

Hong Kong (China)

National Higher Education Equity Policy

Governance

The Education Bureau is responsible for setting higher education policies. It formulates and develops policy, as well as monitors its implementation. The University Grants Commission (<https://www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/ugc/index.html>) allocates budgetary resources on behalf of Government.

Higher Education Policy Documents

What are the current official documents defining the national higher education strategy / policies?

- Vision and Strategic Plan: Hong Kong Higher Education: To Make a Difference, To Move with the Times (UGC - 2004)
- Aspirations for the Higher Education System in Hong Kong (UGC – 2010)

Equity in Policy Documents

What broad and specific equity objectives do the policy documents identify?

- According to the Government objectives listed on the website of the Education Bureau, one of the key goals is to “ensure that no qualified students are denied access to higher and post-secondary education due to a lack of financial means.”

Which equity target groups are identified in the policy documents?

- Low-income students
- Minority groups: ethnic and language.
- Students with disability

Hong Kong does not have concrete targets for the participation of specific equity groups. Neither does it have a standalone policy document dedicated to equity promotion in higher education.

Are there specific anti-discrimination provisions?

What specific interventions and/or instruments of equity promotion are included in the official strategy and policy documents (monetary and non-monetary)?

Monetary Policy Instruments

- Needs-based scholarships and grants / Other grants targeted for equity groups:
 - HKSAR Government Scholarship Fund provides support for “outstanding” students.
 - Since 2013, the government has targeted some scholarship funds to students with disabilities through the “Endeavour Merit Award.”
- Student loans: The Student Finance Office provides loans and financial assistance to students in higher education. Special assistance is provided for ethnic minorities to enroll and go through the process of receiving financial aid in their language. The seven ethnic minority languages that are recognized by this program are: Bahasa Indonesia, Hindi, Nepali, Punjabi (Indian), Tagalog, Thai and Urdu (https://www.wfsfaa.gov.hk/sfo/en/support_ethnic.htm).
- “Community Care Fund:” Since 2014, “needy” undergraduate students can receive a hostel subsidy for three academic years. The program, which was approved by the Commission on Poverty, was extended until 2018/19.

Non-Monetary Policy Instruments

- Outreach and bridge programs
- Academic and career guidance and counseling
- Flexible pathways and transfers / Recognition of prior learning
- Retention programs

Financial Resources

What financial resources does the country devote to equity promotion measures?

- Not available

Quality Assurance

The quality assurance criteria do not take equity elements into consideration.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- The University Grants Commission is responsible for monitoring the impact of equity promotion measures.

Dedicated Equity Promotion Agency

Hong Kong does not have an agency dedicated to equity promotion in higher education.

Sources

Education Bureau, the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region <https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/about-edb/info/welcome/index.html>

Education Bureau “Post-Secondary Education” <https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/about-edb/policy/postsecondary/index.html>

Student Finance Office, Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency
<https://www.wfsfaa.gov.hk/sfo/en/postsecondary/index.htm>

University Grants Commission (<https://www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/ugc/index.html>)

“HKSAR Government Scholarship Fund” Education Bureau,
<https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/edu-system/postsecondary/local-higher-edu/publicly-funded-programmes/scholarship.html>

“Community Care Fund: Providing hostel subsidy for needy undergraduate students” Student Finance Office, Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency,
<https://www.wfsfaa.gov.hk/sfo/en/postsecondary/ccf/hs/overview.htm>