

Welcome Remarks at the Honours Academy Fourth Cohort Inauguration Ceremony 2023-2024

20 October 2023

Auditorium, Lee Quo Wei Academic Building, Yuen Campus, HSUHK

Council Chairman Dr. Moses Cheng, Distinguished Honours Academy Fellows, Guests, Colleagues and Students,

Welcome to the Fourth Honours Academy (HA) Inauguration Ceremony. Today, we gather here to witness the inauguration of 16 finely selected HA students coming from 13 programmes, who are about to embark on a three-year transformative learning journey during their undergraduate studies. I would like to extend my heartiest congratulations to the fourth cohort of HA!

In the coming three years, you will be receiving an interdisciplinary and focused leadership training programme designed to enrich your university experience. The programme includes tailor-made honours core modules especially relating to public policy, mentorship, seminars, international learning and internship experiences, leadership training activities, independent research opportunities, and other broadening opportunities. I encourage you to make the most of these opportunities and resources to explore your potential, push your own boundaries, and harness your unique talents to serve and contribute to the HA community, the University and beyond.

As a pioneering and visionary private university, HSUHK established the Honours Academy (HA) in 2020, the first of its kind in Hong Kong. Extending on the University's unique "Liberal + Professional" education model, HA aims to nurture a selected group of high-achieving, high potential, and highly-motivated students to become outstanding public leaders, who can direct positive changes in the local and global communities.

Since its establishment, HA now has four cohorts of 58 elite students, who demonstrate outstanding academic abilities, leadership potential, and a commitment to serve the local and global communities. As the HA family continues to mature, the student profiles are also getting more dynamic and international. This year, we have three non-

local students who will help enhance the diversity, inclusiveness and appreciation of different cultures within the HA community.

Last month, HSUHK launched its new Strategic Plan 2023-2028 (“The Plan”) themed “University of Choice — Advancing ‘Liberal + Professional’ Education”, which will guide the University’s directions and priorities for the next five years. One of the novel initiatives outlined in the Plan is to develop an international alliance of Honours Academies or Honorary Colleges with selected universities to nurture more global leaders. I am pleased to share with you that the HSUHK Honours Academy has recently formed an Alliance with the Griffith Honours College of the Griffith University in Australia. This strategic partnership will open doors to future collaborative scholarly interactions, experiential learning opportunities, and cultural interchange with other Honours Academies or Honorary Colleges worldwide.

On overseas exchange opportunities, HA will continue to enhance its Global Immersion Programme and Elite Summer Programme to provide more opportunities for our HA students to widen their horizons and gain global perspectives in world renowned universities. I am glad that five HA students have returned from the Elite Summer Programmes 2023 of the University of Oxford, two students from the University of California, Berkeley, and one student from Harvard University. These honours students shared their learning experiences with their HA peers and other students held in late September.

2023 is a milestone as HA is proudly celebrating the graduation of its inaugural cohort on 6 December 2023. I hope our HA graduates will maintain strong ties with HSUHK through serving HA, HSUHK and the society in their unique ways.

Lastly, I would like to thank our continuing and new Professional Fellows, Academic Fellows, senior research project supervisors, and other supporters for your continuous support and guidance to our HA students. Building on the achievements over the past three years, I am confident that HA will continue to nurture more elite students to become responsible future public leaders who can make positive impacts on the society and the world.

My best wishes to our HA students for all your future endeavors.

Thank you.