

New top-up programme for a career in the aviation industry



Dr Achim Czerny, Programme Leader of AML and Dr Sarah Wan, Deputy Programme Leader of AML

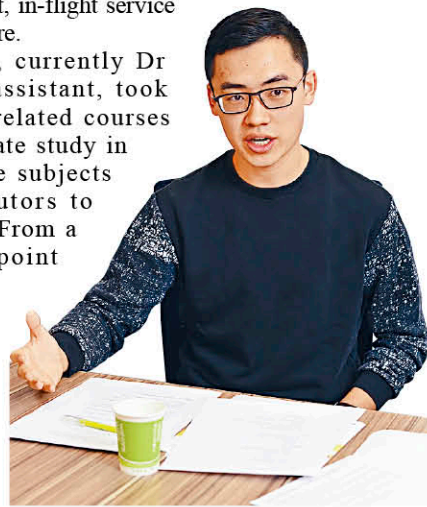
With continued expansion in the aviation industry, The Polytechnic University of Hong Kong (PolyU) has come up with a government-funded top-up degree programme to train young talents and accommodate the growth.

management and logistics within a two-year framework, the programme strives to strike a balance between common business knowledge and professional aviation management skills. Students will be required to take 10 compulsory business courses to acquire basic understanding on such topics as finance, corporate social responsibility, business law, accounting, strategic management and more.

“The industry needs not only talents who are professionals in the field of aviation logistics, but also management staff who can run their business. Hence, it is crucial for our students to have a full grasp of the fundamentals as well,” stresses Dr. Sarah Wan, Deputy Programme Leader and Assistant Professor of AML.

Geared to the industry’s needs, the programme provides an in-depth coverage of how airports, airlines, government agencies, regulators and other professional groups, such as logistics firms and consultants, contribute to the functioning of the aviation market. Hence, there are compulsory subjects covering airport management, air transport logistics, airline strategy and management, aviation safety and security management among other subjects. On top of these, there will also be a wide range of electives dealing with aircraft service engineering and logistics, airline operations and revenue management, in-flight service management and more.

Chengkai Fan, currently Dr Wan’s research assistant, took several aviation-related courses in his undergraduate study in LMS. He sees the subjects as solid contributors to nation-building. “From a macroeconomic point of view, aviation logistics is about bringing in goods and people. And along with them come capital, investment opportunities, and community developments,” says Fan.



Chengkai Fan, currently Dr. Wan's research assistant

Other learning activities

To prepare students for keen competition in the job market, the programme includes a scheme known as Work-Integrated Education (WIE) to gain on-site experience. Students are required to take at least 300 hours of placement in one or more organizations, or through one or more eligible WIE activities.



Chengkai Fan and his classmates' visit to Hong Kong Airlines.

“Other than classroom teaching, we hope students can bring theoretical concepts into real-life working environments”, says Dr Wan.

The programme makes a point of inviting experts in various fields to host workshops and address students. “These could be golden opportunities for students to meet their future employers,” the Programme Leader of AML Dr Czerny notes.

Professional Qualifications and Graduates’ Prospect

“Aviation is one of the most dynamic industries in the world,” observes Dr Czerny. “It has registered a growth of almost 5% in spite of economic setbacks in many countries over the last decades, and much of the future growth will be in the Asia-Pacific region.”

Estimates show that Hong Kong will need an additional workforce of more than 75,000 in the next 15 years. Among them, 17,500 are managerial or professional positions that require a degree-level of education in aviation. In terms of qualifications, AML graduates, with their professional knowhow, are expected to surpass other general degree graduates.

“Currently, the United States has the largest domestic market in aviation, but according to industry forecasts, China is going to outstrip the volume in the foreseeable future,” adds Dr Czerny. Covering 50 destinations in mainland China, Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) has experienced strong growth in passenger and cargo throughput in the last decade. In fact, according to HKIA, the annual passenger throughput hit 70 million in 2016, while cargo throughput has grown 2.4% in the first eleven months of 2016.

Dr Czerny points out that there is a strong demand for aviation expertise. “Opportunities are not limited to Hong Kong,” he says. “In fact, aviation companies in many countries in the Asia-Pacific region are looking for young talents.”

The programme leaders work hard to develop wide recognition and trust from the industry. For instance, they currently seek partial or full exemption from the Professional Qualifying Examination (PQE) of the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) for AML graduates. The many discussions with industry representatives clearly indicate that there is a large pool of potential employers for AML graduates, which include not only airports and airlines, but also consulting firms, investment banks, freight forwarders, air cargo terminal operators and others.

Dr. Czerny expects a surge in demand of talents in the aviation industry in the next 15 year.



As an international transport hub in Asia, Hong Kong is within five hours of flight time to half of the world’s population. There are currently more than 100 airlines operating about 1,100 flights daily, linking the city with about 190 destinations worldwide. With the approval of the third runway for Hong Kong International Airport, the aviation industry is set to take off and requires a new generation of professional staff to support its development.

It is estimated that the economic contribution of the aviation industry, as well as the manpower requirement, will both be doubled in less than 15 years with the establishment of the three-runway system. Therefore, the top-up bachelor degree programme of Business Administration (Honours) in Aviation Management and Logistics (AML) offered by PolyU comes at an opportune time and fills a much-needed gap in human resources development geared to the aviation industry.

As the only government-funded and aviation-related bachelor of Business Administration programme, the 2-year full-time course provides an intake of 40 students per year starting in the coming September.

The AML programme complements PolyU’s three other engineering programmes related to aviation, making PolyU the aviation education leader in Hong Kong. In addition, since this brand new programme will be offered by the Department of Logistics and Maritime Studies (LMS), it will benefit from the high quality of teaching, research and consulting in the area of transport and logistics and the internationally recognized reputation built up over the years by the Department.

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Dr Sarah Wan, Deputy Programme Leader of AML

Bachelor of Business Administration (Honours) in Aviation Management and Logistics

Mode of Study:

Full-time Top-up Programme (Government funded)

Programme Duration: 2 Years | Intake Number: 40

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