

University reminder on social activities and gatherings during COVID-19

Friday, May 8, 2020 9:47 AM

The message below is sent by the Public Affairs Office on behalf of the University's senior management.

Dear Members of HKUST,

We hope you and your loved ones are staying well. During this pandemic period, we wish to remind you that all members of the University should refrain from organizing or joining group gatherings in the collective interest of public health.

Although the HKSAR government is relaxing certain social distancing measures effective 8 May 2020, the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) has continued to caution against social activities and gatherings to reduce the chance of contact with infected persons (who may be asymptomatic), and to minimize risk of outbreak clusters re-emerging in the community

(<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202005/06/P2020050600500.htm?fontSize=1>).

Being a responsible university, HKUST has a duty to safeguard public health and the well-being of all members on campus. As such, the University will not allow any public or group gatherings to take place on campus for the time being. Legally speaking, anyone who takes part in or organizes a public or group gathering will be committing a criminal offence that carries a maximum fine of HK\$25,000 and up to 6 months of imprisonment. If any public or group gathering occurs on our campus that violates the law, then we will be expected to report to the relevant enforcement authorities

(<https://www.elegislation.gov.hk/hk/cap599G>).

We expect all HKUST members to conduct themselves responsibly. The University will act based on this principle to ensure that all conduct on campus is legal and safe. Any HKUST member who organizes or participates in a prohibited public or group gathering will not only be breaking the law, but also be subject to disciplinary action.

The COVID-19 pandemic has quickly spread around the world since its outbreak in January, causing serious health risks and economic hardship. While conditions have apparently alleviated in Hong Kong recently, we are sure you have witnessed examples from other cities of how rapidly the situation can deteriorate. We have been doing well thus far in fighting this pandemic by maintaining hygiene measures, minimizing social contact, and observing social distancing rules. Please stay safe and respect distancing measures a bit longer until we emerge safely from this crisis.

Sincerely,

University Senior Management, Deans and Director of IPO