

Updates on Class Arrangements for Fall Term 2020/21

Tuesday, Jul 21, 2020 22:02 PM

Dear Students,

This is an update on our announcement to all students dated July 14, 2020. In that announcement, we set out the teaching plans in the Fall Term 2020/21 indicating that classes would be conducted in a combination of face-to-face and online modes, with contingency plans to respond to sudden changes in a timely manner.

Since this announcement, Hong Kong has been hard hit by another wave of COVID-19. There has been a sudden surge in locally infected cases in recent days, posing high risk of large-scale community outbreak. It is unclear if the number of cases will subside in a short period of time. Moreover, even if this surge does subside, there is a high risk of recurring waves of pandemic in the middle of the Fall Term, with unpredictable effects on social distancing and class arrangements. In light of the HKSAR Government's advice and guidelines, the University has decided to proactively implement its contingency plans for the teaching arrangements in the Fall Term 2020/21.

For the entire Fall Term 2020/21, the University will adopt real-time interactive online mode (e.g. using Zoom) **for all classes** (UG, TPG, and RPG). Online proctored exams/alternative assessments will be arranged for all students wherever appropriate. As for lab classes, Schools/Departments are working out alternative arrangements and will announce them soon. Schools/Departments will also work individually with students who have to meet graduation requirements (e.g. Final Year Project) to help them progress as much as possible whether they are in Hong Kong or not. As the University will provide support for students to study remotely, non-local students (new or existing) are not required to be physically present in Hong Kong for the entire Fall Term to complete the coursework and examination requirements. Similarly, students (local and non-local) who are already in Hong Kong will not be required to come to HKUST campus if they do not feel comfortable doing so.

We understand that some students who are already physically in Hong Kong may have a preference for f2f elements in their learning. While classes will be conducted in real-time interactive online mode, as the term progresses and if the situation improves and allows, f2f office hours, Q&A meetings, and other avenues for f2f or online interactions with faculty and teaching staff will be provided. These potential arrangements will not disadvantage students who are physically outside Hong Kong or feel uncomfortable in coming to campus.

You may click on [FAQ page](#) for more detailed information.

We recognize that this latest adjustment to Fall 2020/21 teaching arrangements may cause disruption to some of your plans. Balancing all the risk factors, this plan is made in the best interest of students as we prioritize the safety of our community. The pandemic is a huge challenge to us all, and the University would like to thank all of you for the incredible flexibility, perseverance, and care for others that you have shown as members of the HKUST community. The University is committed to providing the needed support to students; and our faculty and staff all stand ready to work with students on any issues and concerns. Students whether you are in Hong Kong or abroad are welcome to contact the Offices of Schools/IPO for academic advising and [Counselling and Wellness Centre](#) for professional assistance in emotional issues.

We look forward to seeing you, f2f, hopefully soon.

Warm Regards,

Lionel NI
Provost

Roger CHENG
Associate Provost (Teaching and Learning)

Enquiries:

1. Student records, registration, examinations and graduation:
ARO <https://arr.ust.hk/reg/index.html>
2. Specific programs and courses including laboratory courses:
Respective Schools/Departments and Program Directors
3. Student Housing: SHRLO shrloinfo@ust.hk
<https://covid19info.ust.hk/faq-student-housing>
4. Quarantine Arrangements: <https://covid19info.ust.hk/quarantine-arrangements>
5. Campus Health and Safety: HSEO safety@ust.hk