

**THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
PUBLIC OPINION PROGRAMME (POP)**

***Opinion Survey on the Public Ranking of
Universities in Hong Kong 2008***

COMMISSIONED BY
MEDIA EDUCATION INFO-TECH CO. LTD
(Education 18.com)

SURVEY REPORT

Compiled by
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JULY 2008

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SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

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23 July 2008

CONTACT INFORMATION

Date of survey : 26/6 - 4/7/2008 Sample size : 1,213 successful cases
Response rate : 65.5% Standard error : Less than 1.4%
Target population : Cantonese-speaking population of Hong Kong of age 18 or above
Survey method : Telephone survey with interviewers
Sampling method : Standard POP telephone sampling method was used. Telephone numbers were selected randomly from residential telephone directories and mixed with additional numbers generated by the computer. If more than one subject had been available, the one who had his/her birthday next was selected.
Weighting method : The data reported have been adjusted according to the provisional figures obtained from the Census and Statistics Department regarding the gender-age distributions of the Hong Kong population at the end of 2007.

Everything in this publication is the work of individual researchers, and does not represent the stand of the University of Hong Kong. CHUNG Ting-yiu Robert is responsible for the work of the Public Opinion Programme (POP) of the University of Hong Kong.

P r e a m b l e

The Public Opinion Programme (POP) was established in June 1991 to collect and study public opinion on topics which could be of interest to academics, journalists, policy-makers, and the general public. POP was at first under the Social Sciences Research Centre, a unit under the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Hong Kong, and was transferred to the Journalism and Media Studies Centre in the University of Hong Kong in May 2000. In January 2002, POP was transferred back to the Faculty of Social Sciences in the University of Hong Kong. POP provides quality survey services to a wide range of public and private organizations, provided that they allow the POP Team to design and conduct the research independently, and to bear the final responsibilities.

In May 2008, POP was commissioned, for the eighth time, by Media Education Info-tech Co. Ltd. (which owns “Education 18.com”) to repeat the annual survey on the public’s perceptions of the local institutions of higher education. The objective of this survey was basically the same as that of the previous years, i.e. to study the general public’s perception of the eight institutions of higher education funded through University Grants Committee (UGC), with the inclusion of Hong Kong Shue Yan University upon the client’s advice. According to our records, the very first study of this subject was designed and conducted in 2000 by the client using a different methodology. For this reason, any direct comparison between the results obtained from the first and subsequent surveys is not recommended, while other comparison of results should also be made with great caution.

The questionnaires used in this and the previous years’ surveys except that of 2000 were designed independently by the POP Team after consulting the client. Fieldwork, data analysis and interpretation were also carried out independently by the POP Team. Knowing that the results of this survey might be controversial, POP proceeded to design and conduct the survey anyway, because we take it to be our responsibility to engage in any opinion survey which requires our professional support. POP is fully responsible for all the opinion survey results released, we welcome any discussion on the fairness of the results.

This year’s telephone survey was conducted during the period of 26 June to 4 July 2008. A total of 1,213 Hong Kong Cantonese-speaking residents of age 18 or above were successfully interviewed. The overall response rate was 65.5% and the standard error due to sampling was no more than 1.4 percentage points. That means at 95% confidence level, the sampling error of percentage figures was less than plus/minus 2.9 percentage points. However, some questions were only applicable to employers in the sample. Their valid sub-samples were much smaller, and the sampling errors for these questions became much bigger.

Research Design

The target population of this survey was Cantonese-speaking population of Hong Kong of age 18 or above. To minimize sampling bias, the following sampling technique was adopted:

Telephone numbers were first drawn randomly from the residential telephone directories as “seed numbers”, from which another set of numbers was generated using the “plus/minus one/two” method, in order to capture the unlisted numbers. Duplicated numbers were then filtered, and the remaining numbers were mixed in random order to produce the final telephone sample.

When telephone contact was successfully established with a target household, one person of age 18 or above was selected. If more than one qualified subject had been available, selection was made using the “next birthday rule” which selected the person who had his/her birthday next from all those present. Please refer to Appendix 1 for the demographic profile of the respondents.

Telephone interviews were carried out between 26 June and 4 July 2008. Data were collected by interviewers using a Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI) system under close supervision.

As shown from the detailed breakdown of the contact information, among the 13,808 telephone numbers sampled for the survey, 5,663 were confirmed ineligible, among them 615 were fax or data lines, 4,139 were invalid telephone numbers, 118 were call-forwarding numbers, while another 675 were non-residential numbers. Besides, 62 of them were invalidated due to special technological circumstances, while 54 cases were voided because no eligible respondents were available at the numbers provided.

Meanwhile, a total of 3,571 telephone numbers were invalidated since the research team could not confirm their eligibility. Among them 151 were busy lines, 2,110 were no-answer calls, 52 cases were diverted to answering devices while 55 were blocked. In addition, 263 cases were treated as ineligible because of language problems, 571 interviews were terminated before the screening question, while 369 cases were voided for other problems.

Of the remaining 4,574 eligible cases, 3,361 failed to complete the interview. Among them 20 rejected the interview immediately after their eligibility was confirmed, 2,548 were unfinished cases with appointment dates beyond the end of fieldwork period. Besides, 48 cases were incomplete due to unexpected termination of interviews, 745 were classified as miscellaneous due to other non-contact problems, and the remaining 1,213 were successful cases (Table 1).

Table 1 Breakdown of contact information of the survey

	Frequency	Percentage
Telephone numbers' ineligibility confirmed	5,663	41.0%
<i>Fax/ data line</i>	615	4.5%
<i>Invalid number</i>	4,139	30.0%
<i>Call-forwarding/ mobile/ pager number</i>	118	0.9%
<i>Non-residential number</i>	675	4.9%
<i>Special technological circumstances</i>	62	0.4%
<i>No eligible respondents</i>	54	0.4%
Telephone numbers' or respondents' eligibility not confirmed	3,571	25.9%
<i>Line busy</i>	151	1.1%
<i>No answer</i>	2,110	15.3%
<i>Answering device</i>	52	0.4%
<i>Call-blocking</i>	55	0.4%
<i>Language problem</i>	263	1.9%
<i>Interview terminated before the screening question</i>	571	4.1%
<i>Others</i>	369	2.7%
Telephone numbers' eligibility confirmed, but failed to complete the interview	3,361	24.3%
<i>Household-level refusal</i>	12	0.1%
<i>Known respondent refusal</i>	8	0.1%
<i>Appointment date beyond the end of the fieldwork period</i>	2548	18.5%
<i>Partial interview</i>	48	0.3%
<i>Miscellaneous</i>	745	5.4%
Successful cases	1,213	8.8%
Total	13,808	100.0%

To sum up, a total of 1,213 Hong Kong residents of age 18 or above were successfully interviewed in this survey. The overall response rate was 65.5% as shown in the following calculation. The standard error due to sampling was no more than 1.4 percentage points.

Table 2 Calculation of overall response rate

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{Overall response rate} \\ & = [\text{Successful cases} / (\text{Successful cases} + \text{Refusal cases} + \text{Incomplete cases})] 100\% \\ & = [1,213 / (1,213 + 20 + 619)] 100\% \\ & = 65.5\% \end{aligned}$$

The data collected have been adjusted according to provisional figures obtained from the Census and Statistics Department regarding the gender-age distribution of the Hong Kong population at the end of 2007. All analyses in this report are based on the weighted data.

Statistical tests of “difference-of-proportions” and “difference-of-means” have been employed whenever applicable, in order to check for significant changes. Figures marked with double asterisks (**) indicated that the variation has been tested to be statistically significant at $p=0.01$ level, whereas those with single asterisk (*) denoted statistical significance at $p=0.05$ level.

The researcher is aware that the POP Team is part of the University of Hong Kong, which is one of the institutions rated by the respondents. As a precaution to eliminate any possible bias due to desirability effect, all respondents were explicitly told at the beginning of the interview that the POP Team was an independent research team, and the respondents should simply report honestly what they felt.

Summary of Findings

The aim of the first part of the survey was to study the general public's perception of the higher institutions funded through UGC, namely, City University of Hong Kong (CityU), Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU), Lingnan University (LU), The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd), The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU), The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) and The University of Hong Kong (HKU), plus Hong Kong Shue Yan University (HKSJU) which was included for the first time. The order of these institutions was rotated randomly in different questionnaires in order to eliminate possible bias due to ordering. By means of a rating scale from 0-10, with 0 representing the worst, 10 representing the best and 5 being half-half, these institutions were assessed one by one with regard to their overall performance.

A. Overall Performance of Institution

First of all, all respondents were asked to evaluate each of these institutions based on their perception of its overall performance using a scale of 0-10, with 0 representing the worst, 10 representing the best and 5 being half-half. Respondents were suggested to take into account the institution's local and international reputation, facilities, campus environment, qualification of its teaching staff, academic research performance, conduct and quality of its students, its learning atmosphere, as well as the diversification and degree of recognition for its courses. Survey results indicated that, in terms of public perception, HKU received the highest mean score of 8.11 as rated by 1,096 respondents, CUHK came second with an average score of 7.67 rated by 1,098 respondents, whereas HKUST ranked third with a mean score of 7.38 rated by 1,047 respondents. When compared to the findings obtained from the last survey, the mean score of all eight institutions surveyed increased, but no difference was observed in terms of their respective rankings. The newly added HKSJU came ninth with a mean score of 5.57 (Table 3).

Table 3 - Overall Performance

	2005 Survey		2006 Survey		2007 Survey		2008 Survey			
	Average	Standard error	Average	Standard error	Average	Standard error	Average	Standard error	No. of raters	Recognition (No. of raters/total sample)
1. HKU	7.85	0.04	7.94	0.04	7.93	0.04	8.11	0.04	1,096	90.4%
2. CUHK	7.50	0.04	7.56	0.04	7.25**	0.05	7.67	0.04	1,098	90.6%
3. HKUST	7.16	0.04	7.21	0.04	7.16	0.05	7.38	0.04	1,047	86.3%
4. PolyU	6.71*	0.04	6.81	0.04	6.79	0.04	7.00	0.04	1,066	87.9%
5. HKBU	6.12	0.04	6.19	0.04	6.28	0.04	6.42	0.04	1,033	85.1%
6. CityU	6.06	0.04	6.04	0.04	6.09	0.04	6.26	0.04	1,015	83.6%
7. HKIEd	5.61	0.05	5.55	0.05	5.60	0.05	5.77	0.05	942	77.7%
8. LU	5.43	0.05	5.41	0.04	5.57*	0.05	5.65	0.05	965	79.6%
9. HKSJU#			N.A.				5.57	0.05	926	76.4%

Newly added in 2008.

Same as last year, our cross-tabulation analyses showed that, within each sub-group, the respective rankings of the universities were basically the same regardless of their education attainment and occupation. Only some insignificant differences were observed which are highlighted in square brackets below. For actual ratings obtained by each institution as rated by each sub-group, please refer to the tables below (Tables 4-5).

Table 4 – Cross-tabulation Analyses: Institution Performance by Education Attainment

	Primary or below			Secondary			Tertiary or above		
	Average	Standard error	No. of raters	Average	Standard error	No. of raters	Average	Standard error	No. of raters
1. HKU	8.22	0.14	142	8.14	0.06	514	8.03	0.05	436
2. CUHK	7.54	0.13	137	7.65	0.06	523	7.73	0.06	434
3. HKUST [^]	7.46	0.15	122	7.24	0.06	495	7.50	0.06	425
4. PolyU [^]	7.31	0.13	130	7.07	0.06	504	6.82	0.05	427
5. HKBU [^]	6.95	0.15	115	6.50	0.06	491	6.18	0.06	423
6. CityU [^]	6.60	0.16	109	6.24	0.07	476	6.18	0.06	426
7. HKIEd [^]	6.68	0.21	93	5.89	0.07	439	5.44	0.07	406
8. LU [^]	6.22	0.18	106	5.73	0.07	452	5.40	0.07	404
9. HKSJU [^]	6.02	0.20	93	5.67	0.07	436	5.34	0.07	394

[^] Differences among sub-groups tested to be statistically significant at 95% confidence level.

Table 5a – Cross-tabulation Analyses: Institution Performance by Occupation (I)

	Professionals and semi-professionals			Clerk and service workers			Production workers		
	Average	Standard error	No. of raters	Average	Standard error	No. of raters	Average	Standard error	No. of raters
1. HKU	8.07	0.06	358	7.99	0.08	240	8.20	0.16	75
2. CUHK	7.71	0.06	361	7.64	0.09	240	7.73	0.14	76
3. HKUST	7.48	0.07	350	7.17	0.09	234	7.34	0.16	72
4. PolyU	6.92	0.06	354	6.95	0.08	235	6.96	0.14	72
5. HKBU [^]	6.22	0.07	348	6.35	0.09	233	6.63	0.13	70
6. CityU	6.13	0.07	345	6.18	0.09	231	6.56	0.17	67
7. HKIEd [^]	5.49	0.08	332	5.71	0.10	215	6.29	0.19	64
8. LU [^]	5.47	0.08	331	5.58	0.09	219	6.11	0.16	69
9. HKSJU [^]	5.40	0.08	323	5.38	0.11	210	6.11	0.16	58

[^] Differences among sub-groups tested to be statistically significant at 95% confidence level.

Table 5b – Cross-tabulation Analyses: Institution Performance by Occupation (II)

	Students			Housewives		
	Average	Standard error	No. of raters	Average	Standard error	No. of raters
1. HKU	8.07	0.11	89	8.09	0.13	146
2. CUHK	7.84	0.11	89	7.56	0.12	144
3. HKUST	7.30	0.11	88	7.26	0.15	127
4. PolyU	6.89	0.12	88	7.04	0.13	139
5. HKBU [^]	6.45	0.13	85	6.65	0.13	132
6. CityU	6.42	0.12	86	6.20	0.13	131
7. HKIEd [^]	5.80	0.14	83	6.01	0.16	115
8. LU [^]	5.44	0.14	84	5.82	0.16	116
9. HKSJU [^]	5.47	0.15	84	5.61	0.14	106

[^] Differences among sub-groups tested to be statistically significant at 95% confidence level.

B. Overall Performance of Vice-Chancellor/President

With respect to the perceived overall performance of the Vice-Chancellor/President of each institution, taking into consideration one's local and international reputation, approachability, leadership, vision, social credibility and public relations, Professor Lap-chee Tsui of HKU this year had surpassed Professor Paul C.W. Chu of HKUST, who came first in 2002-04 and 2006-07, and topped the list with an average score of 7.671 as rated by 775 respondents with a very small margin. Professor Paul C.W. Chu of HKUST followed closely and had attained a mean score of 7.665 as rated by 813 respondents. Meanwhile, Professor Lawrence J. LAU of CUHK, whose position was swapped with Professor Chung-kwong POON of PolyU when compared to last year's rankings, became third at 7.09 and rated by 665 respondents. The fourth to ninth ranks fell to the Vice-Chancellors/Presidents of PolyU, HKBU, HKSYU, HKIEd, CityU and LU correspondingly, with their average scores ranging from 6.15 to 6.98. However, it is worth mentioning that six current Vice-Chancellors/Presidents had obtained recognition rates of over 50%. Professor Paul C.W. Chu of HKUST was acknowledged by 67% of the respondents while Professor Lap-chee Tsui of HKU had received a recognition rate of 64%. The recognition rates of Professor Chung-kwong Poon of PolyU, Professor Ching-fai Ng of HKBU, Professor Lawrence J. Lau of CUHK and Professor Anthony B.L. Cheung of HKIEd were 58%, 55%, 55% and 54% respectively (Table 6).

Table 6 - Overall Performance of Vice-Chancellor/President

	2005 Survey		2006 Survey		2007 Survey		2008 Survey			
	Avg.	Std. error	Avg.	Std. error	Avg.	Std. error	Avg.	Std. error	No of raters	Recognition (No. of raters/total sample)
1. HKU – Lap-chee TSUI	7.39**	0.04	7.37	0.05	7.46	0.05	7.67[^]	0.05	775	63.9%
2. HKUST – Paul C.W. CHU	7.38	0.05	7.57**	0.04	7.51	0.05	7.67[^]	0.05	813	67.1%
3. CUHK – Lawrence J. LAU	6.93	0.05	7.09*	0.04	6.82**	0.06	7.09	0.06	665	54.9%
4. PolyU – Chung-kwong POON	6.61	0.05	6.68	0.05	6.83*	0.05	6.98	0.05	701	57.8%
5. HKBU – Ching-fai NG	6.33	0.06	6.35	0.05	6.54**	0.05	6.66	0.05	669	55.2%
6. HKSYU – Chi-yung CHUNG#			-N.A.-				6.61	0.07	558	46.0%
7. HKIEd – Anthony B.L. CHEUNG#			-N.A.-				6.25	0.06	657	54.2%
8. CityU – Way KUO#			-N.A.-				6.23	0.07	439	36.2%
9. LU – Yuk-shee CHAN#			-N.A.-				6.15	0.07	508	41.8%

No comparison made as the relevant post was taken up by another person then while HKSYU is newly added in this year's survey.

[^] Remark: Expressed in three-decimal places, the average rating of "HKU – Lap-chee TSUI" is 7.671, while that of "HKUST – Paul C.W. CHU" is 7.665.

When cross-tabulated by respondent's education attainment and occupation, slight variations were obtained in terms of the respective rankings of the VCs/Presidents within each sub-group, though differences of most scores fluctuated within the standard error margins. They were highlighted in square brackets for easy identification. Actual ratings obtained by each VC/President as rated by each sub-group can be found from the tables below (Tables 7-8).

Table 7 – Cross-tabulation Analyses: V-C/President Performance by Education Attainment

	Primary or below			Secondary			Tertiary or above		
	Average	Standard error	No. of raters	Average	Standard error	No. of raters	Average	Standard error	No. of raters
1. HKU - LC TSUI	7.68	0.17	73	7.70	0.07	364	<u>7.63</u>	0.07	335
2. HKUST - Paul CHU	7.49	0.17	77	7.58	0.07	384	<u>7.78</u>	0.07	350
3. CUHK – Lawrence J. LAU	<u>7.01</u>	0.27	56	7.19	0.08	316	6.97	0.09	291
4. PolyU – CK POON	<u>7.20</u>	0.23	68	6.98	0.07	321	6.91	0.07	310
5. HKBU – CF NG	<u>6.85</u>	0.20	55	6.72	0.08	319	<u>6.54</u>	0.08	293
6. HKSYU – CY CHUNG	<u>7.06</u>	0.26	51	6.52	0.10	259	<u>6.58</u>	0.11	247
7. HKIEd - Anthony CHEUNG [^]	6.93	0.20	62	<u>6.21</u>	0.08	312	6.15	0.09	282
8. CityU – Way KUO [^]	6.93	0.26	37	<u>6.24</u>	0.09	218	6.05	0.09	183
9. LU - YS CHAN [^]	6.81	0.24	43	6.13	0.09	236	6.02	0.10	227

[^] Differences among sub-groups tested to be statistically significant at 95% confidence level.

Table 8a – Cross-tabulation Analyses: V-C/President Performance by Occupation (I)

	Professionals and semi-professionals			Clerk and service workers			Production workers		
	Average	Standard error	No. of raters	Average	Standard error	No. of raters	Average	Standard error	No. of raters
1. HKU - LC TSUI	<u>7.66</u>	0.08	273	<u>7.48</u>	0.10	168	7.74	0.21	57
2. HKUST - Paul CHU	<u>7.76</u>	0.08	288	<u>7.51</u>	0.10	183	7.69	0.18	61
3. CUHK – Lawrence J. LAU	6.97	0.10	234	6.99	0.11	154	7.19	0.25	44
4. PolyU – CK POON	6.87	0.08	259	6.90	0.11	151	<u>6.84</u>	0.23	51
5. HKBU – CF NG	<u>6.57</u>	0.09	241	6.60	0.10	161	<u>6.82</u>	0.20	40
6. HKSYU – CY CHUNG [^]	<u>6.59</u>	0.11	202	6.20	0.14	129	<u>7.01</u>	0.24	36
7. HKIEd - Anthony CHEUNG	<u>6.05</u>	0.10	238	<u>6.06</u>	0.11	148	<u>6.26</u>	0.23	45
8. CityU – Way KUO	<u>5.99</u>	0.11	161	<u>6.12</u>	0.11	112	<u>6.44</u>	0.24	30
9. LU - YS CHAN	<u>6.07</u>	0.10	189	5.96	0.13	121	<u>6.61</u>	0.28	32

[^] Differences among sub-groups tested to be statistically significant at 95% confidence level.

Table 8b – Cross-tabulation Analyses: V-C/President Performance by Occupation (II)

	Students			Housewives		
	Average	Standard error	No. of raters	Average	Standard error	No. of raters
1. HKU - LC TSUI	7.51	0.15	64	7.75	0.14	90
2. HKUST - Paul CHU	7.43	0.14	66	7.44	0.17	87
3. CUHK – Lawrence J. LAU	7.02	0.16	58	7.05	0.20	70
4. PolyU – CK POON	6.92	0.15	55	6.94	0.15	82
5. HKBU – CF NG	6.62	0.15	52	6.62	0.17	75
6. HKSYU – CY CHUNG [^]	6.60	0.19	49	<u>6.37</u>	0.24	55
7. HKIEd - Anthony CHEUNG	6.39	0.18	53	<u>6.24</u>	0.18	73
8. CityU – Way KUO	<u>6.37</u>	0.17	39	<u>6.37</u>	0.26	48
9. LU - YS CHAN	<u>6.38</u>	0.15	46	6.08	0.24	50

[^] Differences among sub-groups tested to be statistically significant at 95% confidence level.

C. Perceived Deficiencies among the University Students in Hong Kong

Same as last year's survey, a question was then asked to gauge respondents' opinion on the qualities which most Hong Kong university students lack of. Latest results again showed that "work attitude" topped the list with 17% of total respondents citing it. In the meantime, "proficiency in Chinese, English and Putonghua", "conduct, honesty" and "social / interpersonal skills" were also frequently mentioned, by 16%, 13% and 12% of the total sample respectively. Other commonly-cited qualities included "critical thinking and problem-solving ability" and "global prospect / foresight", both accounting for 10% of the total sample. Nevertheless, 25% of the respondents could not give a definite answer (Table 9).

Table 9 – Perceived Deficiencies among the University Students in Hong Kong

	2006 Survey	2007 Survey	2008 Survey		
	% of total sample (Base = 1,509)	% of total sample (Base = 1,210)	Freq.	% of total responses (Base = 1,837 responses from 1,207 respondents)	% of total sample (Base = 1,213)
Work attitude (e.g. serious, enthusiastic, diligent, responsible, motivated)	16.6%	16.6%	202	11.0%	16.6%
Proficiency in Chinese, English and Putonghua	16.4%*	14.1%	197	10.7%	16.2%
Conduct, honesty	18.2%**	17.3%	162	8.8%	13.4%**
Social / interpersonal skills	10.9%	12.9%	150	8.2%	12.4%
Critical thinking and problem-solving ability	8.0%	11.8%**	126	6.8%	10.4%
Global prospect / foresight	11.1%**	12.0%	119	6.5%	9.8%
Social / Work experience	7.5%**	8.1%	100	5.5%	8.3%
Commitment to society	9.0%**	10.2%	94	5.1%	7.7%*
Academic and professional	10.4%	10.2%	78	4.2%	6.4%**
Communication skills	3.4%	4.3%	44	2.4%	3.7%
Self-confidence	3.8%*	5.8%*	43	2.3%	3.5%**
Creativity	3.5%**	2.7%	33	1.8%	2.8%
Patriotism	--	--	28	1.5%	2.3%
Emotion stability	1.1%	1.7%	23	1.3%	1.9%
Financial management	2.9%	1.2%**	11	0.6%	0.9%
All-roundness	--	--	11	0.6%	0.9%
Alertness to risk / handling adverse conditions	--	--	8	0.5%	0.7%
Job opportunity	1.1%	1.1%	7	0.4%	0.6%
Independence	--	--	6	0.3%	0.5%
Self-expectations / dreams	--	--	5	0.3%	0.4%
Civil awareness	0.4%	0.1%	4	0.2%	0.4%
Leadership skills	--	--	3	0.2%	0.3%
Computer proficiency	0.1%	0.0%	1	0.1%	0.1%
Utilitarian	0.7%	0.6%	0	0.0%	0.0%
Nothing	6.5%	3.9%**	49	2.7%	4.0%
Others	4.7%	5.3%	34	1.9%	2.8%**
Don't know/ hard to say	17.7%**	20.3%	297	16.2%	24.5%*
Total	1,499	1,206	1,837	100.0%	
Base	1,499	1,206	1,207		
Missing case(s)	10	4	6		

D. Preference for University Graduates

The survey went on to study employers' preference when selecting university graduates. To begin with, all respondents were asked if they were involved in any recruitment process of new staff in performing their office duties. Results showed that 16% of the total sample, i.e. 194 respondents had such authority in one way or another (Table 10).

Table 10 - Involvement in Recruitment of New Staff (Teachers included)

	2005 Survey	2006 Survey	2007 Survey	2008 Survey	
	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	17.4%	14.9%	16.5%	194	16.0%
No	82.6%	85.1%	83.5%	1,018	84.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	1,212	100.0%
Base	1,517	1509	1,210	1,212	
Missing case(s)	4	1	0	1	

These respondents were further asked which institution's graduates they would prefer most when they looked for a new employee. Graduates of HKU topped the list once again this year, as chosen by 24% of these employers. Meanwhile, graduates from PolyU, CUHK and HKUST were preferred by 16%, 9% and 7% of this sub-sample respectively. Yet, 21% of these respondents said they had no particular preference and 11% did not give a definite answer. No significant differences from the latest survey were observed, but it has to be noted that because of the small sub-sample, the standard error has increased accordingly to less than plus/minus 3.5 percentage points, i.e. less than plus/minus 7.1 percentage points at 95% confidence level (Table 11).

Table 11 - Most Preferred University Graduates

	2005 Survey	2006 Survey	2007 Survey	Freq.	2008 Survey	
	% of total sample (Base = 1,517)	% of total sample (Base = 1,509)	% of total sample (Base = 1,210)		% of potential employers (Base = 194)	% of total sample (Base = 1,213)
HKU	4.2%	3.4%	4.6%	46	23.5%	3.8%
PolyU	2.5%	1.9%	1.5%	30	15.5%	2.5%
CUHK	3.2%	2.5%	2.4%	17	8.9%	1.4%
HKUST	1.5%	1.9%	1.4%	13	6.7%	1.1%
HKBU	0.2%	0.4%	0.5%	5	2.5%	0.4%
HKIED [^]	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	3	1.7%	0.3%
HKSJU		N.A.		2	0.9%	0.1%
LU [^]	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	1	0.6%	0.1%
CityU [^]	0.1%	0.4%	0.4%	0	0.0%	0.0%
Other overseas universities	0.3%	0.3%	0.6%	6	3.0%	0.5%
Others	0.2%	0.4%	0.4%	5	2.8%	0.4%
No preference	2.7%	2.3%	2.9%	41	20.9%	3.3%
Don't know / hard to say	2.2%	0.9%	1.3%	21	11.0%	1.8%
Won't employ graduates [^]	0.0%	0.4%	0.3%	4	2.0%	0.3%
Total				194	100.0%	
Valid Base	264	225	200	194		
Missing case(s)	3	1	0	0		

[^] No respondent opted for these categories in respective survey.

These respondents were then asked to provide some reasons for their specific choices. Same as previous years, “good performance of previous graduates” was most frequently cited by 34% of the sub-sample (i.e. 4% of the total sample). “Good knowledge in job-related areas” came second with 26% (i.e. 3% of the total sample). A respective of 15% and 12% (i.e. 2% and 1% of the total sample) preferred certain graduates simply due to the “reputation” of their university and “good language ability” of the graduates. Other than these, reasons like “being diligent/motivated”, “good work attitude”, “good connection with outside” and “alumni” were mentioned by some although quite few respondents (Table 12).

Table 12 - Reasons for Preferring Graduates of a Particular Institution

	2006 Survey	2007 Survey	2008 Survey			
	% of total sample (Base = 1,509)	% of total sample (Base = 1,210)	Freq.	% of total responses (Base = 180 responses from 129 respondents)	% of valid respondents (Base = 129)	% of total sample (Base = 1,213)
Good performance of previous graduates	3.7%**	4.2%	44	24.2%	33.7%	3.6%
Good knowledge in job-related areas	3.4%*	2.6%	33	18.5%	25.8%	2.7%
Reputation	2.1%	2.4%	19	10.6%	14.7%	1.6%
Good language ability	1.1%	0.9%	16	8.9%	12.3%	1.3%
Diligent, motivated	0.7%	1.2%	12	6.8%	9.4%	1.0%
Good work attitude	1.2%	1.6%	12	6.7%	9.3%	1.0%
Good connection with outside	0.5%	0.1%	8	4.3%	6.0%	0.6%
Alumni	0.7%	0.8%	7	4.0%	5.6%	0.6%
Good social relationship	0.7%	1.0%	4	2.0%	2.7%	0.3%
Good leadership	0.3%	0.1%	2	1.3%	1.8%	0.2%
Salary matched with abilities	0.1%	0.1%	2	1.2%	1.6%	0.2%
Others	1.6%	2.0%	14	8.0%	11.2%	1.2%
No specific reasons	--	0.2%	5	2.8%	4.0%	0.4%
Don't know / hard to say	0.2%	0.1%	1	0.8%	1.1%	0.1%
Total	168	140	180	100.0%		
Valid Base	168	140	129	100.0%		
Missing case(s)	0	6	0			