

Education Bureau Circular Memorandum No. 63/2014

From: Permanent Secretary for Education To: Supervisors / Heads of all aided,
Ref.: EDB(CD/C&S)/SC/1/1/1 (3) government and caput secondary
Date: 15 April 2014 schools, secondary schools under the
Direct Subsidy Scheme and special
schools with secondary classes

First Batch of Recommendations for the New Academic Structure Medium-term Review

Summary

This circular memorandum (CM) summarises the first batch of recommendations for the New Academic Structure (NAS) Medium-term Review as well as dissemination activities and support measures for schools and teachers to optimise the implementation of the senior secondary curriculum and assessment.

Background

2. The New Senior Secondary (NSS) curriculum and assessment of the New Academic Structure (NAS) is a major policy initiative recommended by the Education Commission (EC) in 2000, and implemented in 2009 at Secondary 4. Upon the smooth completion of the first NSS curriculum and assessment cycle, the NAS review was jointly conducted in 2012/13 by the Education Bureau (EDB), the Curriculum Development Council (CDC), and the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) to respond to the concerns of teachers and students and to fine-tune the delivery of the NAS, while holding steadfast to the ultimate goals of the senior secondary curriculum under the NAS. A progress report on the NAS Review, *The New Senior Secondary Learning Journey – Moving Forward to Excel*, was released in April 2013 and short-term measures for fine-tuning the senior secondary curriculum and assessment were also announced as detailed in the circular memorandum (EDBCM No. 48/2013). A medium-term review was also recommended and launched in October 2013 to address issues that may require a longer time and a more holistic process of review and consultation. For details of the objectives, overarching principles, review mechanisms and schedule, please refer to the consultation document *New Academic Structure Review (Medium-term): Moving Forward to Excel* uploaded onto the designated webpage (<http://www.edb.gov.hk/nas/review/en>) on 11 October 2013.

Details of the NAS Medium-term Review

3. The NAS Medium-term Review has continued to be jointly conducted by the

EDB, the CDC and the HKEAA, and the existing stakeholder engagement mechanism and comprehensive consultations have been adopted at all levels through multiple channels. The major issues to be addressed in the NAS Medium-term Review include the holistic review of School-based Assessment (SBA), review on the curriculum and assessment of 9 subjects for updating and fine-tuning, further exploration on the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) Examination arrangements for more efficient delivery, and other emerging issues that require more time for deliberation (see Appendix 1 for details). To accommodate different needs of time among subjects/ issues, the medium-term recommendations will be made in batches with the first batch to be announced in April 2014 and implemented in schools in the 2014/15 school year leading to the 2015 HKDSE Examination at the earliest, and the last batch to be announced by July 2015.

4. Since the launch of the NAS Medium-term Review in October 2013 (see EDBCM No.127/2013), relevant CDC and HKEAA committees and working groups have convened rounds of meetings to deliberate on major issues of concern. Feedback has also been collected from various stakeholders through multiple channels such as forums, meetings, focus group interviews and written submissions.

5. As an important part of the consultation process, school surveys were conducted from January to March 2014 to solicit views from school principals and teachers. Based on the survey results and feedback collected from other stakeholders, the following recommendations for Chinese Language, Chinese Literature, Liberal Studies (Independent Enquiry Study) and Business, Accounting and Financial Studies were discussed and endorsed in the joint CDC-Public Examinations Board (PEB) Meeting held on 10 April 2014 (details in Appendix 2):

Subject	Recommendations
Chinese Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of 12 classical set texts at S4 in 2015/16, leading to the 2018 HKDSE Examination • Corresponding changes in Paper 1 of the HKDSE Examination
Chinese Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revision of 2 set texts at S4 in 2015/16, leading to the 2018 HKDSE Examination • Exploration into the possibility of further streamlining the SBA requirements • Revisiting the timeline for the implementation of SBA
Liberal Studies (Independent Enquiry Study)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of a structured enquiry approach with clear guidelines for the conduct of Independent Enquiry Studies (IES) • Further streamlining arrangements such as requiring candidates to submit only one final report for assessment and cancelling the submission of the Process mark • Related modification of the IES assessment framework at S4 in 2014/15, leading to the 2017 HKDSE Examination

Business, Accounting and Financial Studies (BAFS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of separate grading and reporting of the subject results for candidates taking different elective modules with effect from the 2015 HKDSE Examination (for S6 students in 2014/15), with no change in the curriculum coverage, mode of assessment or question-setting of the papers • Closely monitoring and reviewing the existing curriculum and assessment framework of the trimmed BAFS curriculum (first examination to be conducted in 2016) and the implementation of separate grading and reporting of the subject results; in parallel, starting the ground work for developing the separate subject(s) • The ultimate way forward will be subject to thorough discussion and consultation by the end of 2016, while holding steadfast to the ultimate goals of the senior secondary curriculum under the New Academic Structure
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6. Apart from the above endorsed recommendations, review on other major medium-term issues such as the holistic review of SBA to address issues of cross-subject coordination and workload, Applied Learning as well as the enhancement of a balanced and diversified curriculum will continue for the last batch of medium-term recommendations to be made by July 2015. Feedback will continually be collected from all stakeholders through multiple channels, and proposals will be put to schools for consultation at a later stage as necessary.

Support Measures and Dissemination

7. Briefing sessions on the recommendations for fine-tuning the senior secondary curriculum and assessment of Chinese Language, Chinese Literature, LS and BAFS will be held from May to July 2014. Details of the above events will be announced in due course through the Training Calendar System.

8. In addition to the above sessions, support measures will be further enhanced to help schools and teachers to implement the medium-term recommendations, and include the following:

- ✧ Professional development programmes continued to be provided
- ✧ More learning networks and circles to be set up among teachers and schools
- ✧ More learning and teaching resources, exemplars, samples as well as reference materials to be provided
- ✧ Sample questions and sample examination papers to be provided as appropriate
- ✧ Communication and interaction with relevant stakeholders such as meetings and conferences to be stepped up to collect more feedback and views to inform further development
- ✧ Good practices in curriculum planning, learning and teaching and

assessment strategies to be collected and shared with schools and teachers

- ✧ Dissemination of important information to relevant stakeholders to be continued

9. School heads are requested to circulate this CM to all members of the Incorporated Management Committee / School Management Committee and the teaching staff, and to communicate with students and parents on all relevant information in order to engage the whole school in implementing the fine-tuned senior secondary curriculum and assessment in the coming year(s). Schools should ensure that all messages of changes in curriculum and assessment reach every teacher and student concerned through suitable channels and forms whenever appropriate.

10. Please visit the New Academic Structure Web Bulletin (<http://www.edb.gov.hk/nas/en>) or the designated webpage on the NAS review (<http://www.edb.gov.hk/nas/review/en>) for the latest developments.

Stephen YW YIP
for Permanent Secretary for Education

c.c. Heads of Sections – for information

**Major Issues for Deliberation in
the New Academic Structure Medium-term Review**

School-based Assessment (SBA)

- As part and parcel of the whole-school curriculum and public assessment, a holistic review on the total impact of SBA would be conducted to explore the possibility of further streamlining in order to address the workload issues while maintaining international recognition and the underlying principles of SBA.

Core Subjects

- **Chinese Language** - explore introducing classical set texts and assessment of these texts in the examination
- **Liberal Studies** - review the curriculum and assessment design
- **Mathematics** - review the senior secondary Mathematics curriculum framework

Elective Subjects

- **Business, Accounting and Financial Studies** - explore the feasibility of ‘splitting’ the subject and/or separate grading and reporting
- **Chinese Literature** - explore revision of set texts
- **Economics** - (i) consider the feasibility of incorporating a news commentary type question / data response question in the examination to replace SBA and (ii) explore further development of the topics of the curriculum
- **Ethics and Religious Studies** - explore reduction of SBA workload
- **Geography** - study the need to revise the senior secondary Geography curriculum; and to study the issue of insufficient lesson time for learning and teaching and to propose possible solutions
- **Health Management and Social Care** - review the curriculum and assessment designs and SBA, including the format of the report in SBA (written / audio-visual) and weighting of SBA

Applied Learning Courses (ApL)

Apart from the regular review of ApL courses, the medium-term review will include:

- reviewing the grading mechanism; and
- evaluation of early commencement of ApL in S4 and linking ApL to the Qualifications Framework.

Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) Examination

Further exploration on the HKDSE Examination to better accommodate learner diversity, if deemed appropriate, which may include:

- introduction of half subjects in some suitable senior secondary subjects; and
- revisiting the grading system.

Other Related and Emerging Issues

Further studies on emerging issues which include:

- unintended impact, e.g. whether the student programme has achieved a broad and balanced curriculum with specialization achieved in a broad knowledge base;
- some curriculum design/assessment principles, e.g. whether values have been appropriately applied in public assessment; whether the admission requirements and scoring system should be further improved;
- professional capacity and sustainability, nature of support for schools and teachers;
- catering for learner diversity and need to support schools (both lower achievers and more able students);
- Other Learning Experiences and Student Learning Profile (e.g. How is it affected by 2400±200 lesson hours?);
- some emerging issues related to other senior secondary subjects such as Visual Arts and Chinese History; and
- other issues related to curriculum and assessment but outside the curriculum and assessment development cycle which would be suitably discussed and communicated to relevant partner organisations and stakeholders.

First Batch of Medium-term Recommendations

中國語文科

課程	<p>選篇數量：指定文言經典學習材料的數量為 12 篇</p> <p>選篇：課程提供以下 12 篇指定文言經典學習材料：</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>1. 宋詞三首 [念奴嬌、青玉案、聲聲慢]</td> <td>2. 唐詩三首 [月下獨酌、登樓、山居秋暝]</td> <td>3. 出師表</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. 論仁、論孝、論君子</td> <td>5. 六國論</td> <td>6. 廉頗藺相如列傳</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7. 魚我所欲也</td> <td>8. 師說</td> <td>9. 始得西山宴遊記</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10. 岳陽樓記</td> <td>11. 勸學（節錄）</td> <td>12. 逍遙遊（節錄）</td> </tr> </table> <p>實施日期：於 2015/2016 學年的中四（2018 年香港中學文憑考試）起實施</p>	1. 宋詞三首 [念奴嬌、青玉案、聲聲慢]	2. 唐詩三首 [月下獨酌、登樓、山居秋暝]	3. 出師表	4. 論仁、論孝、論君子	5. 六國論	6. 廉頗藺相如列傳	7. 魚我所欲也	8. 師說	9. 始得西山宴遊記	10. 岳陽樓記	11. 勸學（節錄）	12. 逍遙遊（節錄）
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公開考試	<p>考時：試卷一（閱讀能力）的考時增至 1 小時 30 分鐘</p> <p>試卷設計：</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ 試卷一分甲、乙兩部，甲部考核指定文言經典學習材料，佔全卷 30%；乙部為閱讀理解（擷取若干篇章，文白兼備），佔全卷 70% ◇ 試卷一甲、乙兩部分的文言篇章考核，總佔分不多於全卷 50% <p>評核方向：熟記精華片段；基本掌握文意及篇中文學、文化內涵</p> <p>佔分比重：佔試卷一（閱讀能力）30%</p>												
備註	<p>支援措施：</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ 有關篇章的原文、部分參考資料及教學設計先在 5 月上網，其餘預期於 2014 年底完成 ◇ 培訓課程將於 2014/15 學年開始 ◇ 於 2015/16 學年內提供試卷一（閱讀能力）試卷樣本 												

中國文學科

課程	<p>修訂指定作品：更換內容較深或節選篇幅較長的指定作品</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 節選孟子《齊桓晉文之事章》（由「齊宣王問曰」至「王請度之」） 2. 以曹禺《日出》（節選第二幕，由「李石清由中門進」至「把黃省三拖下去」）取代姚克《西施》 <p>實施日期：修訂於 2015/16 學年的中四（2018 年香港中學文憑考試）起實施</p>
校本評核	<p>進一步檢視校本評核：</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ 探討再進一步精簡校本評核的可能性 ◇ 再考慮校本評核實施時間
備註	<p>支援措施：提供相關參考資料及教師專業發展課程等支援措施</p>

Liberal Studies (Independent Enquiry Study)

IES	<p>1. With effect from 2014/15 for S4 students, leading to the 2017 HKDSE Examination, a structured enquiry approach will be adopted with clear guidelines for the conduct of IES– Four steps are introduced to facilitate students’ completion of their IES in a more focused manner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ Problem definition ✧ Relevant concepts/ knowledge/ facts/ data ✧ In-depth explanation of the issue ✧ Judgement and justification <p>2. The IES assessment framework will be further streamlined as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Number of assessment stages to be reduced from 2 to 1, with the Project Proposal and Product stages merging into one assessment stage b. Number of Tasks to be submitted to be reduced from 2 to 1; only one final report to be submitted for assessment c. Analytic marking guidelines to be used, with a mark to be awarded to each of the following domains: <table border="1" style="margin-left: 40px;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">Assessment Domain</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Weighting</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Problem Definition and Identification of Concepts / Knowledge</td> <td style="text-align: center;">6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Explanation and Justification</td> <td style="text-align: center;">10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Presentation and Organisation</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Initiative</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td style="text-align: center;">20%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> d. Submission of Process mark to be cancelled: students’ performance in the process of conducting the IES is reflected in the Initiative domain e. The mark to be awarded for Presentation and Organisation to be capped at a maximum of 3 marks (out of 9) for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ written form reports exceeding 4500 words ✧ non-written form reports exceeding 22 minutes of viewing time or the short written text accompanying the non-written form reports exceeding 1100 words <p>3. The marks for the first 3 domains will be subject to moderation, while the marks for the Initiative domain will not be moderated</p> <p>4. Similar to the existing requirements, there will be no restrictions on the types of data to be used for enquiry and the forms of presentation (written and non-written) of the final report</p>	Assessment Domain	Weighting	Problem Definition and Identification of Concepts / Knowledge	6%	Explanation and Justification	10%	Presentation and Organisation	2%	Initiative	2%	Total	20%
Assessment Domain	Weighting												
Problem Definition and Identification of Concepts / Knowledge	6%												
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Presentation and Organisation	2%												
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Total	20%												
Remarks	Review of the LS curriculum is on-going, and recommendations will be made at a later stage												

Business, Accounting and Financial Studies (BAFS)

Public Examination	Separate grading and reporting of the subject results for candidates taking different elective modules to be adopted with effect from the 2015 HKDSE Examination (for S6 students in 2014/15), with no change in the curriculum coverage, mode of assessment or question-setting of the papers
Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✧ Closely monitoring and reviewing the existing curriculum and assessment framework of the trimmed BAFS curriculum (first examination to be conducted in 2016) and the implementation of separate grading and reporting of the subject results✧ In parallel, CDI & HKEAA to start the ground work for developing the separate subject(s)✧ The ultimate way forward will be subject to thorough discussion and consultation by the end of 2016, while holding steadfast to the ultimate goals of the senior secondary curriculum under the New Academic Structure