



香港大學
THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Review Panel on Residential Hall Education and Culture

Report to the Senior Management Team

September 27, 2017



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Abbreviations

AAC	Academic Advising Committee
AAO	Academic Advising Office, Registry
ASE	Academic Support and Examinations Section, Registry
CEDARS	Centre of Development and Resources for Students
CoD	Committee on Discontinuation
CoH	Committee on Halls
CSA	Committee on Student Affairs
CSWHT	Committee for the Selection of Wardens and Hall Tutors
CUHK	Chinese University of Hong Kong
DoSA	Dean of Student Affairs
EOU	Equal Opportunity Unit
FYE	First Year Experience
FYEC	First Year Experience Committee
HEDO	Hall Education Development Office
HEDP	Hall Education Development Project
HEF	Hall Education Fund
HKU	University of Hong Kong
HKUST	Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
HKUSU	Hong Kong University Students' Union
HSA	Hall Students' Association
JHAS	Joint Hall Admission Scheme
NUS	National University of Singapore
RAA	Residence-based Academic Advising
RSA	Residential Student Adviser
SEN	special educational needs
SLEQ	Student Learning Experience Questionnaire
SMT	Senior Management Team
TLQC	Teaching and Learning Quality Committee
UEA	University Educational Aim
UGC	University Grants Committee
VP/ASR	Vice-President and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Staffing and Resources)
VP/T&L	Vice-President and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning)

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Residential halls have a century-long tradition stretching back to the foundation of the University of Hong Kong (HKU) in 1911. St. John's Hall, established by the Anglican Church in 1912, was the first residential hall. Since then many more halls have been built, and some such as Lady Ho Tung Hall and Morrison Hall have been reconstructed or even relaunched in a new location after a period of closure.
- 1.1.2 As well as providing accommodation for students, the halls have always played an integral part in the University's education system. By creating a unique out-of-classroom platform for cultivation of intellectual abilities, interpersonal skills, leadership capacities and personal growth, they establish a nurturing ground for future social leaders. The close-knit community within each hall fosters a strong sense of belonging, bonding and commitment, and creates a robust and lasting base for students and alumni to identify with HKU. Collectively, hall members work hard to sustain their particular hall culture, values and identity, often encapsulated in distinctive names such as St. Johnians, Morrisonians, Riccians, Hotungians and Castlers, and more recently Skyers, Hysanians, Starrians and Sunnians.
- 1.1.3 In comparison with student residences in many other global universities, the HKU hall system is largely free of the worst excesses of student behaviour and broadly sustains a disciplined and orderly environment. At the same time, though, HKU halls have been marked by negative episodes spanning decades and still resonant today. A 'Lugard Hall incident' from 1931 was again reported in the press this year, triggered by contemporary echoes in incidents arising within weeks of each other in St. John's College and Simon K.Y. Lee Hall. Both were widely circulated in mainstream and social media. A general perception is that the culture of the residential halls has a dark side of bullying, harassment and control. The impact on the halls' contribution to some of the University's core educational goals is also often thought to be adverse.
- 1.1.4 This review was commissioned by the Senior Management Team (SMT) in May 2017 because it was time for residential hall education and culture to be examined systematically. The last comprehensive review took place in the early 2000s, creating a very long gap in an institution that typically reviews Faculties, curricula and other major units on a five- or six-year cycle. The six-member Review Panel on Residential Hall Education and Culture (Panel), chaired by Professor Ian Holliday, Vice-President and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) (VP/T&L), held seven internal meetings between late May and late September. At the first, on May 24, 2017, it established the scope of the review in light of its terms of reference, and formulated a plan for consulting as widely as possible. Thereafter, it scheduled many information-gathering sessions with individuals across the HKU community, built a website for submission of online feedback, and made every effort to keep the process open and inclusive. It pledged to report back to SMT by September 30, 2017 (see chapter 2).
- 1.1.5 In view of the tight timeframe, this report focuses on the terms of reference given to the Panel by SMT. It does not attempt to provide a full historical survey of residential hall education and culture at HKU, or a detailed comparative analysis.

1.2 Organization

- 1.2.1 The report has nine chapters. Chapter 1 sketches the background of the review and the organization of the report. Chapter 2 describes the Panel's terms of reference and membership, and the scope and methodology of the review. Chapter 3 surveys Government and University Grants Committee (UGC) policy on student hostels, and recent developments in residential education and teaching and learning at HKU. Chapter 4 examines the present situation of the residential halls and residential education. Chapter 5 assesses key features of student accommodation in benchmarked local and overseas institutions. Chapter 6 delineates the Panel's findings with respect to structural and management issues. Chapter 7 outlines the Panel's findings with respect to residential hall education and culture. Chapter 8 presents the Panel's recommendations. Chapter 9 is a brief conclusion.

2 Methodology

2.1 Panel

2.1.1 At its meeting on May 4, 2017, SMT agreed to invite Professor Ian Holliday, VP/T&L, to lead this review with the following terms of reference:

To examine residential hall education and culture in the light of the mission, vision and core values of the University, with a view to recommending changes that may be necessary (including to existing rules and regulations, management structures and operational models) to enable the halls of residence to contribute as fully as possible to the achievement of the University's educational aims.

2.1.2 In mid-May 2017, the Panel was constituted with six members:

- Professor Ian Holliday, VP/T&L (Chairman);
- Dr. Eugenie Leung, Dean of Student Affairs (DoSA);
- Dr. Henry Y.K. Lau, Warden of University Hall;
- Mr. Chan Hei Long Aaron, Vice-President (Internal) of the Hong Kong University Students' Union (HKUSU), Session 2017-18;
- Mr. Ho Kin Tung Tony, Chairperson of R.C. Lee Hall Students' Association, HKUSU, Session 2017-18; and
- Miss Judith Ng, Assistant Registrar, Registry.

2.1.3 The Panel met for internal meetings on May 24, June 20, August 7, and September 8, 15, 22 and 26, 2017. It was also able to discuss emergent issues in the margins of key stakeholder and town-hall meetings. As central themes began to develop, members shared and commented on many drafts of the report.

2.1.4 At its first meeting, the Panel reviewed the University's mission, vision, core values and educational aims. It recognized that its analysis would need to be informed by HKU's status as Asia's Global University, and specifically by the 2016-25 strategy of 3+1 Is: internationalization, innovation and interdisciplinarity, all converging on impact. Since the most detailed statement of HKU's educational ambition is to be found in the University Educational Aims (UEAs), however, it decided to focus much of its attention here. Moreover, as the vast majority of hall residents are undergraduate students, it agreed to use the UEAs for undergraduate students to structure key parts of its work. In most relevant respects, the UEAs for taught and research postgraduate students are in fact very similar.

2.1.5 Consistent with its terms of reference, and informed by this discussion of the different component parts, the Panel determined the core scope of the review as follows:

To explore the contribution of the residential halls to four key HKU values, each of which maps onto one or more of the six UEAs for undergraduate students: I: Supportive of academic excellence (UEA 1); II: Nurturing of responsibility, responsiveness and leadership capacities (UEAs 2/6); III: Positive about difference, diversity, inclusion and integration (UEAs 3/4); and IV: Affirmative of working constructively with others (UEA 5).

While this scope was used to structure consultation with staff, students and alumni, it did not restrict the Panel's deliberations or straightjacket its recommendations.

- 2.1.6 At the same time, the Panel agreed to secure as much available documentation as possible, and to speak with members of the University community able to provide it with information and insights about existing rules and regulations, management structures and operational models.
- 2.1.7 To make the review process as transparent and inclusive as possible, the Panel devised a consultation plan articulated through three main channels: closed meetings with key stakeholders; open town-hall meetings with members of the hall and University community; and a dedicated website to enable HKU staff, students and alumni to submit online feedback. Subsequently, a fourth channel was created through questions inserted in the annual survey of new undergraduate students administered by the Centre of Development and Resources for Students (CEDARS).
- 2.1.8 Finally at its first meeting the Panel agreed to complete its deliberations and report back to SMT by September 30, 2017.

2.2 Consultation

- 2.2.1 Mindful of problems generated by the summer break, the Panel began its consultations by reaching out to key stakeholders and working with colleagues in the Communications and Public Affairs Office to construct a website in June and July 2017. It then held town-hall meetings in all 13 residential halls at the start of August, when many returning students were again resident. It scheduled its final consultation sessions at the start of September. Included among them were open town-hall meetings held on campus for staff (one meeting) and students (two meetings). To promulgate launch of the website and details of all town-hall meetings, bulk emails were disseminated by Information Technology Services, the Development & Alumni Affairs Office, and hall and college offices.
- 2.2.2 The Panel held 15 meetings with the following 44 key stakeholders:
- President, Provost and Vice-President and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Global);
 - Executive Vice-President (Administration and Finance);
 - Vice-President and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Staffing and Resources) (VP/ASR);
 - Registrar, Academic Adviser of the Academic Advising Office and Equal Opportunity Officer;
 - Professor John Spinks, Senior Advisor to the President and Director of Undergraduate Admissions, and Ms. Isabella Wong, Associate Vice-President (China Affairs), Director of Admissions and Academic Liaison Section and Director of China Affairs;
 - chairs of the Committee on Discontinuation (CoD) and Committee on Halls (CoH);
 - wardens and master of the residential halls;
 - hall managers and other administrative staff;
 - DoSA, Director of Campus Life, Director of Careers and Placement and Acting Director of Counselling and Person Enrichment of CEDARS;
 - Dean and Associate Dean of Graduate House, and Chairman of Postgraduate Student Association; and
 - masters and deputy masters of the residential colleges.

- 2.2.3 The Panel scheduled 20 town-hall meetings attended by a total of 351 participants comprising members of the residential halls, tutors of the residential halls, HKU staff, students and alumni, wardens and members of the non-residential halls, and members of the residential colleges.
- 2.2.4 The Panel's website for collection of feedback from staff, students and alumni was opened for five weeks from June 26 to July 31, 2017. In total, 216 submissions were received, comprising 9 from staff, 143 from students and 64 from alumni. A statement on collection of personal information and feedback was provided at the top of each online form.
- 2.2.5 To gauge new undergraduate students' perceptions of HKU accommodation, three tailored questions were inserted in CEDARS' annual freshman survey. In August and early September 2017, 1,696 students completed the survey.

2.3 Documentary research

- 2.3.1 Aside from findings generated through the consultation process, data were collated from Registry records and offices, CEDARS and hall offices. The Panel also received documents, reports and input from other units and colleagues in the University as reference material, often on a confidential basis. For context, the Panel reviewed the practices of benchmarked local and international institutions based on information available on their official websites and reports of overseas study tours organized by the Hall Education Development Office (HEDO) (see para. 4.9.2).

3 Context

3.1 Government policy

- 3.1.1 Government policy on the provision of student hostels was promulgated in 1996 and remains unchanged to this day. It is used by UGC to calculate the level of provision at UGC-funded institutions based on the following principles:
- all undergraduate students should be given the opportunity to stay in a student hostel for at least one year;
 - all research postgraduate students should be granted student hostel places;
 - all non-local students should be granted student hostel places; and
 - undergraduate students whose daily travel time exceeds four hours should be provided with student hostel places.

3.2 Residential education since 2000

- 3.2.1 The University undertook its last review of hall education in the early 2000s. Since then, strategic developments have contributed to shaping residential provision into its present form. In particular, there has been a significant increase in the number of residential places, and progressive changes have been made to the overall framework for hall admission and delivery of residential education.

2004 – Report on Hall Education

- 3.2.2 In December 2000, the Committee on Student Affairs (CSA) set up a Working Group on Hall Education with a remit ‘to examine the philosophy of hall education in the current context with a view to making recommendations for the future direction of development of halls by taking into account their specific hall culture’. The eight-member team was led by DoSA Dr. E.J. Powell, and comprised staff and student members from within and outside the hall community. It commenced work in April 2001 and wrote its final report in January 2003. Following lengthy consultation and deliberation by CSA, the report was submitted to Senate in February 2004.

- 3.2.3 The Working Group made 41 recommendations on four major aspects of halls and hall education: philosophy, accessibility, staffing, and structures. CSA modified and approved 40 of them. In turn, Senate endorsed all 40, noting that many were general statements creating a framework for further discussion. The recommendation not approved by CSA concerned universal hall admission. This was the most controversial element, generating considerable debate on and off campus, with strong support and strong objections, the latter mostly from hall and alumni associations. Senate supported CSA’s decision to look further into the admission system recommended in the report alongside other options.

2005 – Student residences at the Flora Ho Sports Centre site

- 3.2.4 Three halls of residence located at the Flora Ho Sports Centre site were opened in September 2005. In June 2005, Council approved the naming of this site as Jockey Club Student Village II, comprising Morrison Hall, Lee Shau Kee Hall and Suen Chi Suen Hall, in appreciation of donations made to the University. The three halls added 900 residential places to University provision.

- 3.2.5 At its May 3, 2005 meeting, Senate received a paper from the Vice-Chancellor's Task Force, modified by CSA, creating a framework for admission to these halls. It also increased the number of non-local undergraduate student places in residential halls, and endorsed UGC's principles (see section 3.1).

2008 – New hall admission scheme

- 3.2.6 At its November 4, 2008 meeting, Senate adopted a new hall admission scheme formulated by the Task Force on Hall Admission Quotas with effect from 2009-10. The Task Force had been set up by CoH to consult widely with relevant stakeholders. It undertook its work between March 2007 and May 2008, and produced a final report that was endorsed by CoH in June 2008 and by CSA in September 2008.
- 3.2.7 In devising the scheme, the Task Force considered the balance between hall education and the absolute need of students, the requirement for a uniform hall admission policy while allowing a degree of flexibility, the accommodation of non-local students in halls, and options for increasing the transparency of procedures and criteria of the hall admission, readmission and appeal systems. The scheme contains eight allocation principles and a set of operational guidelines (see section 4.6).

2012 – Residential colleges

- 3.2.8 Four residential colleges were opened on Lung Wah Street, Kennedy Town in September 2012. Council approved in August 2012 that this site be named Jockey Club Student Village III, in recognition of a donation of \$108.25 million from Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, and in April 2014 that the constituent units be named Chi Sun College, Lap-Chee College, New College and Shun Hing College. Altogether these colleges provide accommodation for 1,800 students.
- 3.2.9 The residential colleges were established to meet HKU's need for an alternative form of residential education. A different mode of governance and operations from that of the residential halls was approved by Senate in December 2010. The colleges aim to admit a balanced mix of undergraduate and postgraduate students, and of local, Mainland and international students, and to promote a strong academic orientation and interaction between undergraduate and postgraduate and local and non-local students. The Governance Committee of the Residential Colleges on Lung Wah Street, a sub-committee of CSA, oversees the colleges and formulates policies pertaining to student learning, accommodation and welfare.

3.3 Teaching and learning since 2012

- 3.3.1 As part of sector-wide 3-3-4 reforms, HKU launched a new undergraduate curriculum in 2012. In reforms underpinning the normative four-year structure, it took the opportunity to reconceptualize the undergraduate curriculum, defining it as the totality of learning experiences afforded to students to achieve the six UEAs. Residential education thereby became an even more important part of the co-curriculum.
- 3.3.2 Academic advising in halls of residence is one component of the academic advising system approved by Senate in March 2011. In 2012 a Residence-based Academic Advising (RAA) scheme was launched to complement the academic advising undertaken by Faculties. Under the new framework, senior hall residents are recruited as residential student advisers (RSAs) on the basis of academic achievement, interpersonal and communication skills, and willingness to serve. In collaboration with Faculties, the Academic Advising Office (AAO) of the Registry and CEDARS

provide training, and the academic advisers of home Faculties provide supervision. CEDARS coordinates implementation. In its current form, the system varies slightly from hall to hall in terms of supervision of RSAs.

3.3.3 In March 2012, Senate approved six goals of First Year Experience (FYE) and associated mechanisms to achieve them. The role of the halls is strengthened in several ways:

- a) hall wardens, tutors and the Dean of Student Affairs work further with the hall student associations to review orientation programmes, activities and practices, particularly on the following aspects:
 - compulsory or a high level of expected participation in hall activities;
 - respect for privacy and personal preferences in life style and cultural differences;
 - language use to ensure inclusiveness and cohesion;
- b) the effectiveness of hall orientation and education should be evaluated with reference to the HKU educational aims;
- c) hall wardens and tutors review the admission and readmission criteria and procedures to give due recognition to academic achievement and students' accomplishment and contribution outside the hall, and an adequate mix of students from different backgrounds; and
- d) halls should be encouraged to implement the residence-based academic advising system in 2012 as a major step to better align hall education with the goals of undergraduate education at HKU.

3.3.4 In recent years HKU's intake of non-local undergraduate and exchange students has increased (Tables 3.1 and 3.2). This trend is likely to continue as the University internationalizes still further, and strives to admit the maximum number of non-local students allowed by UGC. The attendant demand for accommodation and for integration of local and non-local students generates challenges for the University as a whole, and for the residential hall community within it.

Table 3.1 Undergraduate intake and enrolment, 2012-13 to 2016-17

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
First-year undergraduate intake	6,562	3,409	3,637	3,614	3,716
Undergraduate enrolment	14,316	14,721	15,411	15,839	16,172
Non-local undergraduate enrolment	2,224	2,288	2,341	2,374	2,498
Mainland undergraduate enrolment	1,453	1,465	1,465	1,457	1,450

Note: Figures refer to UGC-funded programmes only. In 2012-13, a double cohort was admitted as a result of the 3-3-4 reforms. Source: UGC online database.

Table 3.2 Undergraduate exchange student intake, 2012-13 to 2016-17

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Full year	193	215	224	234	241
First semester	434	480	463	537	577
Second semester	306	321	351	341	334
Summer semester	5	11	10	26	15
Total	938	1,027	1,048	1,138	1,167

Source: Enterprise Information System, September 8, 2017.

- 3.3.5 The Quality Assurance Council conducted its second audit of HKU in 2015, with the twin audit themes of ‘enhancing the student learning experience’ and ‘global engagements: strategies and current developments’. Under the first theme, the University committed to ‘attempting to strengthen the integration between local and non-local students through curricular and co-curricular activities, and through opening up new and different forms of residential accommodation’. In its report, the Audit Panel acknowledged the University’s recognition of the demands imposed by its target of 100 percent undergraduate participation in international learning experiences, including ‘provision of sufficient accommodation for incoming reciprocal exchange students’. It affirmed that it was ‘confident these challenges are being and will be vigorously tackled’.
- 3.3.6 In 2016, the University adopted its 2016-25 strategic plan with the overarching theme of Asia’s Global University, and ambitious aims to deliver on the 3+1 Is in the major domains of research, teaching and learning, and knowledge exchange. For teaching and learning, one central objective was creation of a vibrant, cosmopolitan campus.
- 3.3.7 From 2016-17, Government policy on admission of non-local students to funded sub-degree, undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes in UGC-funded institutions switched from ‘4 percent in, 16 percent out’ to ‘20 percent out’. On a trial basis in 2017-19, all UGC-funded universities are allowed to over-enrol non-local students up to a ceiling of 25 percent of the approved student number.

4 Present Situation

4.1 Residential halls

4.1.1 HKU's 13 residential halls admit mostly undergraduate students, plus a small cohort of postgraduate students living above all in two halls. Among the halls, the University administers 11, St. John's College is managed by the Anglican Church, and Ricci Hall is run by the Jesuit Fathers. Because the halls are supported by UGC funds, all residents at all levels (undergraduate, taught postgraduate and research postgraduate) must be enrolled in UGC-funded programmes.¹ The 13 halls, with available bed spaces, are: Lady Ho Tung Hall (404); Lee Hysan Hall (378); Lee Shau Kee Hall (300); Morrison Hall (300 including 150 allocated to postgraduate students); R.C. Lee Hall (375); Ricci Hall (120); St. John's College (334 including 111 for postgraduate students); Simon K.Y. Lee Hall (310); Starr Hall (500); Suen Chi Sun Hall (300); Swire Hall (302); University Hall (110); and Wei Lun Hall (381).²

4.1.2 The residential halls differ in several ways:

- History – St. John's College, dating to 1912, is the oldest hall of the University. Lee Shau Kee Hall and Suen Chi Sun Hall opened most recently in 2005.
- Gender – Lady Ho Tung Hall is the only all-female hall. Morrison Hall (on the undergraduate but not postgraduate side), Ricci Hall and University Hall are all-male halls. The other halls admit both female and male students.
- Location – Simon K.Y. Lee Hall and Swire Hall are located on the Main Campus. The other halls are situated on Pokfulam Road and Sassoon Road.
- Places – The 13 halls provide 4,114 residential places, including 150 in Morrison Hall and 111 in St. John's College designated for postgraduate students. Starr Hall is the largest with 500 places. University Hall is the smallest with 110 places.
- Rooms – St. John's College and Ricci Hall have single rooms only. The other halls have a combination of single, double and shared rooms.
- Floors – Putting to one side Ricci Hall and University Hall, which have special architectural structures, the halls each have eight to 22 floors. The number of hall places per floor varies from around 20 to around 40.

4.1.3 Based on the current hall admission scheme and practice, the residential halls in 2016-17 could accommodate some 23 percent of all undergraduate students enrolled at HKU and some 41 percent of the first-year undergraduate intake, without taking into account incoming exchange students (see section 4.6).

4.2 Non-residential halls

4.2.1 Two active non-residential halls each charge an annual affiliation fee of \$200. Hornell Hall, an all-male hall, was founded in 1952. Lee Chi Hung Hall, a co-educational hall, was created in 1995. In 2016-17, these halls had respective memberships of 13 and 161. Students are not permitted simultaneously to join a residential hall and a non-residential hall.

¹ St. John's College and Ricci Hall are able to admit non-UGC-funded students, though only St. John's does so (in very small numbers).

² In some halls a few places have been converted for other uses, such as meeting rooms, sick rooms, tutors' rooms or manager's flat.

4.3 Other types of student accommodation

4.3.1 In addition to the residential halls, the University provides several other types of student accommodation (Table 4.1). Most are managed by CEDARS, though Graduate House is governed by the Graduate House Committee of Management, and the Madam S. H. Ho Residence for Medical Students and Patrick Manson Student Residence are operated by the Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine. Robert Black College, primarily a guesthouse for overseas visiting scholars, is not included here.

Table 4.1 Other types of student accommodation

Accommodation	Places	Target residents
Residential colleges	1,800	Balanced splits of undergraduate and postgraduate, as well as local, Mainland and international students
Student flats	72	Primarily undergraduate exchange students
Pokfield Road residences	262	Primarily newly-admitted non-local postgraduate students
Ching Lin Terrace residence	126	Primarily newly-admitted non-local students
University-rented flats	186	All students
Graduate House	197	Postgraduate students
Madam S. H. Ho Residence for Medical Students and Patrick Manson Student Residence	327	Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine students undergoing clinical training at Queen Mary Hospital

Note: All residents are full-time students.
Source: CEDARS.

- 4.3.2 Students may also choose to rent privately-owned rooms or flats. CEDARS assists by compiling data on properties available for rent near the University, and providing advisory notes and guidelines on matters relating to tenancy agreements.
- 4.3.3 The Bursary Scheme for Off-campus Accommodation, introduced in 2009, provides reimbursements of up to \$2,600 monthly and \$26,000 annually for non-local undergraduate students, and \$1,500 monthly and \$15,000 annually for undergraduate exchange students. From 2012-13 to 2015-16, the number of successful applicants increased by 114 percent from 483 to 1,037, and the total amount awarded grew by 110 percent from \$8.8 million to \$18.5 million. The scheme is financed by top-sliced funds from non-local student tuition fees.

4.4 Rules and regulations

- 4.4.1 Statute XXIII of the University vests in Senate the power ‘to determine the policy to be followed by the Halls of Residence maintained by the University; and to approve Halls and other accommodation for the residence of students not maintained by the University and to prescribe the conditions under which students may be permitted to reside therein’.
- 4.4.2 Internally, the residential halls are governed by the University’s Regulations Governing Halls and Flats. H2 of these Regulations states that the warden may make additional rules, subject to subsequent approval by CoH and communication to the hall community. All 13 halls have drawn up their own rules. H3 provides for a hall

association, universally known as a Hall Students' Association (HSA), comprising all members. Its constitution is subject to approval by the warden.

4.5 Management structures

4.5.1 Many units help to manage and administer the residential halls (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 Roles and responsibilities with regard to the residential halls

	CSA	CoH	CSWHT	AAC	FYEC	AAO	CEDARS	DoSA	Wardens	Tutors	Managers	HSA
Hall admission	√	√					√	√	√	√		√
Hall orientation		√					√	√	√	√	√	√
FYE					√	√	√	√				√
RAA				√		√	√	√	√	√		
Annual reports								√	√			√
Lodging charges	√	√						√				
Hall lodging account	√	√						√	√			
Hall Education Fund		√					√	√	√			√
Daily operations									√	√	√	
(Re)appointment of:												
• wardens		√	√					√				√
• hall tutors			√					√	√			*
• managers and hall office staff								√	√			

* Denotes variation between halls.

University committees and offices

4.5.2 CSA, chaired by VP/T&L, discharges on behalf of Senate statutory functions relating to student welfare and facilities, and reports back at least annually.

4.5.3 CoH, a sub-committee of CSA, includes from each hall the warden or master and one student member. Its remit is to advise CSA on student welfare in the residential and non-residential halls, and the development and planning of the residential halls; to recommend to CSA, for advice to Council, the level of lodging and catering charges in the University-administered residential halls; and to advise the warden or master of those halls not maintained by the University on matters pertaining to student welfare. CoH also takes charge of budget allocations under the hall lodging account, subject to CSA oversight.

4.5.4 The Committee for the Selection of Wardens and Hall Tutors (CSWHT) makes appointments and reappointments of wardens, senior resident tutors, resident tutors and hall tutors in the University-administered residential and non-residential halls. For tutorial positions, CSWHT may delegate to specific sub-committees.

4.5.5 The Academic Advising Committee (AAC) coordinates academic advising for undergraduate students, and makes suggestions to the Curriculum Development Committee on relevant matters. The First Year Experience Committee (FYEC) oversees FYE and academic induction activities, and reports annually to the Teaching and Learning Quality Committee (TLQC).

4.5.6 The Academic Support and Examinations Section (ASE) of the Registry provides secretarial support for CoH and CSA, and administers the online application system

for hall admission in collaboration with CEDARS. AAO provides secretarial support for AAC and FYEC, liaises with CEDARS on implementation of the RAA system, and oversees the University-wide academic advising system.

- 4.5.7 The Equal Opportunity Unit (EOU) offers more diffuse support by providing education and training to enhance awareness of equal opportunity issues, and by handling alleged cases of discrimination and harassment.

CEDARS

- 4.5.8 CEDARS plays a vital role in the management and administration of the residential halls. It executes the hall admission exercise in collaboration with ASE, prepares annual reports on hall admission for submission to CoH, coordinates implementation of the RAA system, organization of FYE activities and allocation of the Hall Education Fund (HEF), and provides a broad range of student support services.

- 4.5.9 DoSA is the head of CEDARS. She administers funds for the appointment of wardens, tutors, site managers and other hall support staff, forms part of the wardens' reporting line to the President, is a member of CoH, CSA, CSWHT and AAC, and chairs FYEC.

Halls³

- 4.5.10 Each warden reports annually to the President through DoSA on hall administration, maintenance of discipline and order, pastoral functions, and admission and readmission of hall members.

- 4.5.11 Wardens are appointed on three-year terms and may be reappointed for one further term, after which the position is advertised. The incumbent may reapply. Wardens are invited to compile a self-evaluation report in the first two years of service, and a detailed report incorporating input from hall residents in the third year. These reports, together with the warden's annual reports on hall life, are examined by CSWHT when reappointment is being considered. Each wardenship carries a Level 2 responsibility allowance, free accommodation and other benefits.⁴

- 4.5.12 Wardens are supported by tutorial teams comprising senior resident tutors, who are full-time teaching or non-teaching staff, or in some cases alumni; resident tutors, who are full-time teaching or non-teaching staff, part-time demonstrators, or full-time postgraduate students; and honorary resident tutors, who are full-time teaching or non-teaching staff, part-time demonstrators, or full-time postgraduate students. Appointments are made on a one-year, renewable basis, and carry prescribed duties and an honorarium. Senior resident and resident tutors have rent-free accommodation and other hall benefits. Each hall has three to nine tutors, including at least one senior resident tutor and one resident tutor.

- 4.5.13 Four site managers, each linked to a cluster of halls, assist wardens with daily operations. At University Hall, a steward assists the warden. The managers and steward may also support the organization of hall orientation activities. They report to the wardens and may seek advice and assistance from CEDARS. Hall office support staff and some hall attendants and watchmen are also appointed.

³ St. John's College and Ricci Hall have their own appointment systems.

⁴ The Level 2 responsibility allowance is currently \$6,300 per month, the same level as for a head of department.

4.5.14 In each hall the HSA has an Executive Committee formed annually for a term roughly spanning the calendar year. Floor associations and other groups also exist. These bodies organize hall activities. HSAs also oversee selection of student representatives on CoH and CSWHT, and submit annual reports on hall life to DoSA.

4.6 Hall admission

4.6.1 The hall admission scheme implemented since 2009-10 has eight allocation principles and a set of operational guidelines. The key features are as follows:

- (a) Each applicant is given an admission score, comprising a need score and a merit score, both ranging from 0 to 100 and weighted at varying combinations of 0, 50 and 100 percent for different categories.
- (b) The need score is determined by the travel time (from home to campus) and home environment of the applicant.
- (c) The merit score is based on academic and non-academic achievements, and for readmission on additional criteria set by the hall, such as observation of rules.
- (d) Local students needing to travel more than 3 hours per day are considered to have absolute need. Their need score is 100.
- (e) Local undergraduate students with absolute need and non-local undergraduate students are guaranteed one year of hall residence.
- (f) Each hall may assign one-third to two-thirds of its intake of students with no prior hall experience to non-local students, subject to a ceiling across all halls of (i) 30-33 percent of non-local students and (ii) 70 percent of local students with absolute need plus non-local students with no prior hall experience.
- (g) On a discretionary basis the wardens may allocate 3 percent of undergraduate student places without taking need factors into consideration, and the halls must reserve 3 percent of places for undergraduate students with proven special physical or psychological needs.
- (h) The minimum quota for postgraduate students is 2 percent.
- (i) To ensure accountability, all admission and readmission interviews must be conducted in the presence of the warden or a tutor, and one to three current residents. Each hall must also submit its admission and readmission criteria and procedures, including those of the floors, to CoH for endorsement, and then publicize them widely. All appeals are considered by the warden.

4.6.2 Detailed arrangements have been drawn up in conjunction with this scheme: a need score system, modified by CEDARS and approved by CoH in March 2017 (see para. 4.6.1(b)); special housing arrangements for students with special educational needs (SEN) or other personal reasons, prepared by CEDARS and approved by CoH in November 2013 (see para. 4.1.6(g)); and hall admission and readmission criteria (see para. 4.6.1(i)).

4.6.3 At its March 14, 2013 meeting, CoH noted that the wardens had agreed by consensus to adopt a minimum GPA admission requirement of 2.0 with a view to helping hall residents maintain a balance between academic performance and hall activities, and to make arrangements for tutorial staff to meet with hall residents with a GPA falling below 2.0. They agreed to specify the GPA requirement in offers of hall admission.

4.6.4 Hall admission operates on an annual cycle. Applications must be submitted online under the Joint Hall Admission Scheme (JHAS) administered by ASE, except for students described in para. 4.6.5. Round I commences in April for hall residents seeking readmission. Round II launches in August for new students or students with

no prior hall experience. St. John's College has its own admission system and its own criteria, though it accepts applications through JHAS.

- 4.6.5 New non-local undergraduate and undergraduate exchange students apply through CEDARS' central placement exercise, commencing in May (for places in the first semester or whole academic year) and October (for places in the second semester).
- 4.6.6 In September, CEDARS operates a central clearing house exercise in collaboration with the halls to fill any vacancies. All students, whether or not they have already registered, may apply through an online system.
- 4.6.7 Postgraduate students generally apply through a separate exercise for the 111 places in St. John's College and the 150 places in Morrison Hall. Applications are submitted through an online system run by CEDARS or, for readmission to Morrison Hall, through JHAS. Such students may also apply through JHAS to the other 11 residential halls with small admission quotas (see para. 4.6.1(h)).
- 4.6.8 In recent years lodging charges have increased somewhat, while admission numbers have remained broadly stable (Tables 4.3 and 4.4). From 2012-13 to 2016-17, lodging charges moved upwards by 16-18 percent over five admission rounds. Roughly 60 percent of hall places were filled by readmission, and 40 percent by new students or students with no prior hall experience. The proportion of non-local hall residents expanded from 33 to 39 percent.

Table 4.3 Lodging charges, 2012-13 to 2016-17

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Daily rate: undergraduate (\$)	40	42	44	47	47
Daily rate: postgraduate (\$)	49	51	53	57	57
Days in residential year	271	282	282	282	280
Yearly charge: undergraduate (\$)	10,840	11,844	12,408	13,254	13,160
Yearly charge: postgraduate (\$)	13,279	14,382	14,946	16,074	15,960

Note: The charges apply to University-administered residential halls.
Source: CEDARS.

Table 4.4 Hall places filled, 2012-13 to 2016-17

	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	3680		3519		3647		3562		3724	
JHAS I	2,021	54.9	2,254	64.1	2,194	60.2	2,146	60.2	2,240	60.2
JHAS II, CP, PGMH	1,659	45.1	1,265	35.9	1,453	39.8	1,416	39.8	1,484	39.8
Undergraduate	3,476	94.5	3,368	95.7	3,466	95.0	3,373	94.7	3,542	95.1
Postgraduate	204	5.5	151	4.3	181	5.0	189	5.3	182	4.9
Local	2,457	66.8	2,381	67.7	2,306	63.2	2,226	62.5	2,280	61.2
Non-local	1,223	33.2	1,138	32.3	1,341	36.8	1,336	37.5	1,444	38.8

Key: CP: CEDARS' central placement exercise. PGMH: Postgraduate places of Morrison Hall.
Note: The statistics refer to places filled as of September in the 13 residential halls, including postgraduate places in Morrison Hall but not in St. John's College. The postgraduate intakes are not broken down into students applying under JHAS and the postgraduate housing exercise (see para. 4.6.7).
Source: CEDARS.

4.6.9 University regulations enable non-resident members to be attached to the residential halls. Each hall administers an annual scheme requiring affiliated members to pay a standard fee of \$200 for access to hall facilities and activities and, in some cases, a small number of high-table dinners and overnight stays. Annual admission is limited, ranging from 20 to 50 affiliated members per hall. Many such members are engaged to participate in interhall competitions.

4.7 Hall orientation activities

4.7.1 Hall orientation activities are organized for new residents before the start of the academic year. Orientation camps last for around 10 days. In April 2011 CoH approved a set of Hall Orientation Guidelines to align these activities more fully with the UEAs and FYE goals. All halls are required to submit an annual report on orientation activities to CoH.

4.8 Interhall competitive awards

4.8.1 There is an abundance of interhall competitions and awards:

- The Malayan Cup and Olma Challenge Rose Bowl (formerly Omega Rose Bowl), awarded respectively to the overall male and female hall sports champions, are most prominent with histories dating back to the 1950s and 1960s. The Sports Association, HKUSU organizes 13 interhall competitions for the Malayan Cup, and 12 for the Olma Challenge Rose Bowl. These are for men athletics, aquatics, badminton, basketball, handball, hockey, lacrosse, soccer, softball, squash, table tennis, tennis and volleyball, and for women the same set minus soccer.
- The Cheng Yiu Chung Cup, established in 1997, is awarded to the interhall cultural competition champion, and covers debating, drama, bridge and choir competitions organized by the Joint Hall Cultural Committee.
- The Rayson Huang Cup and the Centennial Cup, dating from 2012, balance hall academic, sports and cultural activities. The Rayson Huang Cup is awarded for the top overall academic score. The Centennial Cup is awarded for the best amalgamated score across the other four cups.
- The Outstanding Hall Student Award was established in 2013-14. A maximum of 20 students are chosen, on the basis of academic merit and hall contribution, by a selection committee drawn from the hall community and approved by CoH. Each award is worth \$1,000.

4.8.2 Individual halls also have prizes and awards to recognize outstanding achievement.

4.9 Funded hall education projects

4.9.1 HEF was launched in 1995 to promote hall education and is broadly used to subsidize student activities and the costs of honorary tutors. The current annual allocation for each hall is 2 percent of the total lodging fee income. The warden, in consultation with the HSA, decides on use of the funding and reports to CoH. Consistently over the past decade, the HEF account has recorded a net surplus, alongside deficits for individual halls. In June 2016 it had a balance of \$3.9 million.⁵

4.9.2 HEDO was set up under a Hall Education Development Project (HEDP) initiated in January 2011. HEDP has been extended twice, with a cumulative budget allocation of

⁵ In June 2016, the balance of the general reserve of the hall lodging account was around \$13 million.

\$5.9 million funded from the hall lodging account general reserve.⁶ HEDO activities include hall forums and retreats; hall education courses, such as first-aid training for organizers of hall orientation, workshops on managing emotional problems, and courses on political issues; annual Outstanding Hall Student Awards; support for implementation of the RAA system and RSA training, and for evaluating and making monetary rewards to RSAs; and overseas study tours.

4.9.3 Since 2001, two research projects relating to hall education have been funded by the Teaching Development Grant scheme, and two have been supported by the UGC Funding Scheme for Teaching and Learning Related Projects. Altogether the project awards amount to \$7.26 million.

4.10 Feedback and review

Survey results

4.10.1 Each year, all first-, second- and final-year undergraduate students are invited to complete the HKU Student Learning Experience Questionnaire (SLEQ). SLEQ-UG1 results from 2013-14 to 2015-16 show that:

- Hall residents found their University accommodation experience broadly rewarding, with a mean score of 3.82-3.9 on a five-point scale. The overall rating of intercultural understanding slightly exceeded that of academic development.
- Compared with students not living in University accommodation, hall residents reported a significantly higher rating of HKU orientation and academic advising in 2013-14 and 2014-15, and of participation in campus activities and English support in 2015-16. They also consistently gave a higher rating for UEAs linked to intercultural understanding, communication, global citizenship, and leadership.

4.10.2 Since 2012, HKU has adopted the International Student Barometer as a satisfaction metric. In 2015, overall scores on students' social experience in the living environment compared poorly with benchmarked local, regional and global institutions. Local students reported greater satisfaction than non-local students, who generally said they were better able to make friends from their home countries than from Hong Kong or elsewhere. A non-local undergraduate student said this: '[Y]ou can't simply force internationals to embrace hall culture. I don't think anyone likes to be treated poorly especially during orientation, when the whole point of having orientation is to make lifelong friends and be happy.' An incoming exchange student said this: '[T]he only downside is the local students not making an effort to interact and engage with non-local students... I am not the only one that has experienced this.'

Residence-based academic advising and first-year experience

4.10.3 AAC receives annual hall reports on implementation of the RAA system. In 2016-17:

- most halls had 10 to 20 RSAs, while some had fewer than five or more than 20;
- the student-to-RSA ratio was generally high;
- RSAs had a primary focus on academic matters in some halls, and a broader scope extending to additional aspects of hall life in others;
- RSAs and their advisees generally reported positive experiences;
- difficulties included a lack of publicity among hall residents, limited and irregular interaction between RSAs and hall residents, and an inadequate number of RSAs to provide broad-based support to hall residents studying different disciplines; and

⁶ Budget allocations were \$1.27 million for 2011-13, \$2.43 million for 2013-16 and \$2.2 million for 2016-18.

- RSA training was provided by AAO and CEDARS, with assistance from HEDO, generating slight variations from the approved framework (see para. 3.3.2).

4.10.4 TLQC conducted a focused review of FYE and academic induction in May 2015. The review group advised that English be used in all hall publications and activities to facilitate the participation of non-local students. FYEC considered the report in December 2015 and recorded that measures had been introduced to help non-local students integrate into the hall community. At its April 2016 meeting, CoH adopted an action plan for fuller use of English in hall publications and activities and integration of local and non-local students in hall orientation activities, starting from 2016.

Other feedback

4.10.5 The CoD chairman has written repeatedly to DoSA and other senior officers to make observations, including in 2010 and 2012 noting that hall activities appeared to be having an adverse impact on residents' academic performance. In 2017, he reported a drop in the number of hall residents referred to CoD.

4.10.6 The President referred to the Panel a June 30, 2017 letter from the chairman of the Disciplinary Committee commenting on the consumption of alcoholic beverages in hall premises. The letter also advised that allegations of sexual harassment should be handled in a more supportive manner, and that assistance should be sought from relevant offices as soon as possible.

4.10.7 Internal reviews were conducted of widely-reported incidents taking place in St. John's College and Simon K.Y. Lee Hall in March and April 2017. The Master of St. John's College reported to the President in April 13, 2017, noting that disciplinary action had been taken against the students involved and that a public statement had been issued by St. John's College Students' Association on April 8, 2017. A Fact-Finding Panel chaired by VP/ASR looked into the incident in Simon K.Y. Lee Hall. Its report was submitted to the President in June 2017, and a redacted version was shared with the Panel on a confidential basis. The Panel met with VP/ASR in mid-July, and among much else discussed her reflections on this incident.

5 Comparative Analysis

5.1 Benchmarked local and international institutions

- 5.1.1 To provide elementary context for its work, the Panel briefly examined the student residence systems of seven benchmarked institutions. Three are prominent local universities, and four are major international universities. Information was obtained primarily from official websites, and where available from HEDO reports.
- 5.1.2 The three local institutions are Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) and Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST), HKU's top local competitors for quality undergraduate students, and Lingnan University, which has a unique full residency policy (Table 5.1). The four international institutions are all well-ranked and comprehensive, making them good comparators for HKU. Harvard University and Stanford University are leading institutions globally and in the U.S. The University of Manchester is a member of the prestigious Russell Group, and as the largest single-site university in Britain has the country's biggest student community. National University of Singapore (NUS) is a top institution in Asia, and is widely viewed as an excellent comparator for HKU.

Table 5.1 Undergraduate intake and enrolment in selected local institutions, 2016-17

	HKU	CUHK	HKUST	Lingnan
First-year undergraduate intake	3,716	3,828	2,336	533
Undergraduate enrolment	16,172	16,731	9,204	2,595
Non-local undergraduate enrolment	2,498	2,162	1,439	140
Mainland undergraduate enrolment	1,450	1,488	670	123

Note: Statistics refer to UGC-funded programmes only.
Source: UGC online database.

5.2 Chinese University of Hong Kong

- 5.2.1 CUHK operates a college system, with all teaching staff and full-time undergraduate students belonging to both a Faculty and a college.⁷ The colleges support students' whole-person development. More than 50 percent of undergraduate students reside in more than 20 hostels grouped into nine colleges. The undergraduate hostels and the postgraduate halls together accommodate over 8,000 students.
- 5.2.2 All undergraduate students are given the opportunity to stay in a student hostel for at least one year. Non-local students enrolled in a four-year curriculum are guaranteed hostel places for three years. Beyond that period, they may apply for admission to the hostels of their colleges. Admission criteria include travel time, home environment and participation in student activities. Priority is given to specific groups of students, including major office bearers of the Student Union, College Resident Associations and other student bodies. Three colleges, Morningside, S.H. Ho and C.W. Chu, have a fully residential and communal dining system. Students admitted to these colleges are required to live in the hostel throughout their undergraduate studies.

⁷ Some teachers belong to research institutes or centres.

5.2.3 In C.W. Chu College, communal dining is one of the non-credit bearing components of the general education programme. Upon assignment to the college, students are automatically enrolled for a meal plan, including communal dinners three times a week during term time. High-table dinners are also arranged four times a year during term time. Guest speakers or fellow students are occasionally invited to share their experiences during or after dinner. First- and second-year students are required to attend at least 60 percent, and third- and fourth-year students at least 50 percent, of the communal dinners.

5.3 Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

5.3.1 HKUST provides 4,544 residential places for undergraduate students and another 1,020 places for postgraduate and visiting students. Its new hall allocation policy aims to offer housing to more first-year students. The Student Housing and Residential Life Office, headed by a residence master, provides hall management, facilities, personnel, services and learning programmes to hall residents. Hall Education Teams comprise residence masters, learning community fellows, residential life officers, tutors and learning community coordinators. A House Students' Association or group is formed in each hall to work closely with the residence master, tutors and residential life officers to organize activities.

5.3.2 Non-local students and local students without a home base in Hong Kong are provided with university accommodation during their first two years of study. All first-year local students are guaranteed at least one semester of hall residence. They may also apply to the First-Year Experience @ Residence (FYE) Program and receive one year of guaranteed housing, on condition of completing all requirements. The FYE Program was launched on a pilot basis in 2017-18 with a quota of 600 first year students, both local and non-local. The halls generally reserve 45 to 65 percent of their places for new students. For new admission, each applicant may indicate up to three hall preferences. In case demand for a particular hall is greater than supply, allocation is random. Rooms and roommates are also assigned randomly.

5.3.3 For readmission in 2017-18, the following prioritization was adopted:

- priority housing – second-year non-local and local students without a home base in Hong Kong;
- composite score – based on home distance from campus, contribution to campus life, and outstanding performance, weighted at 50:35:15;
- commute hardship – local students with travelling time over 120 minutes who are not offered a place under the composite score system;
- home distance – drawing of lots with weightings assigned to local students with a one-way travel time of less than 90 minutes and to non-local students with a one-way travel time of 90 minutes or more; and
- waiting list – applicants who have not yet been given an offer.

5.3.4 The FYE Program is intertwined with a Senior Undergraduate Mentorship Program. FYE participants live in a peer group together with a mentor, and are expected to participate in the hall orientation camp and hall activities. Mentors are undergraduate students in their second year or above. They each take care of at most eight FYE mentees in their halls and are required to attend briefing sessions and training programmes. Residence masters conduct mid-term and year-end assessments with

mentors. The Living Learning Communities Program integrates students' curricular and co-curricular experiences. Within halls, clusters of students form small communities focused on a particular theme under which structured activities are organized. Each learning community is led by a fellow who assesses student performance, and feeds this assessment into the readmission process.

- 5.3.5 There are also other housing options. HKUST has rented 21 off-campus apartments to provide accommodation for full-time taught postgraduate students. In 2017-18, it has reserved 100 bed spaces at the Hong Kong Adventist College for students. Students may apply to work on coordinated projects and receive financial assistance towards their off-campus accommodation costs.

5.4 Lingnan University

- 5.4.1 Since 2014, Lingnan University has been the only local institution to offer four-year full residency to undergraduate students. Its 10 hostels have 2,600 places. Lingnan's policy is that all UGC-funded students on four-year programmes must reside in student hostels for at least two years and may reside for all four years, all UGC-funded senior year students studying for two years must reside in student hostels for at least one year, and all first year students should reside in student hostels. A certificate is awarded for fulfilment of the requirement.

- 5.4.2 Each hostel is headed by a warden and Warden's Office. The Student Services Centre helps to carry out administrative duties such as admission to student residences. The hostel is supervised by the warden, a senior tutor and four or five tutors. The warden is responsible to the Associate Vice-President (Student Affairs) for good order and discipline in the hostel, and has a range of pastoral functions.

- 5.4.3 Each of the 10 hostels is a Living Learning Community with a clear educational theme. Programmes are organized under common themes about hostel life and a specific theme of the year, which may be open to residents of other hostels. A First-Year Experience Programme and an Advanced Year Experience Programme are organized as co-curricular hostel education activities.

- 5.4.4 All staff members are invited to affiliate to the hostels as fellows. Hostel fellows are entitled to take part in activities organized by the Warden's Office to help promote an intellectual hostel culture. Associate degree students and UGC-funded students who have not resided in hostels are also invited to affiliate to the hostels. New students are assigned to the hostels at the beginning of each academic year. Affiliated members are encouraged to participate in hostel-based activities and inter-hostel competitions. They may change their affiliation once each year.

5.5 Harvard University

- 5.5.1 Harvard University provides separate residences to freshmen and senior students.
- 5.5.2 First-year students live in a freshmen residence located within or adjacent to Harvard Yard. All are placed in a suite with other freshmen and grouped into entryways, which house 20 to 30 students sharing a floor or designated area. A freshman proctor lives in each entryway, providing academic, personal and social counsel, and planning events designed to build community. Campus-wide undergraduate activities are organized by a series of offices, alongside activities created by students themselves. First-year

students are supported by a broad advising network comprising the proctor, academic adviser, peer advising fellows, and resident dean, all of whom advise on both academic and non-curricular matters.

- 5.5.3 At the end of the first year of study, students form small room groups and are assigned to live in one of 12 upperclass houses, each of which accommodates between 350 and 500 senior students. Some 98 percent of all eligible students live in one of the houses. House assignments take place by lottery, and students may enter either as a member of a group or as an individual. Each group can consist of no more than eight students and can be single or mixed gender. On completion of the lottery, each house administers a second lottery to assign members to a suite and bed space. Each house is staffed by a team dedicated to the student experience inside and outside the classroom, comprising both academic and administrative colleagues. Each has a Senior Common Room consisting of non-undergraduates: deans and tutors as well as other university professors, administrators, community members and visiting scholars.
- 5.5.4 The university operates 13 dining halls. All freshmen have their meals in one hall reserved for freshman dining while senior students dine in their house dining halls. Additionally, there is a dining hall open to all undergraduate students.

5.6 Stanford University

- 5.6.1 Stanford University has been a residential teaching and research university from its inception. Its residence system, catering for undergraduate and postgraduate students, including couples and families, is among the largest and most diverse in the U.S. All freshmen are guaranteed four complete or partial years of housing. More than 6,000 undergraduate students, 96 percent of the total, live in Stanford accommodation. Students may choose from a variety of residences with different educational settings, including traditional residences, houses with an academic or ethnic theme, and self-managed and cooperative residences, apartments and suites. The residences vary in size, room type and arrangement, with some having co-educational floors and others being single-sex.
- 5.6.2 For admission, there is no limit to the number of residences to which students may apply. Incoming freshmen are required to live on campus in co-educational residence halls or houses. Rooms are single gender and assignments are random. About 60 percent of freshmen are assigned to their first choice of housing type. The university seeks to make each residence a microcosm of the freshman class, balancing factors such as home state, academic interest, gender and ethnicity. Coordinators aim to pair students who not only share a common interest, but also have differences enabling them to learn from each other. Senior or upperclass students are assigned residential places based on random application numbers and listed choices. A pre-assignment process caters for specific residential programmes. An in-house draw enables students to select a room within their assigned residence.
- 5.6.3 Gender-inclusive housing allows friends of different genders to share a room in one of the gender-inclusive designated residences. Gender-inclusive bathrooms can be found in many residence halls. Transgender students needing special accommodation can take advantage of gender-inclusive housing or seek further assistance.
- 5.6.4 Residential education programmes complement the academic curriculum with activities and experiences designed to build pluralistic communities. They enable

students to learn from each other, from faculty and staff members, and from visiting diplomats, artists and scholars. Popular house activities include faculty dinners, lectures, mini-courses and study groups, international holiday celebrations, weekly discussions of current affairs, poetry readings, drama productions, outings to community events, film screenings, intramural athletics, and trips. Some residences offer unique academic, language, cultural or social activities and leadership opportunities under a pre-assignment programme or theme. Each of these residences has its own programme-related entry requirements. Some residences provide credit-bearing enrichment opportunities for residents and in some cases the whole campus.

5.6.5 Eating with housemates is an essential part of Stanford's residential education programmes, which often focus on events such as faculty night and dinner lectures. All students assigned to undergraduate student housing on campus, with the exception of those in apartments, are required to purchase a meal plan.

5.6.6 In 2010-12, Stanford undertook a review of undergraduate education. The resultant 130-page report devoted seven pages to residential learning, and in its eighth and final recommendation articulated a position that resonates well with one strand of the Panel's thinking:

In seeking to create new opportunities for residential learning, we do not intend ... to turn dormitories into 'extensions of the classroom.' We recognize that residences are distinctive spaces that foster different thinking and learning than classrooms do. Living in dorms, students grapple intimately with the meanings of citizenship, leadership, diversity, respect, tolerance, and community, developing capacities that are not only intellectual but also social and emotional. The goal of residential education is not to 'academicize' these experiences, but to create opportunities for students to connect their curricular and residential lives, in ways that enrich both.

5.7 University of Manchester

5.7.1 The University of Manchester guarantees university accommodation to all home undergraduate students in the first year of study, all overseas undergraduate and postgraduate students for the duration of their studies, and visiting and exchange students who are coming to the university alone and studying for the full academic session.⁸

5.7.2 The university has 22 halls of residence. While separate halls are available for undergraduate and postgraduate students, there are also halls for a mix of both where graduate students are typically roomed together. There is an in-house team of advisers and officers to provide guidance and support for students in the halls. Advisers must be a staff member or postgraduate student and are provided with single-bedded accommodation at no charge. The university arranges for the provision of lifestyle-moderated areas within halls that can offer an alternative lifestyle to what might be considered the usual undergraduate experience in a British university. Students in this area have requested and are expected to adopt a moderated lifestyle in respect of alcohol, parties, noise, and so on.

5.7.3 Manchester Student Homes, a university-run housing service, administers an accreditation scheme for landlords, agents and private halls of residence operating in

⁸ 'Home students' refers to British and European Union students.

Greater Manchester. It accredits over 20,000 bed spaces covering a number of localities and prices, and also offers accommodation assistance to students.

5.8 National University of Singapore

- 5.8.1 NUS operates separate hall allocation systems for freshmen and senior students. International students are assured accommodation in the first and second years of study. New students who wish to apply for a place in one of six halls available during the Freshman Accommodation Exercise are selected on pre-university co-curricular activities and availability. Current full-time undergraduate students applying to the halls are allocated accommodation based on prevailing criteria. Greater recognition is provided to students who contribute to campus life and vibrancy through defined and effective roles. The system allows student groups the flexibility to recognize members' contributions. Every student also has a chance to ballot for a place on campus.
- 5.8.2 Apart from the halls of residence, four residential colleges are located in University Town, an educational hub of residential spaces and learning facilities open to all NUS students and staff. Each college has a distinct academic tone and character, shaped by its rector, master and team of academic fellows. Students live and learn together with their peers and professors, and must enrol in one of their college's academic programmes, which require students to take a number of multidisciplinary modules and provide them with a variety of informal learning experiences. Students who have completed these programmes are deemed to have satisfied part of the graduation requirement for most NUS degrees.
- 5.8.3 Additionally, students may choose to live in residences offering a more independent and quieter living environment than the halls.

6 Findings: Structural and Management Issues

6.1 Overview

6.1.1 This chapter presents the Panel's findings with regard to structural and management issues generated above all by its consultation with key stakeholders, and also to some extent through town-hall meetings. In presenting the findings, it builds on categories specified in the Panel's terms of reference.

6.2 Key stakeholder meetings

6.2.1 The Panel was fortunate to meet with many key stakeholders in the hall community, including all relevant SMT members, other senior officers of the University, all hall wardens and managers, all relevant CEDARS personnel, and all relevant committee chairs. Typically the meetings brought together about three key stakeholders, and lasted for roughly one hour.

6.3 Strategic issues

6.3.1 The residential halls are often rather isolated from the rest of the University, and residential hall education and culture are largely formed within individual halls. In many respects this is entirely appropriate, for it fits with the core theme of student autonomy that has long defined HKU's hall community. Nevertheless, the sheer significance of the residential hall experience for many students, particularly at the undergraduate level, means that the University should take a more active interest in the halls and play a more important role in residential education.

6.3.2 In the University as a whole, there is a shortfall of residential places. To enable HKU to stay competitive and attract quality students from Hong Kong, Mainland China and the wider world, this issue needs to be addressed strategically.

6.3.3 Despite elements of internal diversity within the residential hall community, and the additional option generated by the residential colleges, student accommodation at HKU is not very varied. The University does not offer a full array of student residences differentiated by quality, price, location, lifestyle choice, and so on.

6.3.4 The residential halls currently have a negative public image both on campus and in the wider community in Hong Kong and Mainland China. This was acknowledged by both key stakeholders and residents in town-hall meetings. One consequence is that it may be harder for HKU to attract quality students, notably from Mainland China.

6.3.5 Some kind of universal hall membership could generate a cycle of engagement with the halls, enabling all students to live in hall for part of their studies, to participate in hall activities when non-resident but studying at HKU, and to remain engaged at whatever level they desire after graduation.

6.3.6 The residential halls place quite limited resources at the disposal of both wardens and HSAs. Since 1998-99, the amount earmarked for wardens' official entertainment expenses, funded by the hall lodging account, has been frozen at \$36 per residential

place (thus \$10,800 for a hall with 300 residents), and is now thought by one or two wardens to be inadequate. At the same time, considerable resources are allocated to HEDO under HEDP, with only limited benefit accruing to the wider hall community. There is a need to reexamine the overall funding of residential hall activities, and in particular the financial commitment to HEDP and HEDO.

- 6.3.7 The residential halls are often in a poor state of repair, chiefly because necessary renovations have not been undertaken for many years. Hygiene and safety are at risk. The University needs to make a strategic commitment to timely maintenance of the halls so that they are able to provide satisfactory student accommodation.
- 6.3.8 Following the incidents in St. John's College and Simon K.Y. Lee Hall in the early months of 2017, the hall community came together both informally and formally to discuss strategic issues relating to hall culture. At its meeting on June 22, 2017, CoH noted that the halls would consider undertaking a self-critique in three main areas: rules governing orientation camp, acceptable and unacceptable practices, and channels for expressing grievances and making complaints; core values of hall education, including intellectual elements and social service; and moral education.

6.4 Rules and regulations

- 6.4.1 The residential halls regulate student behaviour quite heavily, yet fail on occasion to provide a safe and non-hostile environment for all residents. The result is that instances of bullying, harassment and abuse sometimes take place in the halls. Every such instance is in direct conflict with HKU's core values.
- 6.4.2 Most residential halls have internal regulations about noise, with many requiring residents to refrain from making excessive noise between 11:00 or 11:30 at night and 07:00 in the morning. Nevertheless, sleeping time is an issue in every hall. A universal rule should therefore be introduced to establish a quiet zone, intended for sleeping, from 12:00 midnight to 07:00 in the morning. As a uniform practice, no official hall activities of any kind would be permitted within this zone.
- 6.4.3 The readmission system focuses mainly on a rather narrow set of specified hall activities. One proposal is to adopt a portfolio approach, limited to perhaps 500 or 1,000 words of text, to enable students to take the lead in demonstrating how they have sought to contribute to the hall, and what they have accomplished.

6.5 Management structures

- 6.5.1 There are not enough female wardens. Only Lady Ho Tung Hall, an all-female hall, has a female warden. Active measures need urgently to be taken to encourage and assist qualified female colleagues to become wardens of the residential halls.
- 6.5.2 An issue raised somewhat in this connection was that HKU might allow applications for wardenships to be made on a spousal or partnership basis, with a colleague and spouse or partner applying to become co-wardens.
- 6.5.3 Management structures within the residential hall community are not entirely fit for purpose. Some students argued for a recasting of the role of wardens and tutors designed to make them less managerial and more inspirational. Several students

argued that the role of tutors should be redesigned, contractually, to direct their duties more fully towards academic support, mentoring and inspiration.

- 6.5.4 Many administrative offices and units throughout the University, including hall offices, CEDARS and the Registry, compile and archive excellent data about the residential halls, which have been drawn on extensively throughout this review process. Both policy and practice feed into making data collection as transparent as possible, and data holdings as accessible as possible. All parties benefit from maintaining the University's high standards in these domains.

6.6 Operational models

- 6.6.1 The rather insular nature of many residential halls can sometimes be an operational issue. There is little to prevent the halls from opening up to outsiders from within the HKU community through, for instance, inviting selected staff and students to high-table dinners.
- 6.6.2 The role of alumni in residential hall life, and especially during orientation camp, is sometimes an issue of concern, and requires analysis. While alumni engagement is very welcome, it should not in any sense define residential hall education and culture.
- 6.6.3 There are few incentives for residential halls to engage in cost-saving measures that would benefit hall residents and the environment. The two main recurrent expenditure items are electricity and water. If an incentive system were introduced, cost savings could be made under both headings. All such savings could be then be channeled to HSAs for student activities.
- 6.6.4 As part of hall culture some residential halls informally encourage all residents to adopt an open-door policy, enabling other residents to drop in whenever they like. Whether to adopt such a practice should not be a matter of hall culture, but rather should be left to individual students to decide.
- 6.6.5 Wifi speeds are too slow in some parts of the residential halls.

7 Findings: Residential Hall Education and Culture

7.1 Overview

7.1.1 This chapter presents the Panel's findings with regard to residential hall education and culture generated above all by consultation through town-hall meetings, online feedback, and CEDARS' survey of new undergraduate students. The vast bulk of the respondents through these channels were undergraduate students. Quite a few alumni also engaged with the review process. The number of staff, particularly academic staff, who attended town-hall meetings or submitted comments through the website was minimal. In presenting the findings, the chapter makes use of the four HKU values used in the consultation process.

7.2 Town-hall meetings

7.2.1 The town-hall meetings were quite diverse, reflecting differences among the halls themselves. In the 13 residential halls, the number of students meeting with the Panel ranged from six to 60, and averaged nearly 20. Mostly students were free to join the discussion or stay away. Occasionally, however, students resident during the summer break were strongly encouraged to attend. Meetings with students, both in the halls and on campus, always began with two questions designed to get the conversation started. Each was drawn directly from the review led by Dr. Powell some 15 years ago, generating a measure of continuity and comparability across the two exercises.

7.2.2 The first question was: 'In just one word, please express the benefit of hall education for you.' In response, the words and short phrases used most frequently by students were: independence, responsibility, initiative, exchange, teamwork, working with others, learning from others, networking, time management, priority setting, balance, attitude, sacrifice, leadership, opportunity, personal growth, maturation, adjustment, new forms of intelligence, conflict management, communication, self-challenge, self-reflection, self-confidence, more extrovert, breakthrough, change, transformation, community, family, belonging, inclusion, intense but closed experience, collectivism, involvement, exposure, interaction, interpersonal skills, diversity, understanding, open-minded, taste of local culture, and social capital.

7.2.3 Expanding on these themes, several respondents noted that halls lower the entry barrier for taking part in organized activities, making it easier for students to join, say, a soccer team or dance club. They also generate different leadership opportunities from those found in other student associations. One student suggested that a festival of residential education be organized each year to showcase student attainment. For many residents, living in hall is without doubt a richly beneficial experience.

7.2.4 The second question was: 'If there was one thing about hall education you would want to change, what is it?' In response, the words and brief phrases used most often by students were: nothing, make hall life less intense, committed, competitive and demanding, make the halls more outward-looking, rebuild trust between the halls and the wider university community, start to think about how hall traditions can be revived and made less rigid, do more to embrace diversity of membership by tackling the current separation between local and non-local students, do more to embrace a

wide range of activities beyond the current focus on sports and culture, change mindsets, rebalance the attention paid to hall life, study time and outside activities, boost the reputation of halls, and improve the delivery of hall education.

7.2.5 Engaging more fully with students, the Panel heard that only a certain type of student can enrol in the some of the halls because the culture is quite narrow and rigid. If a student standing outside this type happens to join a hall of this kind, it was said, the choice is often either to conform to the prevailing culture or leave. One respondent noted that even ice-breaking games tend to have a distinctive HKU style, setting the tone for much that follows. Many respondents called on their HSA to organize more integrated activities, reach out more fully to other halls and the wider campus, and engage with the society more systematically. One student noted that it was quite implausible to hold that senior students might be able to provide junior students with comprehensive exposure to ideas, activities and people, arguing for a wider range of engagement in halls. A point made in several different ways was that the halls should have the confidence to change ‘bad habits’ accumulated within the culture and promote a positive image of hall education. For many residents, living in hall can be a more channelled and directed experience than they would like.

7.3 Online feedback

7.3.1 The online feedback received in June and July 2017 contained similar themes to those that were subsequently to surface in town-hall meetings in August and September. Early respondents tended to have negative views of residential hall education and culture, and clearly had issues they wished to bring to the Panel’s attention. Later respondents tended to be more positive, often using strikingly similar language to express the benefits of hall life.

7.4 Survey of new undergraduate students

7.4.1 In CEDARS’ annual survey of new undergraduate students, almost every respondent was from Hong Kong: 1,691 local students and five non-local students completed the questionnaire.⁹ Students were asked whether they planned to apply for admission to a University residence during their time at HKU, and from a list of options to provide the two most important reasons for their choice.

7.4.2 Roughly 62 percent said they did intend to apply for admission to a University residence, with about two-thirds planning to do so in their first year, and one-third opting for future years. Among these respondents, 67 percent hoped to experience community life, 51 percent had a long commute from home to campus, 34 percent wanted the opportunity to meet friends from different cultures and Faculties, and 27 percent sought independence from home. Only 0.4 percent expressed a desire to experience hall education.

7.4.3 Among the 38 percent who were not interested in applying to live in HKU accommodation, 62 percent preferred to stay at home, 35 percent worried about being distracted from their academic studies, 35 percent did not favour hall/college culture, 21 percent were deterred by negative media coverage of hall/college culture, 12 percent had financial concerns, 6 percent had other residential arrangements, and 6 percent indicated a parental objection.

⁹ The data were drawn from the first phase of the survey, when many non-local students had not yet arrived on campus.

7.5 Supportive of academic excellence

- 7.5.1 Many students viewed academic excellence as a worthwhile aim for the residential halls, but not the top priority. They supported the existing practice that sees many hall activities wind down ahead of the exam period, with extra support often laid on for students. They noted that there are now academic prizes across the entire hall community and sometimes within individual halls. They emphasized the 2.0 GPA requirement for hall readmission. In principle, however, they felt that halls could make a more significant contribution to personal growth in areas beyond the strictly academic. There were three distinct perspectives on whether the halls, as presently constituted, actually are supportive of academic excellence.
- 7.5.2 One argument was that the residential hall environment is not supportive of academic pursuits, and can undermine academic performance. Students face pressure to spend a lot of time on hall activities at the expense of study time, failing which they might not be able to meet the readmission criteria. Academic excellence is not celebrated, and residents perceived as focusing too heavily on their studies may be viewed as self-centred. One student said that halls do not strive for excellence, but rather for mediocrity, since the GPA threshold for readmission is set at only 2.0. Partly this is because sports and cultural activities loom so large in the culture of many halls, dominating student life from orientation camp forwards. Partly it is because there is not enough provision for collective study space to enable hall residents to work together on academic tasks. Partly it is because the RAA system often makes little difference to the academic life of halls. There is some support for this view in CoD data on reasons for unsatisfactory student performance, though the situation has improved considerably in recent years.
- 7.5.3 A second view was that the residential hall environment enables students to support each other in their studies more readily than on campus. Hall activities and academic studies are not mutually exclusive. Rather, it is a matter of priority setting and time management, and individual students have the discretion to make their own choices. Furthermore, through participation in hall activities and interaction with other residents, students attain intellectual development, which contributes more broadly than academic studies to their university education.
- 7.5.4 A third view was that the residential halls are not designed to support students' pursuit of academic excellence, but at the same time are not detrimental to it. They simply operate in different spheres of student life.
- 7.5.5 St. John's College draws on its own resources to employ academic tutors to mount academic activities, such as weekly Law tutorials. It also has an extensive alumni network able to support off-campus activities, including a vibrant internship programme. In 2016-17, it held its sixth annual academic colloquium, and in recent years has joined forces with other halls to create an interhall academic symposium.

7.6 Nurturing of responsibility, responsiveness and leadership capacities

- 7.6.1 Many students saw nurturing of responsibility, responsiveness and leadership capacities as a key attribute of the residential halls, arguing that it is one of the major areas enabling them to be more than mere dormitories. A strong point made by several students was that freedom is a requirement if students are to exercise

responsibility. Many thus emphasized the importance of student autonomy as a driver for this educational aim and, indeed, several others. They saw autonomy as a core hall value, and sometimes noted that wardens and tutors interfere too much in hall life.

- 7.6.2 Alongside a desire for collective autonomy in running the residential halls, some students also called for more personal autonomy. One non-local doctoral student argued against rules banning alcohol, gambling and sex from the hall, and noted that such regulations directly undermined hall aspirations to build student independence and autonomy. The same student also argued against segregating male and female students by floor within mixed halls.
- 7.6.3 Some students noted that sometimes there is too much pressure for students to get involved in residential hall activities, and that this reduces the time in which they are able to pursue their own passions and interests. They noted that the tone is often set during orientation camp, which according to some students can be quite ‘harsh’. It is reinforced by the readmission process, which requires students to register accomplishments within a fixed framework and thereby limits difference and diversity. Against this, it was argued that some students do not feel responsible towards the hall community, preferring to treat their halls merely as a place to sleep. There was a tendency to place non-local students in this category. A small number of students saw this as acceptable, however, since non-local students often have little choice but to live in hall.
- 7.6.4 Many students noted that there are abundant opportunities in the residential halls for students to exercise leadership through the Executive Committees of HSAs, floor associations, organizing committees and persons-in-charge of hall functions, sports and cultural teams and other student bodies. These experiences enable students to develop a keen sense of responsibility, whether as a leader or even as a team member, as well as other interpersonal skills. Against this, some students said that while all of this is true, the types of leadership that pervade many halls are not necessarily fit for use outside. One student who made this point argued that leadership abilities acquired in hall were unlikely to be transferable to the real-world context encountered by graduates. This student’s view was that more useful leadership skills could only be gained in other contexts, such as an internship experience. Another student said there should be more possibilities to develop visionary leadership within the halls.
- 7.6.5 Some aspects of the ‘seniority system’, whereby established hall residents come to dominate residential hall culture and control junior residents, were criticized by a number of students. New residents face pressure to commit heavily to hall activities in order to meet readmission criteria. Despite this, senior students are insensitive to the immense pressure generated by hall activities, and are sometimes too immature for the mentorship roles they assume. One student said there was too much ‘verbal bullying’ from senior students. Another said that while guidance from seniors is good, it should not become oppressive. This student felt that friendship would be enough from senior students.

7.7 Positive about difference, diversity, inclusion and integration

- 7.7.1 Broadly, students were strongly supportive of the proposition that the residential halls should be positive about difference, diversity, inclusion and integration. They also noted that in terms of membership and activities halls have become more diverse and inclusive in recent years, with non-local students joining and new clubs forming

beyond traditional areas such as sports and cultural activities. In general, there was a sense that the halls are making progress towards these linked values.

- 7.7.2 In support of these points, many positive comments were made by hall residents. Some said that the hall environment enables residents to communicate and exchange ideas with students of different disciplines, countries and cultural backgrounds more readily than on campus. Some noted that all hall residents are free to join hall sports and cultural teams, and can also develop new teams and clubs of their own volition. Some reported that there is a rising awareness among hall residents of the need for integration of local and non-local students. Mostly there is mixing of local and non-local students on floors, and some students also choose to share a room with someone from a different cultural background. To promote integration, one hall pairs all non-locals with a local freshman student. In some halls a sub-committee to promote integration of non-local students in hall activities has been formed, though in one hall this practice has already been tried and abandoned. Hall publications are mostly presented in English or bilingually, and English translation is often provided to non-Cantonese speakers for hall activities conducted in Chinese. Integration activities, such as international cooking day, are organized to enhance understanding between students from different cultural backgrounds. If language and cultural barriers can be overcome, local and non-local students integrate particularly well in sports teams through a strong sense of commitment and bonding.
- 7.7.3 Against this, an argument mostly revealed in the online feedback was that difference, diversity, inclusion and integration are either discouraged or not fully promoted in the residential halls. Again the ‘seniority system’ came in for criticism, as it generates a bias towards conformity. At the heart of hall culture, the strong emphasis on interhall sports competitions, reflected in readmission criteria, limits diversity. Some students feel they do not have the option to prioritize their studies over hall activities. Within halls, local and non-local students are sometimes segregated, whether on floors or in activities. In many halls, activities are conducted in Cantonese to cater for local students. Differences in lifestyle and habit also generate distance. Hall orientation activities were also criticized. Mostly they take place in Cantonese, and in general there is a lack of induction activities for non-local students. Often they are challenging both physically and emotionally. Occasionally reports surface of freshmen being bullied and humiliated. Currently there are no detailed written guidelines to inform wardens and tutors on procedures for handling such cases.
- 7.7.4 Among some local students there was a belief that non-local students were not keen on integrating with their own residential hall community, since few non-local students had joined hall clubs and teams, and invitations to join lunar new year and ‘superpass’ dinners had been turned down. While for some this was a problem, for others it was a natural consequence of non-local students having little choice but to live in hall. Either way, there is clearly a chicken-and-egg situation here that is hard to disentangle. Nevertheless, some local students were critical of non-local students who failed to respect the distinctive way of life developed in the halls across many cohorts of residents. There was also resentment of perceived lower expectations for non-local students in some hall readmission exercises. An argument was made that on joining a hall students should be prepared to make every effort to adapt to its culture and values and commit fully to its activities.
- 7.7.5 Reflecting on these distinct perspectives, many students felt more could be done to encourage hall residents to develop a wider range of interests and talents. Quite a few

students felt that hall education was still mostly for locals, with non-locals living beyond that sphere. While the halls offer a thick 'HKU-style' residential experience to most local students that is a form of residential education, they offer only a thin experience to many non-local students, meaning that the notion of residential education does not really apply and the halls become little more than dormitories for many residents.

7.7.6 The residential halls are generally receptive of students with disabilities and SEN. They are reasonably friendly towards lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students. Working with CEDARS, they play a significant role in identifying and helping students facing mental health crises and suicidal thoughts.

7.7.7 One point made under this heading was that many students living far from campus do not join the residential halls. Some apply and are not admitted, while others are concerned about the adverse impact of intensive hall activities on their academic studies. It was suggested that more consideration be given in the admission and readmission system to students' practical need to live in hall.

7.8 Affirmative of working constructively with others

7.8.1 Affirmative of working constructively with others was widely thought to be a core value in the residential halls, with all members in principle having the opportunity to join forces in a wide range of hall activities, and the emphasis being more on attitude than ability.

7.8.2 Nevertheless, several students identified problems with implementation of this value in the residential hall context, arguing in particular that interhall competition and the requirement to work constructively with others generated by it is one of the biggest issues facing the hall community. A general feeling was that interhall competition takes up too much time. Other students noted that the floor system can become too dominant within halls, meaning that residents work constructively with only a small proportion of the individuals living in their hall. Others said that the halls isolate themselves from the rest of the University, creating a small circle within which to work constructively with others.

7.8.3 Many students argued that new ways should be found to leverage the extensive bonding that takes place in the residential halls to contribute to both HKU and Hong Kong as a whole. The argument was that while hall education is not for all, it should generate a platform for those who experience it to reach out to and benefit others. In general, students were strongly in favour of greater hall engagement with the wider Hong Kong community, citing possibilities for school visits, hall visits for secondary-school students, and broad-based social service projects.

8 Recommendations

8.1 Overview

8.1.1 This chapter presents the Panel's recommendations, numbered R1-R43, using the substantive headers from chapters 6 and 7 to structure analysis. Since each of those chapters has four substantive sections, the recommendations are grouped into eight major categories. They apply fully to the 11 University-administered halls, and less directly to Ricci Hall and St. John's College.

8.2 Strategic issues

8.2.1 R1 The Panel recommends that more undergraduate students be given the opportunity to live in hall and benefit from residential education. To this end, it recommends that CoH devise a guideline designed as soon as practicably possible to raise the segment of residential hall places reserved for new undergraduate students or students with no prior hall experience in University-administered halls from the current level of roughly 40 percent to around 60 percent, as at HKUST. It further recommends that the readmission standard be raised progressively with each year that a resident seeks readmission to a residential hall. It encourages the halls to adopt an expectation that normally local and non-local students will not live in HKU student residences, inclusive of residential halls and colleges, for the full duration of their normative period of studies.

8.2.2 R2 The Panel recommends that in the long term the University, led by SMT, align its practice with Government policy on student hostels by giving all undergraduate students the opportunity to live in a residential hall or college for at least one year and thereby benefit from residential education.

8.2.3 R3 The Panel recommends that the University, led by SMT, build on existing variation among the residential halls, considerably supplemented by the residential colleges in recent years, to develop a wide range of student residences offering distinct combinations of quality, price, location and lifestyle, as at Manchester. It further recommends that SMT invite private providers to join forces with the University to generate a diverse set of accommodation options for students. When new halls are being developed, it encourages SMT to consider experimenting with one or two halls offering a fully residential and dining experience, as at CUHK, Harvard and Stanford. More radically, it encourages SMT, again when building new halls, to think about creating a freshmen residence, as at Harvard and Stanford.

8.2.4 R4 The Panel recommends that SMT ensure that the residential halls be maintained at an appropriate physical standard for an institution of HKU's stature and ambition. To address resource issues, it further recommends that SMT create a working group to join with key stakeholders in evaluating the recurrent financial needs of the residential halls, and the implications for lodging charges.

8.2.5 R5 The Panel recommends that CoH allocate no additional funding to HEDP, that HEDO be closed at the end of the present funding cycle, and that a mechanism be devised for channeling an equivalent level of resource directly to individual halls

mainly on the basis of student headcount. It further recommends that wardens, in collaboration with HSAs, be invited to submit to CoH a brief plan for use of this resource in supporting residential hall education, and that CoH monitor spending through an annual reporting cycle.

8.2.6 R6 The Panel recommends that SMT commission strategic reviews of residential hall education and culture on a regular cycle of around 10 years.

8.2.7 R7 The Panel recommends that each residential hall undertake an analysis of its values, culture and practices in order to determine its strategic positioning within the wider University. It encourages some of the halls to consider introducing lifestyle-moderated areas, as at Manchester.

8.3 Rules and regulations

8.3.1 R8 The Panel recommends that CoH review existing rules and regulations to ensure that the residential halls provide a safe and non-hostile environment for all residents, and safeguard student wellbeing. At the same time, and without prejudice to this proposal, it recommends that CoH and individual halls review current guidelines to reduce controls on students' social activities and enhance student autonomy.

8.3.2 R9 The Panel recommends that CoH build on existing internal regulations in many of the residential halls to introduce a universal rule throughout the residential hall community to create a quiet zone, intended for sleeping, from 12:00 midnight to 07:00 in the morning. It further recommends that no official hall activities of any kind be permitted within this zone.

8.3.3 R10 The Panel recommends that the residential halls devise internal rules making the adoption of an open-door policy a matter for individual choice.

8.4 Management structures

8.4.1 R11 The Panel recommends that CSWHT take urgent action to encourage and assist qualified female colleagues to become residential hall wardens. The Panel further recommends that CSWHT devise arrangements enabling candidates for wardenships to be permitted, but not required, to submit a joint application with a spouse or partner for appointment as co-wardens sharing in full the duties and benefits of a wardenship.

8.4.2 R12 The Panel recommends that SMT take the lead in establishing term limits for the posts of warden and tutor in the residential halls, if need be with input from CoH. For wardens, it recommends that an individual normally serve for up to three terms and, in any case, not more than four terms totalling 12 years within one hall. For tutors, it recommends that an individual serve, at different levels within one hall, for a combined total period of no longer than nine years. In cases where incumbents have already exceeded these term limits, it recommends that a grace period of up to one further term following expiry of the current term be allowed, subject to established reappointment procedures.

8.4.3 R13 The Panel recommends that SMT revise the appraisal system for residential hall wardens, tutors and managers. For wardens, it recommends that the annual appraisal system be delegated from the President to DoSA, with a scheduled individual appraisal session held annually by DoSA and reported to the President. For tutors, it

recommends that performance review be conducted annually by the wardens taking into account opinions provided by the HSA, with common key performance indicators proposed by CoH for endorsement by CSA and CSWHT. For managers, it recommends that performance review be conducted annually by two wardens within the cluster, with input from hall residents, and endorsed by DoSA.¹⁰

- 8.4.4 R14 The Panel recommends that DoSA work with the residential halls to establish an active mentoring and sharing system to enable wardens and tutors to exchange knowledge and share experience on a regular basis.
- 8.4.5 R15 The Panel recommends that DoSA take the lead in working with CEDARS, EOU and the wardens to devise a system requiring tutors, within six months of appointment, to complete specialized on-campus training covering basic knowledge and skills associated with student wellbeing, equal opportunity and related areas.

8.5 Operational models

- 8.5.1 R16 The Panel recommends that each of the residential halls articulate its identity and positioning more clearly to help prospective applicants make their choice of hall.
- 8.5.2 R17 The Panel recommends that DoSA take the lead in working with the residential halls to enhance the clarity and transparency of admission and readmission criteria. It further recommends that these criteria be publicized internally on the websites of the halls and CEDARS, and be updated in a timely manner.
- 8.5.3 R18 The Panel recommends that the residential halls apply uniform criteria to local and non-local students applying for admission or readmission to the same hall.
- 8.5.4 R19 The Panel recommends that CoH establish a broad parity of admission procedures and a common structured process across the residential halls. To this end, it recommends that a small group charged with making decisions on applications for admission and readmission be chaired by the warden and comprise at least one of each of the following members: a tutor, an HSA Executive Committee member, an ordinary local resident, and an ordinary non-local resident. It further recommends that all appeals and exceptional cases be considered by a small group comprising a warden from another hall plus two residents from the hall in question nominated by the HSA Executive Committee, subject to oversight by DoSA.
- 8.5.5 R20 The Panel recommends that CoH review the mechanism for admission to residential halls of students with ‘absolute need’ to enable it to cater more fully for students with a practical need to live in University accommodation.
- 8.5.6 R21 The Panel recommends that, as part of a concerted effort to build a safe and non-hostile residential hall environment, CoH devise a clear and explicit statement to be transmitted throughout the campus, and reinforced by key leaders of the hall community, of the University’s complete disapproval and zero tolerance of bullying and harassment. It further recommends that CoH develop a framework within which CEDARS and EOU are able to provide systematic support and assistance to wardens, tutors and hall residents in handling alleged cases of bullying and harassment.

¹⁰ In University Hall appraisal of the steward can be conducted by the warden, with input from residents, and endorsed by DoSA.

8.5.7 R22 The Panel recommends that CEDARS strengthen the administration of policies and procedures on residential halls through creation of a one-stop online hub enabling students to obtain all relevant, up-to-date information in a single site visit.

8.5.8 R23 The Panel recommends that CoH create incentives for residential halls to engage in cost-saving measures, notably with regard to electricity and water. It further recommends that any such savings be channeled to HSAs for student activities.

8.6 Supportive of academic excellence

8.6.1 R24 The Panel recommends that SMT, through VP/T&L, take the lead in ensuring that residential education at HKU, while fully aligned with the UEAs, retain a distinctive character, and endorses the proposition, as at Stanford, that the aim is not to ‘academicize’ the residential halls, but rather to ‘create opportunities for students to connect their curricular and residential lives, in ways that enrich both’. It supports the development of a more formal, though elective, FYE programme, as at several benchmarked institutions.

8.6.2 R25 The Panel recommends, nevertheless, that as a means of signalling more clearly the desire of the halls to support academic excellence, alongside many other forms of student achievement, the residential halls capture academic performance in readmission exercises not on a threshold system (with, currently, a 2.0 GPA), but rather on an attainment system.

8.6.3 R26 The Panel further recommends that the residential halls base their admission and readmission criteria on an attainment system designed to appraise students’ achievements in a balanced way across four key areas of sports, cultural, academic and community service activities.

8.6.4 R27 The Panel recommends that the residential halls consider giving some of their tutors a more academic mandate to enable them to provide students with mentoring in generic academic skills.

8.6.5 R28 The Panel recommends that all residential halls consider taking part in the interhall academic symposium and other joint hall academic activities.

8.6.6 R29 The Panel recommends that the residential halls consider organizing an annual festival of residential education to showcase student attainment.

8.6.7 R30 The Panel recommends that AAC evaluate the operation of the RAA system to ensure it is able to offer effective support to residential education.

8.7 Nurturing of responsibility, responsiveness and leadership capacities

8.7.1 R31 The Panel recommends that the residential halls promote personal responsibility by reducing the number of activities in which students are expected to participate.

8.7.2 R32 The Panel recommends that the residential halls promote collective responsibility through more equal and democratic practices embracing all hall members.

8.7.3 R33 The Panel recommends that the residential halls seek to respond creatively to the needs of all members, and of the wider society to which they belong both within HKU

and in Hong Kong more generally. It strongly encourages the halls to enhance their outreach and community service activities.

- 8.7.4 R34 The Panel recommends that the residential halls model leadership opportunities on the kinds of leadership challenges likely to be faced by graduates navigating a wide array of careers and lifestyles in diverse global contexts.

8.8 Positive about difference, diversity, inclusion and integration

- 8.8.1 R35 The Panel recommends that the residential halls adopt the good practice of mixing local and non-local students throughout floors, rather than concentrating distinct groups at different ends or within distinct parts of each floor.

- 8.8.2 R36 The Panel recommends that the residential halls be encouraged to adopt the good practice of pairing in rooms first-year non-local students with first-year local students.

- 8.8.3 R37 The Panel recommends that the residential halls ensure that the University's commitment to the use of English in all publications be fully implemented, and that English be used in all major activities organized for hall members as it is the sole language spoken by all residents.

- 8.8.4 R38 The Panel recommends that the residential halls reconsider the current dominant emphasis on sports activities. It strongly encourages the hall community to review the number of sports counting towards award of the Malayan Cup and Olma Challenge Rose Bowl. In place of at least a dozen required sports, it favours a system of core and elective sports, with halls competing in a maximum of four sports in each category.

- 8.8.5 R39 The Panel recommends that CoH review the activities drawn on for award of the Centennial Cup to promote a more balanced development of different kinds of residential hall activities.

8.9 Affirmative of working constructively with others

- 8.9.1 R40 The Panel recommends that the residential halls make concerted efforts to supplement the existing floor system with mechanisms designed to bond together all members of a hall.

- 8.9.2 R41 The Panel recommends that CoH strengthen the mechanism for admission of non-resident hall members as affiliates of the residential halls. It recommends first that the non-resident membership schemes of University-administered residential and non-residential halls be consolidated into a single system; second that an opt-in system be introduced in 2018-19, enabling all undergraduate students who have not been admitted to a residential hall to apply either to join one of the non-residential halls, or to join one of the residential halls as affiliate members; third that a maximum non-residential membership quota be set for each residential hall at 100 percent of its residential capacity; and fourth that affiliate members register with residential halls through an online system on a first-come, first-served basis.¹¹

- 8.9.3 R42 The Panel recommends that the residential halls reach out more proactively to HKU staff by inviting both teaching and non-teaching colleagues from across the

¹¹ For the non-residential halls, a quota should be set within the capacity of the existing physical setting.

campus to participate in hall activities such as high-table dinners and hall festivals. It encourages the residential halls to move towards a system of ‘faculty nights’, as at Harvard and Stanford, to foster interaction with academic colleagues.

- 8.9.4 R43 The Panel recommends that the residential halls organize off-campus outreach and community service activities to enable students to work constructively with different social groups and thereby gain wider exposure and experience.

8.10 Implementation

- 8.10.1 For each of the Panel’s recommendations, a responsible party has already been identified to facilitate effective implementation of any reforms endorsed by SMT. One further way of viewing the package of recommendations is within broad areas of residential hall life: residential education, hall admissions, student wellbeing, hall activities, staffing, financial and administrative matters, and enterprise projects. This section presents these two cross-cutting dimensions in summary form as a means of specifying the different parties that need to work together for effective implementation in distinct spheres of residential hall life (Table 8.1).

Table 8.1 Responsible parties within broad areas of residential hall life

	CoH	SMT	Halls	CSWHT	DoSA	CEDARS	AAC
Residential education		R6, R24	R7, R29				
Hall admissions	R1, R19, R20, R41	R2	R16, R18, R25, R26		R17		
Student wellbeing	R8, R9, R21		R10				
Hall activities	R23, R39		R28, R31, R32, R33, R34, R35, R36, R37, R38, R40, R42, R43				
Staffing matters		R12, R13	R27	R11	R15		
Financial matters	R5						
Administrative matters					R14	R22	R30
Enterprise projects		R3, R4					

9 Conclusion

9.1 Looking backwards

9.1.1 At the end of the review process, the Panel is keen to acknowledge the many staff, students, alumni and friends of the University who contributed information and ideas to the exercise. More than 600 individuals engaged directly with the process as key stakeholders, participants in town-hall meetings, and respondents through the website. Others supplied essential data. The Panel is very grateful for all of this assistance, without which this report could not have been compiled.

9.2 Looking forwards

9.2.1 The Panel found much to commend and indeed applaud in the University's residential hall education and culture. It also identified areas in which necessary reform can be accomplished by the entire, vibrant, dynamic hall community working together to chart new ways forward that fit the circumstances of a comprehensive global university at the start of the twenty-first century. It hopes that this report can play a part in facilitating positive and constructive change.

9.2.2 The Panel further hopes that this review will not be an isolated event, but rather the start of an enhanced process of consultation and dialogue between stakeholders committed to the residential halls and concerned to promote their progressive development for many years to come. The Panel believes that widespread engagement with this exercise bodes well for the extended process of consultation and dialogue that ideally will take place in the future. Each Panel member is keen to extend the debate well beyond the four months within which this review was completed.