

# Opinion Survey of HKAGE Students and Alumni

## Executive Summary

The Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education (the Academy) commissioned the Centre for Communication and Public Opinion Survey (CCPOS) of the Chinese University of Hong Kong to conduct two surveys gauging the views of its students and alumni. The surveys were carried out on 1st, 5th, 6th, 11th and 12th March 2016. Samples were randomly chosen and provided by the Academy. All of them were the secondary students and alumni who had participated in the Academy's courses by the end of 2015. CCPOS conducted the surveys by interviewers through phone interviews with the aid of Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) system. 302 secondary students and 199 alumni were successfully interviewed and the response rates were 52% and 41% respectively. The major findings are summarized below.

### *Students and Alumni: Opinions on the Academy's Courses and Services*

1. The first twelve questions in the questionnaires for both students and alumni aimed at understanding their views on the courses and services provided by the Academy from three aspects. Question 1 to 4 were related to academic aspect, including "Improving knowledge of a particular domain", "Deepening interest in a particular domain", "Improving study skills" and "Aiding academic results and development ". Question 5 to 8 were related to social aspect, including "Enhancing communication and social skills", "Making friends with peers of similar ability or interest", "Making friends from diverse backgrounds" and "Enlarging social circle". Question 9 to 12 were related to personal growth aspect, including "Broadening horizons", "Aiding future planning", "Enhancing self-confidence" and "Enhancing leadership skills". In each question item, respondents were asked to rate the Academy's courses and services on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "Totally cannot", 5 being "Totally can" and 3 being "Fair". Besides calculating the mean of each item, mean of academic index, social index and personal growth index could also be computed based on the ratings in items concerning the three aspects. This could provide a comprehensive understanding of students' and alumni's views towards the three aspects. In addition, respondents giving 4 or 5 points could be considered that they thought the Academy's courses and services were helpful. From which, the proportion of students and alumni who had positive views on the Academy's courses and services

could be known. The analysis of these twelve questions are as follows.

- Most students and alumni thought that the Academy's courses and services could "Broaden horizons". 82.1% of students and 73.4% of alumni gave 4 or 5 points. The mean scores were 4.13 (students) and 3.88 (alumni). It was followed by "Improving knowledge of a particular domain". 80.8% of students and 64.8% of alumni gave 4 or 5 points. The mean scores were 3.93 (students) and 3.69 (alumni). The third highest rated item was "Deepening interest in a particular domain". 74.2% of students and 65.4% of alumni gave 4 or 5 points. The mean scores were 3.92 (students) and 3.68 (alumni).
  - For most of the remaining items, around half of the students thought the Academy's courses and services were helpful, the mean scores were between 3.40 and 3.60. However, the lowest rated item was "Enhancing leadership skills", with the mean of 3.24. Only 40.4% of students thought the Academy's courses and services were helpful on this. Meanwhile, there were variations among alumni's ratings in different items. Among them, there were 3 items that only less than 30% of alumni thought the Academy's courses and services were helpful, namely "Improving study skills" (23.6%), "Aiding academic results and development" (26.1%) and "Enhancing leadership skills" (28.6%). The mean scores of these three items were just below 3.0.
  - Regarding the students, the mean of academic index was the highest (3.69), followed by the mean of personal growth index (3.59). The lowest was the mean of social index (3.47). Regarding the alumni, the three indexes were close. The mean of social index, academic index and personal growth index were 3.38, 3.33 and 3.30 respectively.
  - By comparing students' and alumni's views towards the Academy's courses and services, students' ratings in the respective four items of academic and personal growth aspects as well as the mean of the two indexes were also significantly higher than alumni's. For the social aspect, students' and alumni's ratings were close, but the students' mean in the item of "Enhancing communication and social skills" was significantly higher than the alumni's.
2. 68.9% of students and half (50.3%) of alumni opined that the Academy's courses and services were helpful for their overall growth and development. There were significantly more students than alumni thinking that the courses and services were helpful.
  3. 81.8% of students and 62.3% of alumni were overall satisfied with the Academy's courses and services. There were significantly more students than alumni expressing

satisfaction with the courses and services.

4. Regarding the biggest benefit obtained from the Academy, based on the four options provided in the questionnaires, students and alumni held the views with same order as follows: "Learning advanced knowledge in a specific domain" (students: 63.6%, alumni: 51.8%); "Learning new concepts in a specific domain" (students: 58.9%, alumni: 41.7%); "Learning from specialist outside school" (students: 30.8%, alumni: 31.7%); "Learning from peers" (students: 21.9%, alumni: 29.1%). There were significantly more students than alumni choosing "Learning advanced knowledge in a specific domain" and "Learning new concepts in a specific domain" as the biggest benefit obtained from the Academy.
5. An open-ended question was asked whether students and alumni think any improvement of the Academy's courses was needed or have any other suggestion. 74.5% of students and 78.4% of alumni thought that there was no need to improve or could not offer any suggestions. Recommendations for improvement given by the rest of the respondents could be categorized into four aspects. 1) Improving "Arrangements and administration of courses or services" (students: 14.2%, alumni: 7.0%), such as increasing the number of lessons, and improving class schedule. There were significantly more students than alumni giving suggestions in this aspect; 2) Improving "Categories and choices of courses or services" (students: 8.3%, alumni: 8.0%), such as increasing courses of different categories, adding extracurricular activities like field studies, and providing courses for high school graduates; 3) Improving "Content and design of courses or services" (students: 5.0%, alumni: 5.5%), such as having small-class teaching, and increasing interactivity in courses; 4) Improving "Information and promotion of courses or services" (students: 1.3%, alumni: 4.5%), such as informing students about the latest information through email, and increasing publicity and promotions. There were significantly more alumni than students giving suggestions in this aspect.

#### Students: Learning Expectations

6. 58.3% of students were interested in face-to-face teaching courses. 35.4% were interested in workshops. 32.5%, 32.5% and 29.8% would like to join study tours, online courses and experiencing workplace respectively. 26.2%, 25.8% and 22.8% were interested in training camps, talks and competitions respectively. Only 6.0% would like to participate in mentoring schemes.
7. 53.6% of students were interested in physics and chemistry courses. 42.1% were

interested in mathematics and 38.7% interested in biology. 36.4%, 31.8% and 30.8% were interested in languages and humanities, leadership, and social sciences respectively. 22.8% were interested in courses about personal growth and social development.

8. 73.2% of students expressed wish to study in Hong Kong's universities, while 18.9% would like to study in overseas universities. 5.3% indicated that they were fine with studying in Hong Kong's or overseas universities.
9. Half (50.3%) of students intended to study science subjects at university. 27.5% intended to study medicine. 16.2%, 14.6%, 13.9%, 12.9% and 11.9% would like to study engineering, arts, business, social sciences and law respectively.

### *Students: Performance and Achievements*

10. Almost all (99.7%) students did not skip grades in the past three years.
11. 39.1% of students served as chairpersons or vice-chairpersons of clubs and societies in the past three years.
12. 27.8% of students participated in local open competitions and won the top three prizes or awards in the past three years.
13. 5.6% of students participated in international open competitions and won the top three prizes or awards in the past three years.
14. 61.6% of students got scholarship in the past three years. 41.4% won internal scholarship from school, 4.6% won external scholarship, and 15.9% got both internal and external scholarships.
15. An open-ended question was asked in order to understand the students' proudest achievement in the past three years. Based on the responses, five aspects of achievement could be categorized. 33.1% of students were most proud of "Having good academic performance and development", such as being the first at subject in grade, and admitted to a desirable school. 15.2% were most proud of "Having good performance or being leader in extracurricular activity", such as doing volunteer work, being invited to join foreign study tour, and being head prefect, house captain or club chairperson. 14.6% were most proud of "Obtaining award in extracurricular activity or competition", such as being representative of Hong Kong and winning prize in competition, and winning in debate competition. 7.0% were most proud of "Obtaining school/academic award or scholarship", such as receiving excellent student award, and receiving internal or external scholarship. 5.6% were most proud of "Personal growth and development", such as broadening social circle, practicing time management and

achieving good balance between academic and extracurricular activities, and increasing self-confidence. However, 25.5% of students thought that they did not have any proud achievements in the past three years.

#### Alumni: Performance and achievements

16. 96.5% of alumni did not skip grades when they were at secondary school.
17. 70.4% of alumni had served as chairpersons or vice-chairpersons of clubs and societies when they were at secondary school.
18. 34.2% of alumni had participated in local open competitions and won the top three prizes or awards when they were at secondary school.
19. 4.0% of alumni had participated in international open competitions and won the top three prizes or awards when they were at secondary school.
20. 72.4% of alumni got scholarship when they were at secondary school. 42.7% won internal scholarship from school, 4.5% won external scholarship, and 25.1% got both internal and external scholarships.
21. 77.9% of alumni took Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (DSE). 5.8% of them achieved Level 5\*\* in five or more subjects and 16.1% achieved Level 5\*\* in three or more subjects. 20.1% of alumni took Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE). 37.5% of them achieved Grade A in five or more subjects and 60.0% achieved Grade A in three or more subjects.
22. Among the alumni who had completed undergraduate program, 31.3% of them had been on the Dean's List or graduated with first-class honors. Among the alumni who were taking undergraduate program at the time of interview, 19.6% of them had been on the Dean's List.
23. An open-ended question was asked in order to understand the alumni's proudest achievement from secondary school to the time of interview. Based on the responses, five aspects of achievement could be categorized. 30.7% of alumni were most proud of "Having good academic performance and development", such as having good results in public examination, admitted to university, and being on the Dean's List. 9.5% were most proud of "Having good performance or being leader in extracurricular activity", such as doing volunteer work, participating in exchange tours, and being head prefect or club chairperson. 6.0% were most proud of "Personal growth and development", such as doing desirable job, and meeting many friends. 5.0% were most proud of "Obtaining award in extracurricular activity or competition", such as being

representative of school in competition and winning prize, and winning the best athlete. 3.0% were most proud of "Obtaining school/academic award or scholarship", such as getting internal or external scholarships. However, 39.2% of alumni thought that they did not have any proud achievements from secondary school to the time of interview.

#### Alumni: Current Development

24. 85.4% of alumni were full-time students at the time of interview, while 12.1% were working full time.
25. Among the alumni who were working full time at the time of interview, 41.7% were professionals, another 41.7% were associate professionals. In addition, 70.8% got the salaries of \$10,000 to \$19,999 in the first formal job after graduation, while 25.0% got \$20,000 to \$29,999 and 4.2% got \$30,000 or more.
26. Among the alumni who were full-time students at the time of interview, 90.1% were studying undergraduate program, while 2.9% were studying master program. Among the alumni who had completed the formal education at the time of interview, 75.0% held the highest education level of undergraduate degree, 9.4% held master degree, and 15.6% held the tertiary non-degree level.
27. Among the alumni who were studying or had finished undergraduate programs at the time of interview, 31.9% and 30.3% were from The Chinese University of Hong Kong and The University of Hong Kong respectively. It was followed by The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (13.0%), The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (8.6%), City University of Hong Kong (4.9%) and Hong Kong Baptist University (2.7%).
28. Among the alumni who were studying or had finished undergraduate programs at the time of interview, 17.3% majored in social sciences subjects. It was followed by business (16.8%), science (15.7%), medicine (14.6%) and engineering (14.1%).
29. 60.8% of alumni indicated that they intended to further study in Hong Kong or overseas in future, whereas 37.7% said that they did not have the intention of further study.
30. Among the alumni who intended to further study in Hong Kong or overseas in future, relatively more people would like to further study science subjects (26.4%), followed by social sciences (19.8%) and medicine (19.0%), business (14.0%), engineering (13.2%) and arts (11.6%).