

## Some important points and reminders as we begin the Fall Term 2021-22

Thursday, Aug 19, 2021, 4:43PM

To: All Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students  
cc: All Faculty and Teaching Staff

Dear Students,

Welcome back from the Summer, and, for those who are joining us for the first time, a special welcome to HKUST! A new academic year begins soon. I am writing to wish you all the best for this new year, and with a few important tips and reminders.

### Academic arrangements

**The default mode for classes in the Fall will be face-to-face on campus.** Some classes have been approved to be conducted in blended or real-time online mode. Please see the [course schedule](#) for these exceptions. As usual, lab classes and TPg programs may make their own arrangements.

**Some students face restrictions that prevent them from traveling to Hong Kong, and they have therefore been approved to study remotely.** If a class contains such student(s), that class will be held in mixed-mode. During the add/drop period, such students may request instructors to share the Zoom links and/or class videos. If you are able to return to Hong Kong during the term, please inform your advisors and course instructors about your quarantine completion date. With such a wide variety of arrangements, **all students are reminded to check the course information** including the mode of delivery, syllabus, and assessment, from the course offering departments.

**Proctored examinations including mid-terms (if any), for courses which need them, will be held on campus.** Alternative arrangements will be made for the students who have been approved to study remotely. **No special examination arrangements will be provided to those students who are in Hong Kong**, since, if they are not vaccinated, they may simply get tested within two weeks before the examination date. Instructors have the authority to specify the assessment mode for individual students, and students should be assured that different arrangements do not mean any disadvantage for anyone [since the University does not "grade on a curve"](#).

Please note that **opportunities for on-campus and mixed-mode classes will depend on the pandemic situation and restrictions may need to be imposed at any time.** As a contingency, if you are new to HKUST, we have prepared a [video](#) (use [this link](#) if you are in the Mainland) which shows you how to get an HKUST Zoom account and join live interactive online classes securely. These steps are essential to maintain cybersecurity and engage smoothly in class. Also, we are sympathetic that first year undergraduate students may need extra allowances as they settle into University life, and so **if you are feeling the pressure at any time during the semester, please contact your academic advisor or Program Office for assistance** in figuring out a plan for you.

### Active engagement for effective learning

During the unprecedented challenges we faced last two years, as a community we have all worked very hard to pull together. Together, students and faculty members have gained invaluable experience in online education and it was reassuring that the feedback has been largely positive. Of course, there is a lot of scope for improvement, and we have been working hard to collect and share good practices that everyone can adopt to collectively enhance the quality of teaching and learning. Some of the main points applicable to everyone are:

1. As a community, we all learn together. Last year, we rolled out the [one-stop feedback system](#), which everyone can use to give quick input if something is not functioning properly. This innovation worked well so we are continuing it. Please use it if needed.

2. Interactivity is critical for online classes. Therefore, if the instructor says so, then students should turn on their videos in class. The virtual background feature provides privacy if desired. Correspondingly, for classes with participation scores, students with video turned off should expect lower participation scores. If interested, please explore appropriately professional templates such as these [UST themed virtual backgrounds](#), presentations, and other options.

## Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is critical. All HKUST members should uphold a high standard of academic integrity, which is the first point among the [5 Core Values of HKUST](#). As an educational institution, one of our objectives is to inculcate integrity in graduates, enabling them to be responsible citizens and accountable leaders of society. Hence, HKUST has **zero tolerance** for cheating and any student found compromising academic integrity will face severe penalties, including termination of study. While the vast majority of students act in accordance with these high standards, we regret that some students have committed academic dishonesty in online assessments. These cases have been dealt with severely.

Regulations governing academic integrity can be found [here](#) and more details for different groups of students are available at:

- Undergraduates: <https://registry.hkust.edu.hk/resource-library/undergraduate-student-guide>
- Research Postgraduates: <https://rpg handbook.ust.hk>
- Taught postgraduates: <https://tpg handbook.ust.hk>

## FAQs on Academic Arrangements

To address some common inquiries on the academic arrangements, we have recently updated the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\) on academic arrangements](#) for your reference.

To conclude, I wish you all a great and rewarding Fall term. Those of you who are in Hong Kong, we look forward to having you on campus, and for those who are outside, we hope to see you here soon. Have fun!

Best,

Prof. Anirban Mukhopadhyay  
Associate Provost (Teaching & Learning)

Enquiries:

1. Student records, registration, examinations and graduation:  
Academic Registry <https://registry.hkust.edu.hk/contact-us>
2. Specific programs and courses including laboratory courses:  
Respective Schools/Departments and Program Directors
3. Student Housing: SHRLO [shrloinfo@ust.hk](mailto:shrloinfo@ust.hk)  
<https://shrl.ust.hk/news/faqs-covid-19-housing-arrangement>
4. Quarantine Arrangements: <https://covid19info.ust.hk/quarantine-arrangements>
5. Campus Health and Safety: HSEO [safety@ust.hk](mailto:safety@ust.hk)