

Education Bureau Circular Memorandum No. 105/2019

From: Secretary for Education

To: Heads of all Primary and
Secondary Schools (excluding
ESF and International Schools)

Date: 19 June 2019

Territory-wide System Assessment of Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics at Primary 3 (P3) and Secondary 3 (S3) in 2019/20

(Note: This circular memorandum should be read by Heads of all primary and secondary schools, excluding ESF and International Schools, for necessary action.)

Purpose

The purpose of this circular memorandum is to inform schools of the arrangements of the Territory-wide System Assessment (TSA) of Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics at P3 and S3 levels for the 2019/20 school year.

Background

2. Based on the document “Reform Proposals for the Education System in Hong Kong” released by the Education Commission in 2000, TSA aims to help schools and the Government gauge students’ attainment of Basic Competencies in Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics at end of key learning stages, which will provide feedback for the planning of school-based learning and teaching, and improvement of education policies with the information obtained. The Government has commissioned the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) to administer TSA. It was introduced to P3 in 2004, P6 in 2005 and S3 in 2006. TSA is a low-stake assessment that does not provide assessment results of individual students, and by no means a basis for grading their advancement in studies or allocating school places for admission to Secondary 1. Schools may make reference to the Basic Competencies at respective key learning stages at the

website http://cd1.edb.hkedcity.net/cd/eap_web/bca/index3.htm.

3. Since the phased introduction of TSA in 2004, the Education Bureau (EDB) has maintained close communication with various stakeholders to learn about the implementation progress and stakeholders' views for enhancements. Among others, to respond to the public's concerns about TSA, the Secretary for Education announced in late October 2015 that the Coordinating Committee on Basic Competency Assessment and Assessment Literacy (the Committee) would conduct a comprehensive review of Basic Competency Assessment. Throughout the entire review that took more than two years, the EDB, acting upon the Committee's recommendations, introduced the 2016 Tryout Study (Primary 3) and 2017 Basic Competency Assessment Research Study to verify the effectiveness of the enhancement measures. The Committee has collected and summed up the views of different stakeholders and experience from schools and submitted the Report on Review of the Primary 3 Territory-wide System Assessment 2015-2017¹ (Review Report) to the EDB in March 2018.

4. The EDB accepted the Review Report submitted by the Committee, and announced that the feedback at the territory-wide and school levels for P3 TSA will be handled separately in 2018 and afterwards. At the territory-wide level, TSA will be conducted every year on a sampling basis, with around 10% of P3 students sampled from each public sector and Direct Subsidy Scheme school. At the school level, schools which would like all their P3 students to participate in TSA and obtain detailed school reports may approach the HKEAA direct. The HKEAA will issue school reports to schools directly. The EDB will not obtain school reports of individual schools from the HKEAA. Details are set out in EDB Circular Memorandum No. 37/2018.

TSA in 2019/20

Primary 3 Level

5. The Chinese audio-visual (CAV) assessment and speaking assessments for Chinese Language and English Language at P3 level will be conducted on a sampling

¹ Report on Review of the Primary 3 Territory-wide System Assessment 2015-2017 (March 2018)
<http://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/assessment/about-assessment/2015-17-tsa-report-en.pdf>

basis on **5 May 2020 (Tuesday) or 6 May 2020 (Wednesday)** (with 8 May 2020 (Friday) as the fallback date). The HKEAA will inform schools nearer the time on which of these two days the speaking assessments will be conducted. Meanwhile, the assessment for Mathematics, and the written assessments for Chinese Language and English Language for P3 will be conducted similarly on a sampling basis on **11 June 2020 (Thursday) and 12 June 2020 (Friday)** (with 15 June 2020 (Monday) as the fallback date). The HKEAA will later issue letters to advise schools of the details on direct communication with the HKEAA if they would like all their P3 students to participate in TSA and would like to obtain detailed school reports from the HKEAA.

Primary 6 Level

6. Since 2015, the P6 TSA will be conducted in odd-numbered years. Hence, the P6 TSA will be suspended in 2020, but individual schools can still take part in the P6 assessment on a voluntary basis in the year of suspension of the P6 TSA, and make use of the marking and reporting services provided by the HKEAA. As this is not an assessment participated by all P6 students in Hong Kong, the HKEAA will not provide system level data (including the territory-wide performance on sub-papers and individual items). Schools interested in participating please note that the CAV assessment and speaking assessments for Chinese Language and English Language at P6 level will be conducted on a sampling basis on **12 May 2020 (Tuesday) or 13 May 2020 (Wednesday)** (with 15 May 2020 (Friday) as the fallback date). The HKEAA will inform schools nearer the time on which of these two days the speaking assessments will be conducted. Meanwhile, the assessment for Mathematics, and the written assessments for Chinese Language and English Language for P6 will be conducted on **11 June 2020 (Thursday) and 12 June 2020 (Friday)** (with 15 June 2020 (Monday) as the fallback date).

Secondary 3 Level

7. The speaking assessments for Chinese Language and English Language at S3 level will be conducted on a sampling basis on **21 April 2020 (Tuesday) or 22 April 2020 (Wednesday)** (with 24 April 2020 (Friday) as the fallback date). The HKEAA will advise nearer the time on which one of the two days mentioned will the speaking assessments be conducted. Meanwhile, the assessment for Mathematics, and the

written assessments for Chinese Language and English Language at S3 level will take two days. Schools are requested to reserve **16 June 2020 (Tuesday) and 17 June (Wednesday)** (with 19 June 2020 (Friday) as the fallback date in case the assessments have to be deferred due to inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances) in their school calendar for administering TSA.

Participation of students

8. TSA is a low-stake assessment and provides the Government with not only objective territory-wide data on students' Basic Competencies, but also school level data and information on overall student performance in different learning dimensions for schools to give feedback on learning and teaching. Hence, schools have to arrange all students (including Non-Chinese Speaking (NCS) students and students with special educational needs (SEN)) to participate in P6 and S3 assessments; while all P3 students (including NCS and SEN students) to participate in the sampling arrangement at the territory-wide level, with a view to assisting the Government in collecting data for related research, policy review and provision of relevant support. To provide feedback of assessment data to schools to enhance teaching and learning, at the school level, the HKEAA can provide secondary and primary schools with five or more NCS and SEN students taking part in the S3 and P6 assessments with respective reports on the overall performance of relevant students. This measure is also applicable to schools which arrange all their P3 students to participate in TSA and obtain detailed school reports. In addition, the HKEAA provides accommodation measures for NCS and SEN students as needed, and will later advise schools of the details concerned.

Enquiries

9. For enquiries, please contact the following persons:

Enquiry on administration of TSA:

Dr Tenny LAM of the HKEAA at 3628 8100

Enquiry on general policy of TSA:

Mr Michael YEUNG of the EDB at 2921 8943

Reminder

10. Schools are reminded to timely communicate the schedule for the assessment and the contingency arrangements during adverse weather (including the reserve dates) to parents to help ensure smooth implementation of TSA.

Ms Wendy AU
for Secretary for Education

cc: Heads of Sections – for information