

Hong Kong Baptist University
70th Convocation
Presidential Address

Embark on your transdisciplinary journey

Dear Students and Colleagues,

With great joy and enthusiasm, I welcome all of you to this momentous occasion—the 70th Convocation of Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU). Today marks not merely the commencement of a new academic year, but also the dawn of your transformative journey towards intellectual and personal growth. As you embark on this new journey, you will encounter challenges that test your limits, experiences that expand your horizons, and opportunities that prepare you to succeed in the rapidly evolving world nowadays.

As newcomers to HKBU, you are joining one of the region's most dynamic and thriving institutions. Here, you will become part of a diverse and vibrant community of over 7,000 undergraduates, nearly 5,000 postgraduates, and over 1,100 academic and teaching staff in our Hong Kong campus; and more than 8,700 undergraduates, over 1,200 postgraduates, as well as close to 600 academic and teaching staff in our Zhuhai campus, i.e. Beijing Normal-Hong Kong Baptist University. HKBU is a place where your unique talents, abilities and perspectives are welcomed and embraced. Together, we share a common vision: to pursue excellence and innovation for the betterment of Hong Kong, our Nation, and the world.

What sets HKBU apart is our deep commitment to whole-person education and transdisciplinary learning, teaching and research. We see the University not as a collection of isolated disciplines, but as a vibrant ecosystem where ideas intersect and flourish. We actively connect the humanities with the sciences, the arts with technology, in order to foster collaborations, generate insights, and cultivate innovation across boundaries. As you pursue your studies here, you will gain not only subject expertise, but also the necessary skills and integrative mindset to address the world's challenges.

One powerful example of our transdisciplinary approach to education is ensuring that all students engage with emerging technologies as part of the General Education programme. Beginning this academic year, every HKBU student will attain a basic level of AI literacy. Why? Because AI is no longer confined to computer science students and experts alone; it has become a revolutionary force reshaping different industries—from healthcare to finance, creative arts to sports. Much like literacy, AI competency is now an essential skill—one that can enhance learning and unlock productive capacity. At HKBU, we see AI as a partner for human ingenuity, not a replacement. When guided by ethical reasoning and critical thinking, AI can become a helpful tool. This is why we integrate it

thoughtfully into our curriculum, enabling you to gain both technical fluency and the wisdom to apply it meaningfully.

Of course, AI represents only one facet of our transdisciplinary approach. HKBU's vision extends beyond the technological realm. It is our aim to offer opportunities for students to build global networks and gain real-world understanding. We are rooted in Hong Kong with a campus in Zhuhai that is positioned in the heart of the Greater Bay Area, but our networks and presence extend far beyond. Our extensive exchange programmes with over 380 partners offer you the chance to develop the cultural fluency and global mindset required of global citizens and future leaders. I encourage you to take full advantage of the global networks of exchange partners that our university offers by participating in the exchange programmes which will not only allow you to explore new cultures and perspectives but also help you develop valuable skills and build lasting connections with peers from around the world. Through such global-local nexus, HKBU serves as both a gateway to Asia and a springboard to the international world. At the same time, our increasing internationalisation is evidenced by a double-digit growth in the number of non-local applicants for undergraduate study. This highlights HKBU's position as Asia's premier destination for cross-cultural learning.

We are proud to have launched the Jockey Club Campus of Creativity earlier this year. This is a major facility development that transforms the very concept of campus life. At its heart lies the Village CARE, with "CARE" standing for "Creative Arena for Residential Education". It embodies our vision of integrating living space and learning environment to allow students from diverse disciplines to interact, live, learn and create together. This campus is our ambitious endeavour which will be in full service starting this academic year. Please go and experience it!

It must also be highlighted that this academic year holds special significance to HKBU as we will celebrate the 70th anniversary of the University's founding in 2026. It is a historical milestone that honours seven decades of excellence in higher education. We will host a series of activities and events that pay tribute to the people who have shaped this university: the educators, the researchers, the staff, the generations of alumni, the stakeholders, and just as importantly, you—our students—who will inherit HKBU's legacy and carry our values into the future. Through your studies, research and service, each of you contributes to who we are and what HKBU represents. Let us all look forward to the celebrations ahead. I hope you feel as excited as I do!

While you are at HKBU, the education you receive will reward you with more than a qualification—it will cultivate your identity, help you find your purpose, and lead you towards many possible doors and paths. Go out of your comfort zones, join activities that intrigue you, meet peers who can broaden your horizon, seek guidance from your professors, and engage with the community. Along the way, you may be surprised by the progress you have made and the achievements you never expected to accomplish. These progress and the achievements will not only help you succeed in your future career but also prepare you to make significant contributions to our society, the Nation and even to the world.

Above all, when you put on graduation gown a few years down the road, I have every confidence you will be richer not only in knowledge and skills, but you will also have become well-rounded individuals who can think creatively and critically, communicate effectively, and lead with integrity and vision.

Once again, let me extend my warmest welcome to all of you. May your years at HKBU be filled with fun, inspiration, lasting memories and enriching growth. We're delighted you have joined our HKBU community, and we shall look forward to seeing you around!

Thank you!