

PolyU SPEED Top-up Degree Programmes Frequently Asked Questions

- [1] **What is the difference between “ordinary degree” and “honours degree”?**
- Under the traditional British university system, "honours degree" programmes are undergraduate degree programmes which generally require a graduation dissertation.
 - In USA, universities do NOT offer "honours degree" programmes. All university students are studying on four-year ordinary degree programmes.
 - In Australia, students normally enrol on three-year ordinary degree programmes. Those with excellent academic performance are invited by universities to enrol on "honours degree" programmes, which are designed as research-based programmes for preparing students to pursue study in MPhil/PhD.
- [2] **Does PolyU recognise PolyU SPEED degree?**
- Both PolyU degree and PolyU SPEED degree are granted by PolyU Senate. In principle, SPEED cannot grant any award on its own. Therefore, PolyU SPEED degree is recognised by PolyU.
- [3] **What is the difference between PolyU SPEED degree and PolyU degree?**
- The undergraduate degree programmes of PolyU normally carry “honours” classification (i.e. 1st, 2nd & 3rd) whilst PolyU SPEED degree programmes lead to “ordinary degree” with award classification of “distinction”, “credit” and “pass”.
 - The parchment of PolyU SPEED degree contains the PolyU logo only (without SPEED logo) while the full English name of PolyU and SPEED will also be printed.
- [4] **Do HKSAR Government and employers recognise PolyU SPEED degree?**
- In the previous years, there were PolyU SPEED degree graduates employed by the HKSAR Government on positions requiring a recognised degree. Our graduate survey carried out in September 2009 showed that 4.7% of graduates who entered the workforce were employed by the HKSAR Government.
 - Apart from the government, our graduates are also employed by large corporations including HSBC, Standard Chartered Bank, Oracle, Carlsberg, etc.
 - All PolyU SPEED top-up degree programmes have been listed in the Qualification Register (QR) at Level 5.
- [5] **What is the employment prospect of PolyU SPEED degree graduates?**
- Below are some findings of the graduate survey in 2009:
 - About 70% of graduates secured employment within 3 months.
 - Over 60% of graduates got at least 2 job offers.
 - Average monthly salary was around HK\$10,000.

[6] Can PolyU SPEED degree graduates apply for admission to master degree programmes?

- Yes, all PolyU SPEED degrees are granted by the Senate of PolyU. Generally speaking, these graduates can apply for admission to postgraduate programmes offered by PolyU and other universities.
- Some of our graduates have completed or are studying master's degree programmes in local and overseas universities, such as *PolyU*, *CityU*, *Baptist University*, *London School of Economics and Political Science* and *Manchester Metropolitan University*.

[7] The “BA in Hospitality Management”, “BA in Professional Communication” and “BA in Psychology” are subject to approval by PolyU. What is the status of these programmes?

- The 3 programmes are newly designed for offering in the coming academic year (2010/11). All programmes leading to PolyU SPEED awards should go through the validation and approval procedures of PolyU before implementation. The 3 new programmes are now being validated and we expect to obtain implementation approval from PolyU Senate in its coming meeting in June 2010.

[8] The “BA in Business (Finance)” and “BA in Business (International Business)” are currently under periodic review by PolyU. What is the implication of such review?

- The approval for offering a PolyU SPEED award programme has a validity period. The 2 programmes were approved for implementation for 5 intakes as from 2005/06 academic year. They are subject to re-validation in 2009/10. The programme curriculum may be updated and enhanced during the re-validation. The review process will be completed in June 2010.

[9] What is the normal study pattern for students?

- Full-time students are normally required to study 15 credits* in each 14-week semester. Following the normal study pattern, students will complete the programme in 3 semesters (1.5 years). Generally speaking, students may enjoy a summer break after the first year of study.
- Part-time students are normally required to study 6 credits* in each 14-week semester and 3 credits* in each 7-week summer term. There are two 14-week semesters and one 7-week summer term in each academic year. Following the normal study pattern, students will complete the programme in 3 years.

* *Most of the subjects are 3-credit subjects. A 3-credit subject normally consists of a total of 42 contact hours.*

[10] How many classes will students be required to attend in a week? When will the classes be held?

- Under normal study load, the number of contact hours per week is 15 for full-time students and 6 for part-time students.
- Classes for full-time students will normally be held in daytime on weekdays while classes for part-time students will normally be held on weekday evenings and/or Saturday afternoons.

[11] Will students be allowed to deviate from the normal study pattern?

- In consultation with the Programme Leader, students may adjust the study load according to their own needs.
- In any cases, the maximum duration of study on a programme is 3 years for full-time students and 6 years for part-time students.

[12] What are the selection criteria and when will the applicants be informed of the application results?

- Applicants' academic performance in sub-degree study will be the major consideration during the initial screening process. Short-listed applicants may be invited to attend admission interview and/or test.
- Applicants without the requisite academic qualifications but have fulfilled the requirements for mature candidates may also be considered.
- Applicants without sufficient knowledge in the areas concerned may be required to complete bridging course(s) as designed by SPEED before programme commencement.
- Applicants will normally be notified of the application results one month after the closing of applications.

[13] How can I submit an application?

There are 2 ways for submission of application:

- Complete application form online at the Web Admission System (WAS):
http://www.cpce-polyu.edu.hk/speed/its/speed_was
Please refer to the procedures stated at WAS for settling application fee and providing supporting documents to the SPEED office after submitting the application online.
- Complete the hardcopy of application form and send it with proof of application fee payment and supporting documents to the SPEED office. Please refer to the procedures as stated in the last page of the application form.

[14] If my application is successful, when will I be required to pay the tuition fee? Will the fee paid be refundable if I subsequently wish to withdraw from the programme enrolled?

- Successful applicants will normally be required to pay the tuition fee for the first semester of study (15 credits for full-time students and 6 credits for part-time students) within 2 weeks from issuing of the notification of offer.
- Applicants with financial difficulties may apply for payment deferment. If approved, they will be required to pay HK\$5,000 only, as registration fee, within 2 weeks from issuing of the notification of offer.
- If a registered student submits an application for withdrawal before the programme commencement, the tuition fee paid after deducting a registration fee of HK\$5,000 will be refunded.
- For withdrawal of study before programme commencement on the ground of admitting to PolyU honours degree programmes or government-funded degree programmes of other local institutions, only HK\$1,000 will be charged as registration fee. The remaining tuition fee paid will be refunded.

[15] If I need to take bridging course(s), will I be required to pay additional fee? What is the duration of the bridging courses?

- The fee of the bridging courses is HK\$3,500 per course. Students concerned will be required to pay the fee when completing programme registration procedures. The bridging course fee paid is non-refundable.
- If a student failed to complete the bridging course requirements and is eventually not eligible for admission to the top-up degree programme, the tuition fee paid for the programme will be fully refunded.
- There will be 35 contact hours for each bridging course. Classes will be held on weekdays, Saturdays and/or Sundays from early July to late August.

[16] If I have completed an Associate Degree or a Higher Diploma in related disciplines, will I be entitled for credit transfer for related subjects on admission to a PolyU SPEED top-up degree programme?

- The PolyU SPEED Bachelor's Degree programmes are top-up programmes with Associate Degree or Higher Diploma as the entry qualification. Normally, credit transfer will not be granted for students based on studies at sub-degree level.