be trained and prepared for communicating in English competently.

Recommendations (cont'd)

3. Proactive steps be taken at the level of **course design** and **in-class teaching** to create **more embracing** curricula for a greater **diversity of student backgrounds** on-campus:

- international students
- local Cantonese-speaking students deficient in Chinese literacy
- Putonghua-speaking students lacking Cantonese proficiency

To include more care and attention dedicated specifically to the **holistic learning** and **well-being** of our students from greater China as well as overseas.

Recommendations (cont'd)

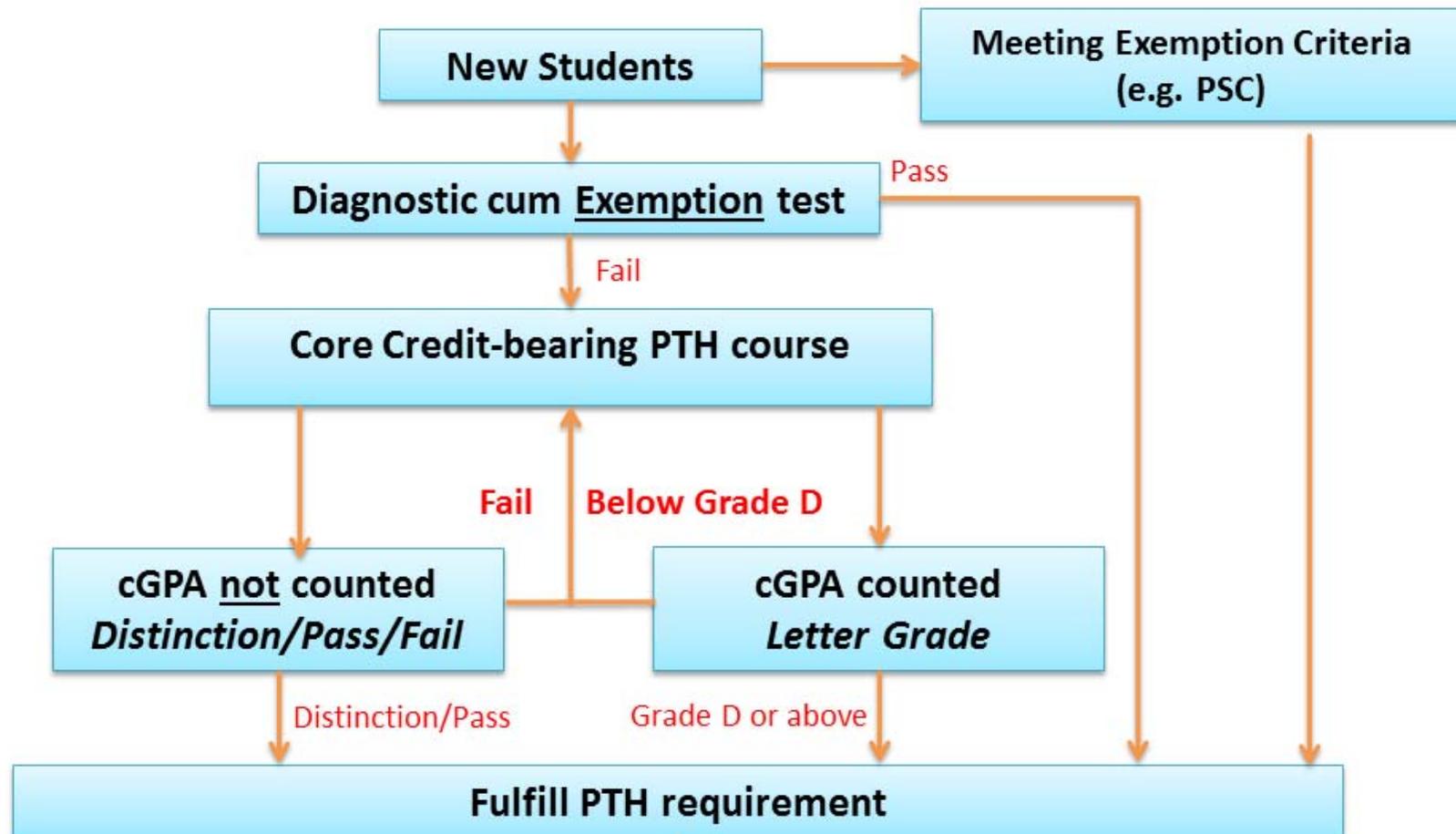
4. English- and Putonghua-language credit-bearing curricula be revisited with operational adjustments made in the direction of **specific purposes (academic and non-academic)** (e.g. English in the disciplines and workplace/career training courses).
5. A supportive and caring **on-campus learning environment** be otherwise established, maintained, and enhanced in the direction of a **formalized Major programme (or comparable set of courses)** achieving breadth as well as depth) for **Cantonese language instruction**, culture, and traditional heritage.

The ULP Proposal – Concrete Actions

1. An exclusively English-language curriculum at the General Education (GE) curriculum Level 1 courses[#] for **all** academic units of the University by 2021, , thereby fostering:
 - increased classroom diversification;
 - broader access to effective English-language learning and assessment for Chinese-speaking students;
 - adequate access to and full accomplishments of the PILOs of the GE curriculum for non-Chinese speaking students; and
 - the substantial and comfortable delivery, in English, of Chinese ideas, themes, and values accessible to introductory learners not possessing adequate fluency or literacy in any Chinese language.

[#]excluding the provision of language courses meeting University graduation requirements

Paths for Fulfilling PTH Proficiency Requirement



Concrete Actions (*cont'd*)

2. **Core credit-bearing Putonghua courses** shall be offered in the direction of **specific purposes**, career training, and intercultural awareness for all students provided that:
 - such courses benefit from an **in-house** diagnostic cum **exemption test** in order to determine meaningfully the extent of prior student knowledge and how it fits present aims and objectives for classroom learning;
 - the teaching of **pinyin** be made strictly and apparently **relevant** to applicable in-class pedagogies and objectives;
 - the calculation of student performance in such courses **not** be computed as part of the **cumulative GPA**, but assessed **on a distinction/pass/fail basis**; and
 - students, however, may be allowed to **opt** for performance assessment that does contribute to their **cumulative GPA**.

Concrete Actions (*cont'd*)

3. Greater attention needs to be taken when ensuring English language proficiency of all teachers working at the University at the point of recruitment, including resources dedicated to enhancing staff members' English proficiency, as appropriate, well after the point of hire.
4. Any exemption from ULP provisions pertaining to the delivery of the English MOI shall be standardized subject to specific and actionable criteria to be applied consistently rather than permissioned ad hoc or annually.

Concrete Actions (*cont'd*)

5. Academic units so exempted from the ULP for any subset of their courses must nevertheless make **sufficient English-medium courses available** to **non-Chinese speaking students** thereby enabling them to be able **to complete their given Major** programmes as pedagogically appropriate and justifiable.
6. The establishment of a steering committee to explore the future viability and feasibility of an **academic concentration** (and, eventually, a degree-granting programme) in **Cantonese language, literature, and culture**.

Concrete Actions (*cont'd*)

7. The formal establishment of a **Cantonese-language learning programme** of depth, practicality, and interest for all **non-Cantonese-speaking** students.

8. The **revisiting of proficiency baselines** deemed reasonable (and of funding support for achieving them) when **meeting current English- and Putonghua-language graduation requirements**, including securing adequate provision of the **funding** for language proficiency assessment, e.g. GSLPA (the Graduating Students' Language Proficiency Assessment), COPA and/or IELTS entry- and exit-testing).

Concrete Actions (*cont'd*)

9. The establishment of **minimum** language assessment **weightings** across ***all*** courses of the University without exception or exemption.

10. The enhancement of “**other Language**” learning and curricula on campus, **distinct from Chinese and English**, and in support of other international languages of currency in general.

Open Forum

Q & A Session

Follow-up Actions

Action	Timeline
Task Force to make proposal on University Language Policy with actionable recommendations	1 st semester AY2016/17
U-wide consultations on the University Language Policy Proposal	2nd semester AY2016/17
Consideration by the QAC and the Senate	June 2017
Target implementation of the proposed University Language Policy	AY2017/18

More Town Hall Meetings

2nd session

Date: 3 March 2017 (Friday)

Time: 17:30 – 19:00 (registration from 17:15)

Venue: Rev. James Mau Memorial Chapel (G9), BUR Campus

3rd session

Date: 10 March 2017 (Friday)

Time: 14:30 – 16:00 (registration from 14:15)

Venue: FSC501, HSH Campus



Comments welcome

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Thank you!