



香港大學教職員會

*The University of Hong Kong
Academic Staff Association*

Newsletter

May 2006

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EDITORIAL

In this issue of ASA Newsletter there are several topics that are of interest to members, including academic retitling and the progress on the HRM for our non-academic staff. Also included in this issue is Chairman's report presented at the AGM plus the ASA's financial statements for 2005-06.

May is examination time and most colleagues will be busy with the tedious but very important job of marking, leaving little time for other activities. Therefore, we must be vigilant, just in case the University makes any unexpected announcements.

L K Chu Tel: (852) 2859 2590, Fax: (852) 2858 6535, Email: lkchu@hkucc.hku.hk

ASA Executive Committee 2006

Chairman:	C W Chan	(Mechanical Engineering)
Vice-Chairman:	A T Yeung	(Civil Engineering)
Secretary	K C Cheung	(Mechanical Engineering)
Hon Treasurer:	Edward Chiu	(School of Business)
Newsletter Editor:	L K Chu	(Ind & Mfg Sys Engineering)
Ordinary Members:	P T Ho	(Computer Centre)
	W S Sze	(Mechanical Engineering)
	P L H Yu	(Statistics & Actuarial Science)
Co-opted Member:	S L Beh	(Pathology)
	P H Toy	(Chemistry)

From the Chairman

Annual General Meeting

I am glad to inform you that the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the ASA was held on Thursday, 16 February 2006 and that I was elected Chairman and K. C. Cheung Secretary. Overall, there is no change in the membership of the ASA Committee, as Philip Beh and Patrick Toy have kindly agreed to be co-opted members. With such an experienced team, I am confident that the ASA Committee will continue to serve the interests of all our members.

Retitling of Staff with a Lecturer or Associate Professor (Lecturer) grade to a Professor grade

We are glad that the University has at last initiated the process of retitling Lecturer/Associate Professor (Lecturer) to Professor. However, financial clearance is required before these retitling cases will be considered by the Promotion and Tenure Panel. As no salary increment is involved for those who are successful, one would have thought that there should not be any need for financial clearance. If this is in fact a promotion, staff who are successfully retitled should be entitled to a salary increment.

To clarify this issue, we met with the Vice-Chancellor and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor on April 3, 2006, and the key points of our discussions were as follows:

1. The University considers the retitling from Lecturer or Associate Professor (Lecturer) to Professor as a promotion.
2. Staff opting for fast track tenure can be considered simultaneously for both retitling and tenure.
3. On the need for financial clearance for retitling, our understanding is that the full details will only be available in around July 2006, and that financial clearance will be flexible and based on the number of staff to be retitled as submitted by Faculty.
4. Although we agree with the University that there should be a buffer for salary increments for staff successful in the retitling exercise, the buffer should be much smaller than the current one, so as not to hold up too much Faculty funds. We proposed that a buffer of 3 salary increments, updated regularly, should be sufficient to cover payments resulting from any promotions.

Our advice to members is to participate in this retitling exercise, especially if you feel that you have missed previous promotion opportunities because of a lack of quotas.

HRM Reform for non-academic staff

In March the University announced a proposal for the HRM Reform for non-academic staff based on the Hay Group Report. In the new HRM system, jobs will be broadly grouped into 11 bands and classified into 7 categories, with 3 tiers in each band, and salary increments will be based on performance. After thoroughly studying the recommendations, we strongly believe that the proposed HRM system should not be implemented, as many important details are still missing. Forcing it upon staff will only lead to chaos and to a severe erosion of staff morale.

The main reasons for our objection to the proposal are: a lack of career prospects in the proposed HRM system, no clear provisions for staff to transfer from contract to substantive terms, existing staff will be forced to transfer to the proposed HRM system with inferior terms when they are promoted, and the lack of clear performance assessment procedures and appeal mechanisms. More details of the reasons for our objection can be found later in this Newsletter. After raising our concerns with the University, the University released a revised proposal for consultation which addresses some of our main concerns. We will continue to convey to the University those concerns that have been adequately addressed in the revised proposal, e.g., career prospects and procedures for transferring from contract terms to substantive terms.

Election Committee

The registration of voters for the Election Committee Subsectors of the Election Committee that is responsible for electing the next Chief Executive of the HKSAR is now underway and will end on the 16th of May. We urge members who are eligible to register for the election to do so and to support and vote for candidates from our University and the Federation of Hong Kong Higher Education Staff Associations. A strong representation on the Election Committee is important for us when petitioning candidates for Chief Executive to support higher education and the universities in Hong Kong.

C. W. Chan

14th May 2006

Email Message on Retitling of Lecturer or Associate Professor (Lecturer) to Professor

Dear Members,

We are glad that the University has at last initiated the process of retitling Staff with a Lecturer or Associate Professor (Lecturer) grade to a Professor grade. However, in the circular outlining this process, Professor Richard Wong indicated that: “financial clearance will be required prior to considering these retitling cases by the PTP (Promotion and Tenure Panel)”. The need for financial clearance in this retitling exercise is unclear, since there is no salary increment for those who are successful in the retitling exercise, same as in previous ones.

To clarify this issue, we met with the Vice-Chancellor and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor on April 3, 2006, and the key points of our discussions were as follows:

1. The University considers the retitling exercise from Lecturer or Associate Professor (Lecturer) to Professor as a promotion exercise.
2. Staff opting for fast track tenure can be considered simultaneously for both retitling and tenure.
3. On the need for financial clearance for retitling, our understanding is that the full details will only be available in around July 2006, and that financial clearance will be flexible and based on the number of staff to be retitled as submitted by Faculty.
4. Although we agree with the University that there should be a buffer for salary increments for staff who will be successfully retitled, the buffer should be much smaller than the current one, so as not to tie up too much Faculty funds. We proposed that a buffer of 3 salary increments, updated regularly, should be sufficient to cover payments resulting from any salary increments.

Our advice to members on this retitling exercise is to participate, especially if you feel that you have missed previous promotion opportunities simply because the necessary funds were not available in your Department/Faculty.

C. W. Chan
ASA Chairman
20/4/06

Email Messages on HRM Reform Phase II

Subject : 非教學人員薪酬架構檢討

徐立之校長台鑒：

大學管理階層重複申明，校方需於十一月完成『非教學人員薪酬架構檢討』，以便校務委員會於十二月的會議上討論。為使顧問公司儘快完成檢討報告，校方更指示 Hay Group 可單方面進行其顧問工作，完全漠視職工會的關注。

現已踏入二零零六年，管理階層仍未提供任何有關 Hay Group 所作之檢討報告。這正說明校務委員會之決定，並不如早前管理階層所表示，是鐵石般不可變，而是可忽略的。故此，管理階層以時間緊迫為理由，拒絕職工會要求以科學化及專業角度來參與崗位分析工作坊，及沒有在合理時段，交代這一重要事件的進程，是不負責任的做法。

在此，我們再重述於九月十四日之全校職員大會所通過之決議如下：

「非教學人員薪酬架構檢討的評核準則和程序，必須經教職員會、職員協會和職工會跟香港大學共同制定，整個執行過程亦須有這三個會的充份參與，否則我們不會繼續參與有關的工作，亦不承認任何與非教學人員薪酬架構檢討相關的建議。」

香港大學教職員會
香港大學職工會

二零零六年一月五日

Subject : HRM Reform for non-academic staff

Professor Tsui Lap-Chee
Vice-Chancellor
The University of Hong Kong

5th January 2006

Dear Professor Tsui,

The University Administration has reiterated time and again that they have been instructed by the Council to complete the review of the HRM Reform for non-academic staff by November for Council discussion in December, 2005. The University has therefore instructed the Hay Group to push ahead unilaterally with their work and to produce the review report without taking into account the concerns of the staff association/union.

Even though we are now into 2006, nothing has been forthcoming from the Administration regarding the review report from the Hay Group. This suggests that the resolution of the Council is not as iron tight as was earlier indicated by the Administration, and that it can be readily ignored! It therefore seems extremely unreasonable of the Administration not to take time to consider our request for discussing our concerns that the Job Evaluation exercise has not been conducted in a scientific and professional manner. The Administration is also irresponsible in failing to inform staff in good time of the progress of this very important review.

We would also like to remind you of the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted at the general meeting of ALL non- academic staff held on 14th September 2005, which was attended by approximately 600 staff.

"Staff will participate in the Human Resource Policy Reform for non- academic staff (HRM Reform (II)) provided the criteria and procedures in the whole exercise are mutually agreed by Academic Staff Association (ASA), Non-Academic Staff Association (NASA) and University of Hong Kong Employees Union (HKUEU) and the University, and staff will not continue to participate in these exercises and will not recognize results obtained from such exercises, or any other exercises if they are not conducted with full participation from ASA, NASA and HKUEU."

Yours sincerely,

Academic Staff Association
University of Hong Kong Employees Union

Subject :校務委員會將研討的非教學人員人力資源報告

徐立之校長台鑒：

首席副校長王于漸教授在去年冬至日會見職員協會，相討有關非教學人員之人力資源重組，其談話內容，引起我們的關注。王教授以個人身份解說，當顧問公司 Hay Group 提交報告後，大學管理階層將會研究其內容，從而整理出一份文件，以便廣泛諮詢。

我們強烈反對以此處理方法，因為我們確信，只有將整份呈交與校務委員會之報告進行諮詢，才不會遺漏任何重要事項及引至誤導，令是次諮詢，變得毫無意義。再次強調的是，於九月十四日之全校職員大會所通過的決議，其約束力包括整個過程及諮詢，必須有這三個職員會的共同參與，而非向個別職員會進行。

敬希回覆。

香港大學教職員會
香港大學職工會
二零零六年一月二十三日

Subject : Report for Council discussion on HRM Reform for Non-Academic Staff

Professor Tsui Lap-Chee
Vice-Chancellor
The University of Hong Kong

23rd January, 2006

Dear Professor Tsui,

It has been brought to our attention that Professor Wong has met representatives of the Non-Academic Staff Association towards the end of last year to discuss the HRM Reform for Non-Academic Staff. In the meeting, Professor Wong indicated, in his personal capacity, that the University would study the report by the Consultant, the Hay Group, and that a document based on the report would be prepared for consulting staff.

We are strongly against this approach, as we believe that staff should not just be consulted on selected issues, but on the full report as considered by Council. Otherwise major issues may be omitted and staff may be misled into a meaningless consultation process. As a result of the resolution which was unanimously adopted at the general meeting of ALL non-academic staff held on 14th September 2005, we would like to draw your attention to the fact that it is necessary that all three staff associations/union be consulted jointly, and not as separate entities.

We look forward to receiving your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Academic Staff Association
University of Hong Kong Employees Union

Subject :校長的回覆 - 非教學人員之人力資源管理檢討

各位同事：

人力資源管理檢討(第二期)

教職員會及職工會早前致函校方，要求大學把顧問公司 Hay Group 所提交之報告全文一起共同時諮詢三個職員會/職工會。我們已收到校長之回覆，並附在信末。

我們歡迎校方承諾在充份諮詢員工之後，才將其人力資源檢討建議，呈交校務委員會考慮。在此，我們促請校長接納上述的要求，因為這報告對不同職級的非教學人員，有著同樣深遠的影響。

香港大學教職員會會員
香港大學職工會會員
二零零六年二月二日

致： 香港大學教職員會會員
香港大學職工會會員

收到二零零六年一月二十四日電郵，敬悉一切。

2. Hay 公司之報告乃大學委託該公司就非教學人員人力資源管理問題提交，故此大學絕無意圖不公布報告書全文，也從未考慮只選擇其中部分進行公開諮詢。
3. 當大學管理層提出建議後，校方將會適當地與各職工團體以集體和各別方式舉行會議。
4. 待收到 Hay 公司提交與大學之最後報告書時，麥思培教授當會儘快去函各職工團體告知隨後之安排。

祝 丙戌如意！

徐立之教授 謹啓

附件：香港大學職員協會會員
二零零六年一月二十五日

Subject : Reply of VC on HRM Reform for Non-Academic Staff

Dear Colleagues,

HRM Reform (Phase II)

We have received a reply from the VC on our request for a joint consultation involving all staff associations/union on the report by the Consultant, the Hay Group, and the reply is attached below.

We welcome the University to consult staff fully before finalizing the report on the proposed HRM Reform for non-academic staff for the consideration of Council. However, we would like to urge the VC to take on board our request, especially as the report involves all non-academic staff irrespective of their grades.

Academic Staff Association
University of Hong Kong Employees Union
February 2, 2006

January 25, 2006
Members of Academic Staff Association
Members of University of Hong Kong Employees Union

Dear Members,

HRM Reform for Non-Academic Staff

Thank you for your e-mail letter of January 24, 2006 to me.

2. The University has no intention of not releasing the full Hay report to staff since it is a report commissioned by the University to advise us on human resource management issues applicable to non-academic staff. It has never been our intention to select only parts of the Hay report for public consultation.
3. There will be a number of opportunities for Staff Associations and the Union to be consulted, collectively and separately as appropriate, once the University management's recommendations are available.
4. Professor John Malpas will be writing to all non-academic staff and Staff Associations/Union on the way forward as soon as Hay has submitted its Final Report to the University.

I wish you a Happy and Prosperous Year of the Dog,

Yours sincerely,

Professor Lap-Chee Tsui
Vice-Chancellor
cc Members, Non-Academic Staff Association

Subject :非教學人員之人力資源管理檢討報告書及校方建議諮詢

徐立之校長台鑒：

人力資源管理檢討(第二期)

副校長麥培思教授在大除夕日發出之通告，提及校方已收到顧問公司 Hay Group 所提交之終期報告書。而校方在審閱該報告書後，將會諮詢職員、職員會/職工會，然後才提交報告書及最終建議書與校務委員會在四月作最後決定。

二月將終結，我們敬請校方盡快展開有關的諮詢工作。使職員、職員會/職工會有充足時間去理解 Hay Group 所提交之終期報告書及校方對非教學人員之人力資源管理的最終建議，讓是次諮詢，得以認受。

敬希回覆。

香港大學教職員會
香港大學職工會 謹啓
二零零六年二月二十四日

副本： 香港大學職員協會

Subject: Consultation of Hay Group report & University recommendations

Professor Tsui Lap-Chee
Vice-Chancellor
The University of Hong Kong

24th February, 2006

Dear Prof. Tsui,

Re: HRM Reform (Phase II)

In an open letter to staff before the Chinese New Year, Professor Malpas announced that that the University has received the final report from the Consultant, the Hay Group, and that after studying the report, the University will consult staff and staff associations/union before submitting the report and University's recommendations to Council for its consideration in April.

As it is now close to the end of the February, it would be most appreciated, if the University can initiate the consultation with staff on the Hay Group report and the University's recommendations on the HRM Reform for non-academic staff as soon as possible. In order for the consultations with staff and staff associations/union to be meaningful, it is necessary to allow ample time for the process.

We look forward to receiving your early reply.

Yours sincerely,

Academic Staff Association
University of Hong Kong Employees Union

cc. Non-Academic Staff Association

**Subject : VC's reply on Consultation of Hay Group report & their recommendations 校長回覆非
教學人員之人力資源管理檢討報告書及校方建議諮詢**

March 6, 2006

Academic Staff Association
Non-Academic Staff Association
University of Hong Kong Employees Union

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for the letter dated February 24, 2006 from the Academic Staff Association and the University of Hong Kong Employees Union, copied to the Non-Academic Staff Association.

The University has received the Hay report and has been studying it. It is hoped that the report together with the University's comments can be released within the next week. We will certainly give ample time for consultation with staff members and staff associations/union before any recommendations are made to the Council.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Y. C. Richard Wong
Acting Vice-Chancellor

YCRW/JC/jc

cc Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Professor John Malpas, Pro-Vice-Chancellor
Professor Joseph Lee, Pro-Vice-Chancellor
Registrar
Acting Head, Human Resource Section

Subject: 教職員會與職工會對非教學人員人力資源管理檢討所安排之“保留原有條款不變”原則的立場書

各位同事：

明報在二月二十四日報導香港大學職員協會主席陳捷貴先生發表以下評論：『去年校內 3 個職員會合作處理校方進行薪酬檢討事宜，其間他任主席的職員協會建議，要校方承諾檢討後不會影響舊員工的薪酬與福利，但另兩會不同意』。陳捷貴先生這樣的斷言是毫無根據及錯誤的。

教職員會與職工會對大學應嚴格遵守聘用合約條款，皆非常重視。聘用合約是一份嚴肅及不可違背的文件，只有勞資相方同意，才可更改。實情上，當三個職員會與校方管理層於二零零五年三月八日，展開第一次人力資源管理檢討會談時，教職員會主席已提出此原則，這建議亦記錄在我們的會議記錄內，原文如下：

『大學管理階層知悉職員會下列觀點：(甲) 鑑於最近法院對國泰航空與僱員糾紛的裁決結果，大學應慎重考慮“grandfathering”之重要性』

我們認為陳捷貴先生的言論，不單止是錯誤的，更惡意中傷了教職員會和職工會的名聲，同時亦分化員工。

陳志煒博士 (教職員會主席)
朱紀東先生 (職工會主席)

二零零六年三月二十一日

Subject: Position of ASA and HKUEU on Grandfathering in Relation to HRM Reform for Non-Academic Staff

Dear Colleagues,

It was reported in Mingpao on February 24, 2006 that Mr. Stephen Chan, President of the HKU Non-Academic Staff Association (NASA) made the allegation: "去年校內 3 個職員會合作處理校方進行薪酬檢討事宜，其間他任主席的職員協會建議，要校方承諾檢討後不會影響舊員工的薪酬與福利，但另兩會不同意。(English translation: "The three Staff Associations co-operated last year on matters related to the Salary Review conducted by the University. In the process, Mr. Chan, President of NASA proposed to request the University to promise that the salaries and benefits of existing staff members should not be affected after the Review, but the other two Association/Union did not agree.")". This allegation made by Mr. Chan is groundless and fallacious.

Both the Academic Staff Association (ASA) and the HKU Employees' Union (HKUEU) are committed to the principle that the University should strictly uphold all the terms and conditions specified in our existing contracts of employment. Contracts are very serious and inviolable documents that can only be altered with the consent of both parties. Indeed, in our first meeting with the University Management held on March 8, 2005 to discuss the way forward in the HRM Reform for Non-Academic Staff, the Chairman of ASA brought up this issue, which was recorded in the Summary of Discussions of this meeting prepared and endorsed by all three Staff Associations/Union, including NASA represented by Mr. Chan, as follows: "The University Management heard the views of the Staff Associations and Unions that: (a) the concept of "grandfathering" be considered essential, particularly in view of the recent Court ruling on the dispute between Cathay Pacific staff and Cathay Pacific; ...".

Mr. Chan's allegation is not only untrue, but it is also a malicious attempt to undermine the reputation of both the ASA and the HKUEU, and staff unity.

Dr. C. W. Chan, Chairman, Academic Staff Association
Mr. Chu Kee Tung, Chairman, HKU Employees' Union

21st March 2006

Subject :教職員會與職工會就有關大學非教學人員的人力資源管理架構建議之立場

各位同事：

大學已審閱 Hay Group 所提交之非教學人員人力資源管理架構報告並作出建議。工作崗位大致上分為七個類別並組合於十一個組別，在每一個組別再設立三個級別，而每年的增薪點則與工作表現掛鉤。

經仔細研究大學的建議，兩會深信建議中的人力資源管理架構，在現階段不可能實施，原因是這建議沒詳細考慮到執行的細節，強制執行將會導致混亂及嚴重損害員工士氣。兩會反對的原因如下：

1. 薪酬結構

- 寬幅組別內的最低與最高的薪酬相差近倍，當中更沒有公平地釐定三個級別之薪酬。這樣只有引致同工不同酬的現象，因此是不可行的。
- 引進十一個組別，在每一個組別設立三個級別，用以歸納七個工作類別，將會製造比現時更多的職銜。
- 晉升途徑變得模糊，升職更加困難，例如二級文員需要跨越到高一個寬幅組別，才可晉升為一級文員。
- 大部份職員的頂薪點被降低，有些甚至減去百分之四十。相反地，高級管理人員的頂薪點反為增加，肥上瘦下。
- 建議內沒有指出合約制員工怎樣才能轉為責任制。

2. 工作表現評核

- 用以作為增薪、續約及晉升的工作表現評核準則，並沒有清晰地公開知會員工及評審員。
- 缺乏這些評核準則，工作表現評核變得十分主觀，導致偏袒徇私及奉承文化。
- 沒有對工作表現評核定立嚴謹的監察制度。
- 缺乏上訴機制，尤其是在部門主管為單一的評審員時，至為重要。

3. 「保留原有條款不變」

- 大學先前承諾「保留原有條款不變」，但沒有說明詳情，現在更把有些原有條款改變。因此，大學的承諾看來不過是空話。
- 責任制員工晉升後，需轉至新制度。但由於升職後的頂薪點可能低於現時薪金，員工只能加「辛」而不能加「薪」。更者，假期亦大幅削減，令升職失去意義。
- 員工現時薪酬高於建議中同組別的薪酬，將不會享有「生活消費調整」，直至到兩者薪酬相同為止。

總括來說，建議之人力資源管理架構是不完整及不公平的，亦會對大學做成混亂。因此，為大學及社會的長遠利益著想，我們不應該接納此建議。在此，我們重述於二零零五年九月十四日之全校職員大會所通過之決議如下：

「非教學人員薪酬架構檢討的評核準則和程序，必須經教職員會、職員協會和職工會跟香港大學共同制定，整個執行過程亦須有這些會的充份參與，否則我們不會繼續參與有關的工作，亦不承認任何與非教學人員薪酬架構檢討相關的建議。」

香港大學教職員會
香港大學職工會
二零零六年三月二十七日

Subject: Position of Academic Staff Association and University of Hong Kong Employees Union on the University proposal on the HRM Reform for non-academic staff

The University has announced the proposal on the HRM Reform for non-academic staff based on the Hay Group Report. In the new HRM system, jobs have been broadly grouped into 11 bands and classified into 7 categories, with 3 tiers in each band. Salary increments are based on performance.

After thoroughly studying the recommendations, we strongly believe that the proposed HRM system should not be implemented at this point in time, as important details are still missing. Forcing it upon staff will only

lead to chaos, and to a severe erosion of staff morale. The reasons for our objection are as follows.

1. Salary Structure

- Broadbanding with the maximum salary nearly doubled that of the minimum and without dividing fairly the salary range of the three tiers within each band is inequitable and unworkable. It can readily lead to remuneration that is inequitable for staff performing very similar duties.
- Introducing 11 bands with 3 tiers in each band and 7 categories will create more job grades than the existing ones.
- Career path for staff is unclear, and promotion has become more difficult, e.g., promotion from Clerk II to Clerk I will require moving through two bands.
- Maximum salaries for most junior staff are reduced, some by as much as 40%. In contrast, the maximum salaries for some senior staff are increased.
- The procedure for transferring from contract terms to substantive terms has not been touched in the proposal.

2. Performance Assessment

- The performance assessment criteria for salary increment, contract renewal and promotion have not been revealed to staff or to the reviewers.
- Without such criteria, the performance assessment exercises will be subjective, leading to favoritism and a “shoe shinning” culture.
- There are no checks and balances in the proposed system.
- There are no appeal mechanisms, which are particularly important when department/unit heads are the only assessors.

3. ‘Grandfathering’

- As the principle of ‘Grandfathering’ has not been fully defined, and some important elements in existing contracts have been changed, the promise of ‘Grandfathering’ appears to be hollow.
- Staff on substantive terms have to move to the proposed HRM system when promoted. As the maximum salaries of the proposed HRM system are lower than the existing one, and there is also a reduction in annual leave entitlement, promotion will become meaningless.
- Staff who are earning higher salaries than the band in which they are in will most likely not receive any cost-of-living adjustments in the proposed HRM system until their salaries are in line with colleagues who are in the HRM system.

In conclusion, the proposed HRM system for non-academic staff is poorly conceived and inequitable, and will only create chaos in the University. It is therefore not in the best interests of the University nor for society at large to accept this proposal. We urge the University to carefully consider the resolution adopted by 600 staff at the general meeting of ALL non-academic staff held on 14th September 2005:

“Staff will participate in the Human Resource Policy Reform for non-academic staff (HRM Reform (II)) provided the criteria and procedures in the whole exercise are mutually agreed by Academic Staff Association (ASA), Non-Academic Staff Association (NASA) and University of Hong Kong Employees Union (HKUEU) and the University, and staff will not continue to participate in these exercises and will not recognize results obtained from such exercises, or any other exercises if they are not conducted with full participation from ASA, NASA and HKUEU.”

Academic Staff Association
University of Hong Kong Employees Union
27th March 2006

Subject : 教職員會與職工會對大學倡議修訂非教學人員人力資源管理的回應

各位同事：

欣悉校方倡議修訂以 Hay Group 報告為主的非教學人員人力資源管理之新建議。由此可見，對於我們兩會於三月二十八日之立場書、同事們於三月二十八及二十九日在公開論壇所表達的意見及職員協會在四月三日呈交校長之函件所提出與兩會大致相同的表述，大學已作出正面行動。

我們深信，一個良好及有效的人力資源管理制度，必須包括以下重要元素，才能招聘和挽留良好質素的員工。

- 一個顧及員工事業發展途徑的架構
- 一個清晰的程序，讓合約制員工轉至實任制
- 一個公平、公開的表現評核程序與上訴機制

現有員工亦要能順暢地過渡至新的人力資源管理制度。實際上，如新的人力資源管理政策有適當地保障員工利益，過渡期當然會順利。因此，我們希望校方在修訂人力資源管理制度時，會考慮這些因素。

我們極之高興校方在修訂過程中，決定諮詢三個職員會/職工會。這表示校方也重視全校職員於二零零五年九月十四日所通過的決議。

教職員會：陳志煒，何沛德
職工會：朱記東，吳國恩
二零零六年四月十一日

Subject: Response to the University initiative to revise HRM Reform

Dear Colleagues,

We are glad that the University has initiated the process of revising the HRM Reform, which at the moment is based purely on the Hay Group report. It is encouraging that the University has taken a positive stand on the views expressed in our position paper sent to staff on 28th March, and on the opinions expressed by staff and us at the two open Forums held on 28th and 29th March and the NASA letter of 3rd April to the Vice-Chancellor which concurred with many of the points expressed in our position paper.:

It is our firm belief that a sound HRM policy that can attract and retain good staff must contain the following important elements:

- Clear career paths and promotion prospects.
- A clear path to substantive terms.
- Fair and transparent performance assessment procedures incorporating appropriate appeal mechanisms.

The migration of existing staff to the new HRM policy must also be smooth, if the new HRM policy is well thought-out by taking proper care of staff's interest, there should be no reason why the transition cannot be smooth. We therefore hope the University will take these factors into consideration when revising the HRM Reform.

We are extremely pleased that the University has decided to consult all three Staff Associations/Union in the revision exercise, showing that the University is taking seriously the resolution adopted by 600 staff at the general meeting of ALL non-academic staff held on 14th September 2005.

Academic Staff Association: C. W. Chan and P. T. Ho
University of Hong Kong Employees Union: K. T. Chu and Felix Ng
11th April 2006

Subject : HRM Reform(II) 會見人力資源政策委員會主席鄭維志先生

各位同事：

欣悉校方倡議修訂建議之非教學人員人力資源管理，而校方亦決定於修訂過程中，諮詢三個職員會/職工會。

在三月二十九日之 Hay Group 報告諮詢的公開論壇後，我們立即與校方會面。會上我們要求與人力資源政策委員會主席鄭維志先生直接對話，隨後於四月十三日，鄭先生連同王于漸教授及李行偉教授與教職員會和職工會代表會面。會上討論的重點如下：

1. 鄭先生申明是以私人身份參與會面，以便在校方呈交最後建議與人力資源政策委員會前，收集員工對大學所建議之非教學人員人力資源管理的回應。
2. 我們指出 Hay Group 報告內有多處嚴重錯漏，這亦是兩會於三月二十七日發表之立場書所提及的下列事項：
 - 晉升途徑變得模糊，升職更加困難，例如二級文員需要跨越到高一個寬幅組別，才可晉升為一級文員。
 - 大部份職員的頂薪點被降低，有些甚至減去百分之四十。相反地，高級管理人員的頂薪點反為增加，肥上瘦下。
 - 建議內沒有指出合約制員工怎樣才能轉為實任制。
 - 缺乏公平、公開的工作表現評核序與上訴機制。
3. 我們堅持，除非校方加入下列重要元素，否則員工亦不會接受修訂後之建議：
 - 一個顧及員工事業發展途徑的架構。
 - 一個清晰的程序，讓合約制員工轉至實任制。
 - 一個公平、公開的工作表現評核程序與上訴機制。
 - 一個周詳的安排，使現行員工之利益能暢順地過渡至新的制度及得以妥善照顧。
4. 鄭先生表明校方於修訂建議時，會慎重考慮員工之回應。
5. 當鄭先生被問及是否支持校方在修訂建議時，引入職員會/職工會的意見。鄭先生表明同意校方所採取之路向。我們指出員工亦不希望見到修訂後的建議，因人力資源政策委員會反對任何修訂而被否決。
6. 我們再次強調任何非教學人員人力資源管理政策的改變，必須諮詢三個職員會/職工會。可是，我們三番四次要求校方要與三會一起討論修訂，校方卻採取一個分化的手法，分別與兩會及職員協會會面。因此，我們兩會再次要求校方停止這分化行動。

教職員會：陳志煒，何沛德

職工會：朱記東，吳國恩

二零零六年四月十九日

Subject: HRM Reform (II) News-Meeting with Mr. Cheng, Chairman of HRPC

Dear Colleagues,

We are glad that the University has initiated the process of revising the HRM Reform, and has also decided to consult all three Staff Associations/Union in the revision exercise.

In our meeting with the University in the afternoon of 29th March, immediately after the open Forum held at lunch time on the consultation of the recommendations based on the Hay Group Report, we requested direct dialogue with Mr. Christopher Cheng, Chairman of the Human Resources Policy Committee (HRPC), and a meeting was subsequently arranged on 13th April, 2006. In addition to Mr. Cheng, Professor Richard Wong and Professor Joseph Lee were also present and were able to meet the representatives of the Academic Staff Associations (ASA) and the University of Hong Kong Employees

Union (HKUEU). The key points discussed in the meeting were as follows:

1. Mr. Cheng said that he was there in a personal capacity to get feedback from us on the University's proposal for the HRM Reform (II) before the final proposal was submitted to the HRPC.
2. We emphasized to him the many serious mistakes and omissions in the Hay Report, which were also raised in our position paper sent to staff on 27th March, namely that:- Career path for staff is unclear, and promotion has become more difficult, e.g., promotion from Clerk II to Clerk I will require moving through two bands.
 - Maximum salaries for most junior staff will be reduced, some by as much as 40%. In contrast, the maximum salaries for some senior staff will be increased.
 - The procedure for transferring from contract terms to substantive does not appear to have been considered at all in the proposal.
 - Lack of fair and transparent performance assessment procedures incorporating appropriate appeal mechanisms.
3. We stressed that unless the University incorporated the following important elements, staff will not accept the revised proposal:
 - Clear career paths and promotion prospects.
 - A clear path to substantive terms.
 - Fair and transparent performance assessment procedures incorporating appropriate appeal mechanisms.
 - Well thought-out arrangements that take proper care of existing staff's interests and which enables a smooth transition for existing staff when required to change to the new HRM policy, e.g., promotion.
4. Mr. Cheng indicated that the University would seriously consider feedback from staff in the revision exercise.
5. When asked whether he supported the University's intentions to revise their recommendation by taking into account inputs from Staff Associations/Union, he indicated his support of the actions proposed by the University. We in turn indicated that we did not wish to see the outcome from this revision exercise being turned down by the HRPC for the simple reason that they did not wish to make any revisions in the first place.
6. We again stressed that any changes in the HRM Reform for Non-academic staff must be through consultation with all three Staff Associations/Union. However, despite our request to discuss any proposed changes jointly with all three Staff Associations/Union, the University adopted the rather divisive approach of meeting us and NASA at separate meetings. We have requested the University to reconsider this divisive approach.

Academic Staff Association: C. W. Chan and P. T. Ho

University of Hong Kong Employees Union: K. T. Chu and Felix Ng

19th April 2006

Subject : Revised Report on the HRM Reform

Dear Professor Tsui,

We appreciate that Mr. Christopher Cheng, Chairman of the Human Resources Policy Committee, Professor Malpas, Mr. Wai and his colleagues were able to meet with representatives from both ASA and HKUEU, and that they have taken on board some of the concerns raised in our position paper (sent to colleagues on 27th March 2006) and in the meetings with them in their revised proposal.

At the meetings, we indicated that staff should be consulted before any revised proposals are put to the Council for consideration. We, therefore, would like to urge you to organize public forums urgently to seek the views of staff on the revised HRM proposal for non-academic staff.

Yours sincerely,

Academic Staff Association: C. W. Chan and P. T. Ho

University of Hong Kong Employees Union: K. T. Chu and Felix Ng

12th May 2006

Subject : 人力資源檢討的修訂建議書

徐立之校長台鑒：

在校方安排下，我們及教職員會和職工會的代表能夠與人力資源政策委員會主席鄭維志先生、麥培思副校長和韋永庚教務長會面及商議校方發放之人力資源檢討建議書。在這些會面中，我們重述兩會於三月二十七日立場書內提出的關注，現在校方在修訂其建議書時，亦接納了兩會立場書內表述的部份關注及在這些會上提出的意見。

與此同時，我們亦提出校方必須在充份諮詢員工之後，才將其人力資源檢討建議，呈交校務委員會考慮。故此，我們催促校方儘快安排公開諮詢會，以便收集非教學員工對修訂建議的意見。

教職員會：陳志煒，何沛德

職工會：朱記東，吳國恩

二零零六年五月十二日

Subject: Comments on the Revised Proposal on HRM Reform for Non-Academic Staff

Dear Colleagues,

The following is a copy of the letter, which we send today to the Vice- Chancellor expressing our concerns on the revised HRM proposal for non-academic staff. Although the revised proposal has taken into account our concerns expressed earlier, it has not gone far enough to safeguard the rights of existing staff. We strongly suggest that the University should take the concerns expressed in this e-mail seriously to further revise their proposal before submitting it for the consideration of Council.

Academic Staff Association: C. W. Chan and P. T. Ho
University of Hong Kong Employees Union: K. T. Chu and Felix Ng
17th May 2006

* * * * *

Dear Professor Tsui,

It is much appreciated that the revised proposal on HRM Reform for non-academic staff (document 91/506) has taken on board some of the concerns raised in the position paper of ASA and HKUEU (sent to colleagues on 27th March 2006) and at our meetings with Chairman of Human Resource Policy Committee and members of the University management. In the meetings, we reiterated that in order to be able to attract and retain good staff, the University must consider the following important elements when revising its proposal on HRM Policy for Non-Academic Staff:

- Clear career paths and promotion prospects
- A clear path to substantive terms
- Fair and transparent performance assessment procedures incorporating appropriate appeal mechanisms.
- Well thought-out arrangements that take proper care of existing staff's interests and enable them to transit smoothly to the new HRM policy.

However, the revised proposal (document 91/506) has not adequately addressed the above concerns for the following reasons:

- (1) The promotion prospects of existing staff are dealt with in general terms only. Although it is suggested in the revised proposal that current promotion procedures are applicable to existing staff, such staff will only benefit from these special concessions if they are promoted to newly created posts. For example, someone on a Clerk II grade can only be promoted to Clerk I if a vacant Clerk I post exists or has been created, otherwise promotion is virtually impossible. As the Head of a Department/Unit is now free to create new posts without any reference to existing posts, a new post may be created, but not necessarily as Clerk I. This example illustrates the revised proposal is totally inadequate to safeguard the promotion prospects of existing staff. In order to do so, existing promotion procedures should be able to be initiated without the need to first create the post.
- (2) In the revised proposal, new posts can be freely created. However, there is no mechanism to ensure cross-University equity for staff with similar qualifications and performing similar duties. Therefore, university-wide criteria for creating new posts and new titles should be established, and the career paths, promotion, as well as salary scales should all be clearly stated. The existing Committee on Conditions of Service, whose members include Staff Associations/Union representatives, should be given the responsibility for ensuring that any new posts created follow these criteria.
- (3) We indicated in the meetings that it is unfair to adopt the "0-1-2-3" scheme for performance-based salary adjustments for all non-academic staff. Senior colleagues with considerable autonomy in performing their duties are more likely to receive a 3-step increment, while junior staff with clearly defined and more restricted duties are much more likely to receive a 1-step increment. Since the proposed reward step of 2-3% of the salary is about half the current salary increment, any

three-step increments awarded to senior staff will be detrimental to the possible salary increments for junior staff. All this follows from the Hay Group Report in which they clearly state that "the funds for additional increment will come from saving by not awarding increments to those whose performance is not up to standards or for whom further increments are not justified". We therefore object strongly the proposal of introducing the "0-1-2-3" scheme and to the reward step of 2-3%. The University must adopt the existing reward step of 5% in their proposal; otherwise the University will be seen to be using the HRM Reform as a tool to cut our salaries, contrary to their earlier pledge not to do so.

- (4) The revised proposal only indicates the desirability of drawing up guidelines for contract staff to transfer to substantive terms, but without any specific commitments by the University. This is far from adequate. The revised proposal must therefore be further revised to include a firm commitment by the University on the transition to substantive terms. There is also the need to clarify when and under what circumstances substantive terms will be offered. This commitment by the University is particularly important to staff that have been on contract terms for many years.
- (5) Our understanding of the discussions in the meetings is that the performance assessment procedures will be transparent and fair, and appropriate appeal mechanisms will be established. The development of these systems should involve the Administration, staff and Staff Associations/Union, and not as stated in the revised proposal that "Different stakeholders will be involved in the work of the group with a view to setting up a proper mechanism to cater for the nature and requirements of different categories of jobs." The University should therefore make it very clear that staff and the Staff Associations/ Union will be involved in setting up the procedures and the criteria to be used for the PRSD and the appeal mechanisms for different grades of staff.
- (6) In the revised proposal, substantive staff will be permitted to retain their leave entitlement upon promotion. However, it is unclear whether contract staff can enjoy the same privilege upon contract renewal, promotion or substantiation. The current practice in the University is that contract staff are allowed to retain their original leave entitlement upon contract renewal or after promotion. Therefore, it would only be fair that they should continue to receive their leave entitlement, especially since some of them have been on contract terms for many years. The University needs to incorporate this clause into the revised proposal, if they wish to retain the service and loyalty of this group of staff, especially now that the employment market in Hong Kong is improving rapidly.
- (7) There is a lack of details on the cost-of-living-adjustments (COLA) in the revised proposal. The University should make it absolutely clear in the proposal how and when staff are going to receive the COLA, which should be in line with that offered to the Civil Service and in other large organizations in Hong Kong.
- (8) In the proposal, the salary ranges for the broadbanding system are established based on the employment market in Hong Kong a year or so ago, and it is unclear whether the University is going to review these salary ranges in future. The University must make it absolutely clear that these salary ranges will follow the general Hong Kong employment market, not only when it goes down, but also when it goes up.

Yours sincerely,

Academic Staff Association: C. W. Chan and P. T. Ho
University of Hong Kong Employees Union: K. T. Chu and Felix Ng
17th May 2006

cc: Professor John Malpas
Mr. Christopher Cheng, Chairman of HRPC
All staff members

**The University of Hong Kong
Academic Staff Association**

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 16 February 2006

Present: Dr. C. W. Chan (Chairman)
Dr. Albert T. Yeung (Vice-Chairman, Acting Secretary)
Mr. Edward K. C. Chiu (Hon. Treasurer)
Dr. K. C. Cheung
Dr. P. T. Ho
Mr. W. S. Sze
Dr. Philip L. H. Yu
and 14 other ordinary members

1. The Chairman declared the meeting open at 1:10 p.m.
2. **Minutes of the last AGM**
After some brief discussions, it was proposed by Dr. K. C. Cheung, seconded by Dr. Philip L. H. Yu, and agreed unanimously that the minutes of the last AGM held on 23 February 2005 be confirmed without amendment.
3. **Financial report from the Hon. Treasurer**
 - 3.1 The Hon. Treasurer presented the unaudited Financial Statement at the meeting.
 - 3.2 There was a slight decrease in membership subscriptions due to the departure of some members who took voluntary retirement.
 - 3.3 There was a payment of \$45,000 for legal opinions obtained on the Human Resources Reform for Academic Staff, as agreed by the ASA Committee.
 - 3.4 The expenditure of the Association was similar to previous year.
 - 3.5 Excluding some necessary incidental expenses, a balanced account was maintained.
 - 3.6 It was proposed by Dr. P. T. Ho, seconded by Mr. W. S. Sze and agreed unanimously that the Accounts be accepted.
 - 3.7 The audited financial statements when available will be published in the ASA Newsletter.
4. **Chairman's report**
 - 4.1 The Chairman gave a brief summary of the Chairman's Report tabled at the meeting.
 - 4.2 With regard to the University's Human Resources Management reform on both academic and non-academic staff, the Chairman emphasized that the ASA was not objecting to the reform in principle, but we were of the opinion that clear guidelines, benchmarks and implementation details must be provided by the University before implementing the reform.
 - 4.3 After some further discussions, it was proposed by Dr. Philip Yu, seconded by Mr. W. S. Sze that the Chairman's Report be received as tabled. The proposal was carried with 13 members voted for the motion, 1 against, 2 abstentions, and the Chairman abstained from the voting.

5. **Appointment of Hon. Auditor**

Mr. Edward K. C. Chiu recommended to re-appoint Y. H. Lai & Co. to be the Hon. Auditor for the next session. It was proposed by Dr. K. C. Cheung, seconded by Dr. C. O. Tong and agreed unanimously.

6. **Increase of subscription fee from \$160 to \$200**

After some discussion, it was proposed by Mr. W. K. Kwan, seconded by Prof. L. G. Tham to increase the annual membership subscription fee from \$160 to \$200. The proposal was carried with 16 members voted for the motion, 1 against, and the Chairman did not vote.

7. **Amendment of the name of the Association**

7.1 Regarding the proposal to change the name of the Association to "The University of Hong Kong Academic Staff Association" from the current name "the University of Hong Kong Academic Staff Association", an amendment was proposed by Dr. Peter Cunich to change the name of the Association instead to "The University of Hong Kong Academic and Senior Non-Academic Staff Association", which was seconded by Professor G. K. Y. Chan. After some discussions, the motion was voted and was defeated with 2 members voted for the motion, 10 against, 1 abstention, and the Chairman did not take part in the voting.

7.2 The original proposal to change of the name of the Association to "The University of Hong Kong Academic Staff Association" from the current name "the University of Hong Kong Academic Staff Association" and that the relevant entries in the ASA Constitution be amended accordingly was then made by Dr. K. C. Cheung, seconded by Dr. P. T. Ho and agreed unanimously.

8. **New Executive Committee**

The Chairman informed the meeting that there was only one candidate nominated for each of the posts:

Chairman: Dr. C. W. Chan
Secretary: Dr. K. C. Cheung

The candidates were declared elected unopposed and their two-year term will expire in 2008.

9. There being no further business, the meeting closed at 2:20 p.m.

Signed:

Chairman: _____

Date: _____

The Chairman's Report for 2005/06

The major efforts of the ASA this year have been directed at the Human Resources Management (HRM) Reform for both academic and non-academic staff. For the HRM Reform for academic staff, our main concerns have been the legal aspects of the new academic structure and the implementation details. We have also been working relentlessly with the University on the HRM Reform for non-academic staff. However, progress has been disappointing, as the University appears to be rather reluctant to take on-board our suggestions, particularly on job evaluations, despite our efforts in drawing the attention of the University to the inadequacies of the methods adopted by the consultant, the Hay Group.

During the year, we conducted three surveys: on the implementation details of the HRM Reform for academic staff, on the restructuring of the Faculty of Arts, and on the performance of those in charge of the HRM Reform. All the results were published and discussed in the ASA Newsletters.

The ASA has received a few requests for help from members during the year. The most notable one was the case of Dr. Y. C. Li, who filed a grievance against the unfair review of his performance in research. As his research is in classical Chinese literature and is written in Chinese, it would seem unfair that his research should be reviewed by academics that could not read and understand the Chinese language. Although the grievance was resolved to some extent, one would have thought that such a serious grievance should have been resolved much earlier and not be allowed to escalate into one that attracted so much public interest. Our main concern in this case was the lack of an objective performance assessment criteria and the lack of an appeal procedure for performance assessment, especially as we are now moving towards a performance based HRM policy.

A more detailed account of the activities undertaken by the ASA in the session is presented below.

(1) Human Resources Management (HRM) Reform for Academic Staff

(A) Implementation Details

The HRM Reform for academic staff was adopted by Council in the meeting held in September 2004, and the implementation details were announced in early 2005. It is most unfortunate that there was hardly any consultation with staff before finalizing the details. After the announcement, we conducted a survey to solicit the views of our members on the implementation details. It is clear from the survey that many of the key implementation details do not have the support of the majority of staff. Despite voicing our concerns in meetings with the Vice-Chancellor and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, the University still decided to go ahead with the implementation. Our main concerns on the implementation details are: a) that all the relevant committees dealing with human resources are made up of appointed members only, except the Faculty Human Resources Committee which includes one elected member from contract staff, b) that the criteria for salary increments, contract renewal, tenure and promotion are unclear, c) that performance reviews will be mainly conducted by the Head of Department/unit and his/her appointees, d) and, more importantly, there are no appeal procedures at all in the proposal. More details of our concerns can be found in the "Notes for the Meeting with Professor Tsui Lap-Chee, the Vice-Chancellor on 4 April 2005 at 5pm" published in the June issue of the ASA Newsletter.

It appears that the proposed HRM Reform, which already has produced many unpleasant surprises, is a step backwards when compared with the current system. The current Summative Review is event driven, and therefore does not necessarily apply to everyone, but the proposed HRM Reform affects everyone. Since the criteria for performance assessment are unclear, performance assessment can become extremely subjective, and can seriously affect our career. The most serious consequence of this badly designed HRM Reform is that it will deter good staff from joining the University and at the same time demoralizes existing staff.

(B) Legal Aspects

From the legal opinions obtained by ASA on the earlier draft of the proposed HRM Reform, and the one on the implementation details, it seems that the University has not adequately considered the legal

implications in the proposed Reform. The proposal to change our annual salary increments to biannual ones is clearly open to legal challenge, as already demonstrated by the Court case in which the Cathay Pacific Flight Attendants won the case against Cathay Pacific for unilaterally changing their contracts.

The ASA has made available the legal opinions that we obtained not only to all our members, but also to the University Administration. However, the University Administration has been reluctant to make the legal opinions that they obtained available to staff. The ASA has called a meeting of the Joint Committee of the Council and the Academic Staff Association chaired by the Council Chairman to discuss the legal issues and the implementation details of the HRM Reform. We repeated our request once again in the meeting and urged the University Administration to make their legal opinions available to staff. The Chairman of the Committee concurred with our view on the importance of a strong legal base for the HRM Reform.

(C) Performance Review and Development (PRD)

The University announced the PRD without first consulting staff. We conducted a survey to solicit views of our members on it; the results together with the comments were published in the June issue of the ASA Newsletter. From the results of the survey, it is clear that the main concerns of our members are the criteria and the procedure for the PRD, and how the results will be used. Our concerns, no doubt, have arisen from the top-down performance assessment procedure adopted by the University, which gives the Administration a tight grip on staff, especially since the performance assessment criteria are not transparent. Further, it will encourage a shoe-shinning culture, leading to bias and improper rewards. The progress of the implementation of the HRM Reform is clearly slow and unsatisfactory. We have conveyed members' concerns to the Vice-Chancellor and also pointed out to him that the proposed PRD does not appear to be in compliance with the Data Protection Principles promulgated in the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap. 486) of the Hong Kong laws.

We sent the letter to the Vice-Chancellor on 18th May 2005, urging him to delay the implementation of the PRD until staff have been consulted and our concerns resolved. We are also most disappointed that even after the appointment of Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Staffing), the University still cannot resolve these important and fundamental issues on the proposed HRM Reform. The lack of action by the SMT in addressing these important issues does not help to instill staff confidence in the proposed HRM Reform. Further, the confusions and uncertainties arising from the Reform will not help to attract and retain good staff.

We have advised members to obtain written confirmation on the followings, if they are asked to take part in the PRD:

- (i) The purpose for which the data supplied by staff are to be used and who will have access to the data. This is to ensure that the procedure adopted by the University complies with the Data Protection Principles promulgated in the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap. 486) of Hong Kong laws.
- (ii) The criteria and procedures for making decisions on salary increments, contract renewal, tenure, promotion, and whether the Department's strategic goals will be used as a major criterion for evaluating staff performance.
- (iii) An assurance that members of the review panel are competent to assess staff on their research, teaching and services/administration.

As a first step towards developing objective performance assessment criteria, the ASA has proposed several benchmarks for assessing research publications, which must obviously form the core of any research assessment. These benchmarks are based on the research publications of senior academic staff in the University. As some of them were promoted recently to prestigious posts that require excellent academic credentials as a pre-requisite, their academic achievements will form realistic benchmarks for measuring the performance of other staff in the University. Unfortunately, the University Administration is still reluctant to move in this direction, as in his reply, the Vice-Chancellor still seems to prefer an

holistic approach, but without giving any guidelines as how this holistic approach actually works in practice.

When a performance based HRM policy is adopted, it is inevitable that disputes will arise regarding the conduct of the performance assessment exercises. The ASA has drawn the attention of the Vice-Chancellor to the importance of resolving such disputes at an early stage to avoid a repeat of Dr. Li's case, and proposed that he should set up an appeal procedure for staff performance assessment. Unfortunately, progress has been extremely slow.

(D) Academic Portfolio of Achievement (APA)

As a first step in the PRD, the University Administration introduced the APA to collect personal data from staff; such data is stored electronically in a central database. It is uncertain as to how such data will be used by the University, and our advice to members is therefore to take extreme care when participating in such exercises and avoid compromising their rights.

(2) The Freeze on the Salary of Contract Staff

We received complaints from members that when their contracts were renewed, the salary was set at the same level as their old contracts, even when they had not reached the top of their salary scale. They also complained that the salary offered in the new contract was fixed for the entire contract period, though subject to cost-of-living adjustments. Further, this is a double blow for contract staff, as the freeze on their salary also affects their allowances in the Home Financing Scheme. We have written to the Vice-Chancellor and drew his attention to the fact that this is a departure from the normal practice of awarding such staff progression increments when their existing contracts are renewed. We also stressed that the Council has approved a merit based salary, not a fixed salary structure, and that this procedure is a clear departure from the policy on salaries approved by Council, and in fact represents a unilateral change that denies the legitimate expectation of contract staff to normal salary progression as stated in their existing contracts. We intend to follow this issue up as soon as possible.

(3) HRM Reform for Non-Academic Staff

We have been working relentlessly with the University Administration on the HRM Reform for non-academic staff starting from March last year. The main difficulty we are facing is the reluctance of the University to improve the transparency of the exercise. In the process of designing and implementing the new HRM policy, the full support of staff is clearly important. The University therefore needs to involve us in the review and the design of the new HRM policy. Although it is the responsibility of the University to conduct the review, the University should consult staff and take their concerns into account in the design of the new HRM policy. Otherwise, the University will be seen as taking a dictatorial approach, and thus jeopardizing the support of staff for the proposed HRM policy.

Our main concern is that the job analysis, an important part in the design of the new HRM policy, has been poorly and improperly conducted. Consequently the results of the exercise conducted by the consultant, the Hay Group, may be meaningless as an input to the design of the new HRM policy. Although the University made it clear that they may not accept part or all of the report, the criteria for accepting or rejecting the report has never been made clear to staff. Since the University did not take staff views seriously in the early part of the exercise, we have very little confidence in the value of the work conducted by the consultant. Consequently, the ASA together with the Non-Academic Staff Association and the University of Hong Kong Employees Union jointly organized a general meeting of All Non-Academic Staff at lunch time on 14 September 2005 at which 600 staff participated. In the general meeting, the following resolution was adopted:

“Staff will participate in the Human Resource Policy Reform for non-academic staff (HRM Reform (II)) provided the criteria and procedures in the whole exercise are mutually agreed by Academic Staff Association (ASA), Non-Academic Staff Association (NASA) and University of Hong Kong Employees Union (UHKEU) and the University, and staff will not continue to participate in these exercises and will not recognize results obtained from such exercises, or any

other exercises if they are not conducted with full participation from ASA, NASA and UHKEU.”

Despite the resolution adopted at the general meeting not to recognize the results of such an exercise, the University Administration still asked the Hay Group to continue with their review. The Hay Group has now submitted their report to the University Administration, and the University Administration promised to consult staff after they finished studying the report. We have sent a letter to the Vice-Chancellor requesting the staff associations/union and staff must be fully consulted on the report by Hay and the report prepared by the University on the proposed new HRM for non-academic staff and their views fully taken into account before submitting the final report for consideration by Council.

(4) Survey on the Restructuring of the Faculty of Arts

We have conducted a survey to solicit the views of the members of Faculty of Arts on the restructuring of their Faculty, as we felt that this restructuring exercise will have implications for all the Faculties in the University. We sent out 122 survey forms and we received 30 completed forms. One would have expected a better response rate, as the restructuring is likely to have a direct impact on all members of the Faculty of Arts. I hope this is not an indication of staff losing heart, or uneasiness over future uncertainties that are facing them, as many of them have expressed their concern at the lack of a clear budget allocation policy for the restructured Faculty in the survey.

While the reliability of the survey results may have been affected by the low return rate, general support for the restructuring does not seem to be as clear cut as the result of the secret ballot held by the Faculty of Arts tends to suggest. However, a major and common concern appears to be the lack of a transparent and equitable human resources policy, as indicated by the results of the survey and the comments on the survey forms. We hope that the results of the survey may help other Faculties if and when they are required to go through similar restructuring exercises.

(5) Survey on the Performance of Those in Charge of the HRM Reform

We have also conducted another survey towards the end of 2005 on the “performance of those in charge of the HRM Reform”. From the survey results published in the January 2006 issue of the ASA Newsletter, it appears that the majority of staff are most dissatisfied with the HRM Reform for both academic and non-academic staff, and since it is our goal to become a world class university, this is not the sort of problem that can be simply swept under the carpet. Further, an overwhelming majority indicated that they should be consulted before the Vice-Chancellor’s contract is renewed. It is most regrettable that the overall performance of the four members in the SMT involved in the HRM Reform has been so poorly rated. If we were to apply the same performance based HRM policy to those responsible for the development and implementation of the HRM policies, it is quite clear that they would need to face accountability action.

(6) Academic Freedom under Threat

The Administration of the Hong Kong Baptist University (BU) is trying to terminate six tenured teachers under “other good causes”. The BU’s view is that these six refused to sign new contracts, and therefore will create operation difficulties that constitute a good reason for initiating disciplinary actions under “other good causes”. This reason proposed is obviously nonsensical and unacceptable. If they are allowed to get away with it, then this will spell the end of academic freedom in Hong Kong. This case was discussed in the meeting of the Education Panel of the Legislative Council held on 26th January 2006. We and the Federation of Hong Kong Higher Education Staff Association fully support our colleagues at the BU in this important fight. I shall inform members of the progress in due course.

C. W. Chan
ASA Chairman
15th February 2006