

EDUCATION BUREAU

CIRCULAR MEMORANDUM NO. 39/2021

From: Secretary for Education
Ref. : EDB(CD/C&S)/ADM/75/1/16C(1)
Date: 1 April 2021

To: Supervisors/Heads of all aided (including special schools), government, caput and private secondary schools, and secondary schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme offering the local senior secondary curriculum

(Please circulate this Circular Memorandum to all members of the School Management Committee (SMC) / Incorporated Management Committee (IMC) and all teachers)

Measures to Optimise the Four Senior Secondary Core Subjects

Summary

The purpose of this Circular Memorandum (CM) is to provide details about the measures to optimise the four senior secondary (SS) core subjects (i.e. Chinese Language, English Language, Mathematics and Citizenship and Social Development in lieu of Liberal Studies) and the phasing out of Combined Science and Integrated Science. The arrangements of the four SS core subjects, Combined Science and Integrated Science will be effective at Secondary 4 (S4) from the 2021/22 school year.

Details

2. The Education Bureau (EDB) conducted a school questionnaire survey on “Optimising the SS Core Subjects to Create Space for Students and Cater for Learner Diversity” from 2 February to 2 March 2021 and concurrently collected suggestions and views from the school sector on the proposals to optimise the four SS core subjects through different channels, including school briefing sessions, teacher focus group meetings, etc. The relevant committees under the Curriculum Development Council (CDC) and the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) followed up and put forward proposals to optimise the respective subjects. After thorough examination and deliberation, the CDC and HKEAA Public Examinations Board endorsed the proposals to optimise the four SS core subjects (“optimising proposals”) and made suggestions to the EDB. The optimising proposals have been accepted by the EDB.

3. The four SS core subjects currently take up more than half or even more of the lesson time in many schools and students lack diversified learning experiences. Optimising the four SS core subjects to varying degrees can generate synergy, release lesson time and enhance curriculum flexibility for creating space for students. **With the optimising measures in place, the four SS core subjects will not take up more**

than half of the total lesson time. Schools can make use of this opportunity of optimising the curriculum to review and plan the curriculum in a holistic manner, and release space to varying degrees in order to cater for students' diverse learning and development needs with due regard to each school's own context and student needs. The lesson time released can facilitate schools' provision of more diversified options, for example, enabling students to take an additional elective subject (including Applied Learning), engage in more in-depth study of subjects (**based on the principle of optimising the SS core subjects, which is to create space for students and cater for learner diversity, we do not recommend that schools allocate the lesson time released to teach core subjects**), enabling some of the students to study the Extended Part (Module 1 (M1) / Module 2 (M2)) in parallel with the Compulsory Part of Mathematics, and/or participate more actively in Other Learning Experiences (OLE), life-wide learning activities, and engage in other personal pursuits to cater for their different interests, abilities and aspirations.

4. The optimising proposals involve the four SS core subjects but the ways of optimising each subject are different. Chinese Language focuses on the planning and implementation of the curriculum, enhancing reading in the whole secondary and primary curricula, and restructuring, combining and optimising the public assessment, providing schools with greater flexibility and more space in learning and teaching to nurture students with the necessary language literacy. English Language creates space via integrating the Compulsory and Elective Parts of the curriculum, and streamlining the design of the Writing Paper and the School-based Assessment (SBA) in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE). While keeping the current Mathematics curriculum and the design of the public assessment unchanged, schools are advised to make better use of the existing demarcation between Foundation Topics and Non-foundation Topics of the Compulsory Part to optimise the curriculum so as to cater for learner diversity. Schools are also strongly advised to incorporate lessons of the Extended Part into the regular school timetable. Liberal Studies will be renamed Citizenship and Social Development. The curriculum after reform will adhere to the curriculum rationale and aims of the existing Liberal Studies. The themes include "Hong Kong under "One Country, Two Systems", "Our Country since Reform and Opening-up" and "Interconnectedness and Interdependence of the Contemporary World". Students will be provided with Mainland study opportunities (not involving public examination). The curriculum content and lesson time will be reduced to about half of those of the original. There will only be one paper in the public examination, and the results reported will be either "attained" or "not attained". The EDB will provide support in different aspects in order to implement the optimised curricula effectively. Please refer to **Annexes A – D** for the details of the optimising measures.

5. In addition, it has come to the EDB's attention that the number of schools offering Combined Science and Integrated Science and the number of students taking the two subjects have been on the decrease in recent years. After liaising and communicating with the schools which currently offer the subjects and examining the situation by the CDC and the HKEAA, it is decided that the two subjects will be phased out at S4 from the 2021/22 school year to create space for schools to arrange

for optimising the curriculum concurrently, for example, switching to offer / offering an additional Biology, Chemistry or Physics to strengthen students' science knowledge foundation, or offering an elective subject (e.g. Technology and Living) or Applied Learning course (e.g. Applied Science, Engineering and Production) in the STEM-related areas, encouraging students to participate in more STEM-related life-wide learning activities, to cater for students' interests and development needs, and broaden their learning experiences.

6. This CM shall be read in conjunction with the EDBCM No. 20/2021 and be circulated to all members of the School Management Committee (SMC)/ Incorporated Management Committee (IMC) and all teachers. Key stakeholders such as parents and students shall be briefed and informed about the school's considerations in optimising the four SS core subjects in a holistic manner in order to implement the optimising measures in the 2021/22 school year for the benefit of students. The current SS students will continue to follow the existing curricula.

Enquiries

7. We have newly added the webpage “Optimising the Four Senior Secondary Core Subjects” (www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/renewal/opt_core_subj.html) at the EDB website. The webpage contains relevant information including examples of curriculum planning at the school level, FAQ, etc. For other enquiries, please contact the following officers from the Curriculum Development Institute of the EDB:



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Dr Gloria CHAN
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c.c. HKEAA & Heads of Sections – for information

(Chinese version only)
中國語文科（中四至中六）
優化措施

1. 引言

高中中國語文科的優化措施着重課程的規劃和實施，為學校提供更大的靈活性，以滿足學生的不同學習需求。優化措施並不影響中國語文科的課程宗旨、理念和架構，而是讓課程及評估更聚焦和深化。在精簡課程及評估後，本科最多可釋放約 50 小時的課時。

是次**優化措施**既有關於精簡的地方，亦有加強的部分，希望學生通過語文學習，更有效地培養語文素養，為學習各門學問奠定良好的語文基礎。與此同時，希望可以適當地回應學校課程檢討專責小組建議，加強課程內中國文學和文言經典的學習，以及長遠考慮非華語學生的學習需要。

2. 理念

語文是生活中最主要的傳意和溝通工具，中國語文科的學習內容包括閱讀、寫作、聆聽、說話、文學、中華文化、品德情意、思維、語文自學九個學習範疇。各個範疇緊密扣連、相輔相成，在日常學與教中，要文道並重，學生在語文學習上才會得到均衡而全面的發展。

閱讀是語文學習的根本，中國語文課程一向透過範文輸入語文養份，鼓勵適量背誦，以豐富語文積澱。汲取優秀作品的精華，能有助提高語文能力，拓展視野和胸襟。有豐富的積累，在表達時才能準確、流暢、得體，言之有物。教師除了在課堂上引導學生閱讀不同的文本，亦宜於課堂內外安排多元的閱讀活動，以增加閱讀趣味，豐富閱讀體會。

評估是蒐集學生學習成果顯證的有效工具，既可判斷學生的學習表現，又可改善學與教，在學、教、評的循環中不可或缺。高中課程的評估分公開評核¹及校內評估兩部分。相對而言，校內評估較着重進展性評估，而公開評核則較側重總結性評估。然而公開評核有其限制，難以考核課程內所有元素，故此，在日常學與教之中，教師須均衡地培養學生的讀、寫、聽、說能力，適時回饋，使學生的語文能力得到全面發展。

¹ 公開評核包括「公開考試」及「校本評核」。

優化措施將說話能力的評估融入在校本評核「閱讀匯報」內，並佔一定分數。學生在熟悉的環境中進行考核，較少受外界因素影響，在教師的指導和充足的準備下，不同能力的學生，相信都能發揮得更好。同時，不論公開考試是否設獨立卷別，教師亦會因應學生的能力和學習需要，靈活安排不同類型的說話活動，如個人匯報、朗讀、小組討論、辯論，透過活動和回饋，幫助學生從不同方面培養聆聽和說話的能力。

3. 課程

高中課程融合必修和選修部分，以釋放課時，為學校提供更大彈性和空間。教師可建基於已有的條件和優勢，以及過去的經驗，靈活地組織單元，例如善用選修單元部分學習材料，加強課程內文學文化或綜合讀寫聽說的學習，又或與校本評核閱讀匯報結合；教師亦可將相關的元素融入其他學習單元內，讓學生選讀經典名篇，或觀看由名篇改編的影視作品片段，增加學習趣味。

此外，在中小學各學習階段提供「建議篇章」，以進一步提升學生的閱讀能力，豐富語文積澱。教師可按學校情況，把「建議篇章」融入課程，例如設文言經典單元、配合單元主題加入篇章，或作為單元後的延伸閱讀篇章。「建議篇章」只是學習內容的一部分，教師仍須因應學生的興趣、能力和學習需要，選用其他文言及語體學習材料，幫助學生提升語文能力和語文素養。高中建議篇章的篇目將附於更新的課程及評估指引內。

4. 公開評核

高中中國語文科的公開評核包括公開考試及校本評核兩部分，概述如下：

部分	內容	比重	評核形式	考試時間
公開考試	卷一 閱讀能力	40%	筆試	1 小時 30 分鐘
	卷二 寫作能力	45%	筆試	2 小時 15 分鐘
校本評核	閱讀匯報： 一次文字報告 一次口頭匯報	15%	各呈交 1 個分數， 合共呈交 2 個分數	

公開考試

試卷形式

公開考試包括兩卷，全屬必考，合共佔全科總分百分之八十五。

試卷一 閱讀能力

- 佔全科總分百分之四十，考試時間為一小時三十分鐘。
- 本卷主要考核考生的閱讀能力，包括理解、分析、感受、鑑賞、運用不同策略等能力。
- 試卷分甲、乙兩部分。甲部考核指定的文言經典學習材料，佔全卷百分之三十；乙部擷取若干課外篇章設問，文白兼備，佔全卷百分之七十。全部試題均須作答。
- 設題方式包括問答、選擇、填表、填充等。

試卷二 寫作能力

- 佔全科總分百分之四十五，考試時間為兩小時十五分鐘。
- 本卷主要考核考生理解、組織、構思、表達、創作等能力。
- 試卷分甲、乙兩部分。甲部考核實用寫作，佔全卷百分之三十；乙部命題寫作，佔全卷百分之七十。
- 試卷甲部設若干閱讀材料，供考生整理並加以發揮，完成一項寫作任務，設字數上限。乙部設題方式或命題，或指定情境，並提供選擇，要求考生寫作長文一篇，或短文二至三篇，字數視題目要求而定。

校本評核

所有學校考生必須參加校本評核，佔全科總分百分之十五。

評核內容

閱讀匯報

- 呈交兩個分數，包括一次文字報告及一次口頭匯報。
- 考生須妥善保存有關課業，以供查核，直至香港中學文憑考試成績公布為止。
- 自修生無須參加校本評核。他們本科的成績全部以公開考試成績計算。
- 有關校本評核的詳細要求、規則、評核準則和指引等，將刊於香港考試及評核局編訂的香港中學文憑中國語文科校本評核手冊之內。

English Language (S4–S6)

Optimising Measures

1. Introduction

The following measures are formulated to optimise the arrangements for the learning and teaching of senior secondary English Language and the paper design of the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) English Language Examination. They include:

- integrating the Compulsory and Elective Parts of the curriculum to create space;
- offering Applied Learning (Vocational English) and other English-related Applied Learning courses to cater for students' diverse interests and needs;
- promoting the creative use of language through language arts, and academic use of language through Reading across the Curriculum (RaC) and Language across the Curriculum (LaC) to stretch students' potential in English learning; and
- improving the design of the School-based Assessment (SBA) and Paper 2 (Writing) of the HKDSE English Language Examination to reduce the workload on students and enhance the effectiveness of the assessment.

2. Rationale

The optimising measures seek to maintain the integrity of the frameworks and objectives of the existing senior secondary English Language curriculum and assessment, while offering greater flexibility for schools to better cater for learner diversity and create space for students to broaden their knowledge and learning experience. Under the optimising arrangements, schools are encouraged to enhance learning and teaching by integrating learning elements in different parts, making use of the time and space created to make differentiation arrangements (e.g. remedial and enrichment programmes, Applied Learning courses, elective subjects) and organising learning activities (e.g. RaC and LaC activities, debating competitions) to address students' learning needs, interests and aspirations.

It should be stressed that the optimising measures regarding the senior secondary English Language curriculum and assessment are part of a holistic optimisation initiative to be implemented across the four core subjects. The holistic optimisation aims to create space for schools to cater for learner diversity in accordance with school contexts and students' learning and development needs.

3. Curriculum

With the curriculum aims, design principles, learning targets and objectives, including the learning and teaching elements, stated in *English Language Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4–6)* (CDC & HKEAA, 2007) (with updates in November 2015) unchanged, some refinement is introduced to create space, and facilitate flexible use of time and holistic planning of differentiation measures to cater for learning diversity, as detailed below:

	Existing Curriculum	Optimising Measures
Curriculum Time and Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a total of 313–375 hours of lesson time recommended in the existing curriculum guides 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> saving up to 50 hours of the total lesson time through reducing the overlap between the Compulsory and Elective Parts and optimising teaching arrangements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75% of the lesson time allocated to the Compulsory Part 25% of the lesson time allocated to the Elective Part for the teaching of 2–3 elective modules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Elective Part to be fully integrated into the Compulsory Part, or the Elective Part to be taught as enrichment / extension components, with emphasis on the creative use of English through the language arts components
Cross-curricular Links	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> strengthening cross-curricular links and collaboration by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - promoting the academic use of language through RaC and LaC, as well as co-curricular and life-wide learning activities; and - offering Applied Learning (Vocational English) from the 2021–23 cohort and expanding the range of English-related Applied Learning courses in the future. (Please refer to the EDBCM No. 69/2020 “Senior Secondary Applied Learning Courses (2021-23 Cohort)” for details.) 	

As topics and themes in the Compulsory and Elective Parts are closely related, the two parts can be smoothly integrated. The table below provides some ideas and examples on how the learning elements of the Elective Part can be integrated into the Compulsory Part of the senior secondary English Language curriculum:

Suggested Modules and Units for the Compulsory Part	Possible Elective Modules for Integration	Suggested Integration Activities
<u>Getting along with Others</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Friendship and Dating Sharing, Co-operation, Rivalry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Drama ◇ Poems and Songs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing a script and role-playing a scene on the conflict between two friends Listening to songs about friendship and love and understanding the theme and figurative language used in the lyrics
<u>Study, School Life and Work</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study and Related Pleasure / Problems Experiments and Projects Occupations, Careers and Prospects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Popular Culture ◇ Workplace Communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing a letter for a newspaper column to offer advice on teenage problems Conducting a mock job-interview in a Career Expo

Suggested Modules and Units for the Compulsory Part	Possible Elective Modules for Integration	Suggested Integration Activities
<u>Cultures of the World</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travelling and Visiting • Customs, Clothes and Food of Different Places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ Poems and Songs ✧ Popular Culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading poems and listening to folk songs about other places and cultures • Reading reviews on travel blogs and websites to plan trips and itineraries
<u>Wonderful Things</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful People and Amazing Deeds • Great Stories • Precious Things 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ Short Stories ✧ Sports Communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading stories / biographies of Nobel laureates • Watching documentaries of famous athletes
<u>Nature and Environment</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting the Environment • Resources and Energy Conservation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ Debating ✧ Social Issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting a debate on environmental conservation vs economic development • Designing a questionnaire and conducting a mini-survey on an environmental issue
<u>The Individual and Society</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime • Human Rights (personal rights, civic rights, respect) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ Short Stories ✧ Social Issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading and analysing the theme and plot of a detective story • Giving a speech on discrimination / the importance of an inclusive community
<u>Communicating</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Media and Publications • International Network (Internet) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ Social Issues ✧ Workplace Communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussing the pros and cons of social media and suggesting solutions to problems caused • Writing a memorandum to staff on cyber security at the workplace
<u>Technology</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes Brought about by Technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ Debating ✧ Social Issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting a debate on whether Artificial Intelligence does more harm than good • Writing an article about how technology changes the ways students learn
<u>Leisure and Entertainment</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The World of Sports • “Showbiz” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ Sports Communication ✧ Drama 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing a proposal to suggest a new sport to be included in the Olympic Games / a new city to host the Olympic Games • Recreating the ending of a play / musical

4. Public Assessment

The assessment framework of the HKDSE English Language subject will remain unchanged, as outlined in the following table:

Component		Weighting	Duration
Public Examination	Paper 1 Reading*	20%	1½ hours
	Paper 2 Writing (comprising Part A and Part B)	25%	2 hours
	Paper 3 Listening & Integrated Skills*	30%	About 2 hours
	Paper 4 Speaking	10%	About 20 minutes
School-based Assessment (for school candidates only)		15%	

*Note: *The Graded Approach is adopted in Paper 1 (Reading) and Paper 3 (Listening and Integrated Skills) as a differentiation arrangement to cater to the wide ability range of candidates.*

Changes are made to refine the design of the following assessment components:

	Existing Design	Optimising Measures
Paper 2 (Writing)	<u>Part A – one short guided task (about 200 words)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> one compulsory short question 	<u>Part A– one short guided task (about 2 00 words)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> no change
	<u>Part B – one long task (about 400 words)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> eight questions (each on one elective module of the Elective Part) for students’ free choice 	<u>Part B – one long task (about 400 words)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> delinking questions in Part B from the eight elective modules reducing the number of questions from 8 to 4
SBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> two marks to be submitted, one from the reading / viewing programme, one from the Elective Part, each accounting for 7.5% of the total subject mark 4 texts to be read / viewed in the course of 3 years in preparation for the SBA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> two marks (7.5% each) submitted based only on the reading / viewing programme (i.e. no SBA required on the Elective Part, which is to be fully integrated into the Compulsory Part) adjusting the number of texts to be read / viewed from 4 to 2 - 4

Mathematics (S4–S6)

Optimising Measures

1. Introduction

Mathematics, as a core subject at the senior secondary level, plays its unique role in nurturing students with mathematical literacy to meet the challenges in a technology-oriented and information-rich society. In response to students' different learning needs, the framework of the current senior secondary Mathematics curriculum has already provided flexibility to cater for learner diversity. The current curriculum comprises the Compulsory Part and the Extended Part such that the Compulsory Part provides essential mathematical knowledge and skills which are important for students' different career pathways, while the Extended Part offers a choice of Module 1 (M1) (Calculus and Statistics) or Module 2 (M2) (Algebra and Calculus) to meet the needs of students who require more mathematical knowledge and skills for their future studies and careers. Besides, the content in the Compulsory Part is categorised into Foundation Topics and Non-foundation Topics. Foundation Topics comprises a set of fundamental knowledge and skills that all students should strive to learn, while Non-foundation Topics provides a wider range of content in terms of breadth and depth, for schools to adjust learning content according to students' needs.

As observed from the years of implementation of the senior secondary Mathematics curriculum, the use of the aforementioned built-in flexibility of the curriculum for catering for learner diversity could be strengthened. There is also room for enhancement in arranging mathematics lessons within regular school timetable. This is shared by the Task Force on Review of School Curriculum as their report recommended the enhanced utilisation of the current demarcation between Foundation Topics and Non-foundation Topics of the Compulsory Part of the Mathematics curriculum in learning, teaching and assessment, to cater for the needs of different students.

To better cater for learner diversity and create space in senior secondary Mathematics, the committees on Mathematics under the Curriculum Development Council and the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority have discussed and agreed on the measures that while keeping the current curriculum and assessment design of the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) examination of senior secondary Mathematics unchanged, senior secondary Mathematics is optimised via strengthening curriculum differentiation, so that students of different abilities, interests and aspirations are allowed to study different combinations of the Compulsory Part and Extended Part of Mathematics.

2. Rationale

As the current senior secondary Mathematics curriculum framework has already provided flexibility to cater for students' learner diversity, the optimising measures for senior secondary Mathematics do not include any change to the curriculum of Mathematics and the assessment design of HKDSE examination of the subject. Without suggesting across-the-board requirements for all schools, nor an overall trimming of lesson time for all students, the optimising measures encourage schools to make better use of the demarcation between Foundation Topics and Non-foundation Topics of the Compulsory Part to plan their

school-based learning content in accordance with school contexts and the learning needs of their students, as well as to offer of M1 and M2 in regular school timetable, to fully nurture students' mathematical literacy while matching students' learning needs, abilities, interests and aspirations.

It is emphasised that the optimising measures regarding the senior secondary Mathematics curriculum is part of a holistic optimisation initiative to be implemented in the four senior secondary core subjects together to create space and cater for learner diversity in accordance with school context and student's learning and development needs.

3. Curriculum and Public Assessment

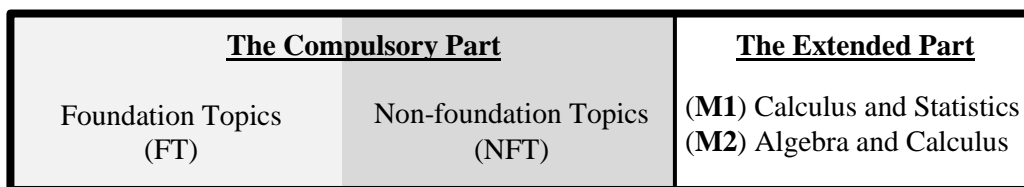
While keeping the current Mathematics curriculum and the HKDSE assessment framework of the Compulsory Part and the Extended Part **unchanged**, schools should adopt an enhanced utilisation of the demarcation between Foundation Topics and Non-foundation Topics of the Compulsory Part of senior secondary Mathematics to cater for learner diversity and create space. Measures include:

- Schools are advised to arrange students with different mathematical abilities, interests and aspirations to study different combinations of the Compulsory Part and Extended Part of senior secondary Mathematics in accordance with school contexts.

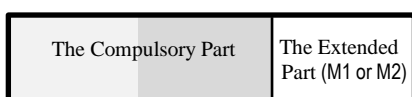
Students	Learning content to take	Release of 50 hours of lesson time
1. General students	The whole Compulsory Part	Not applicable
2. Students who have keen interest in Mathematics or need more mathematical knowledge and skills for their future studies and careers	The Compulsory Part together with M1 or M2 of the Extended Part	Not applicable
3. Students who have the inclination to pursue further studies on subjects not related to Mathematic (Non-Mathematics-inclined students)	Foundation Topics and part of the Non-foundation Topics of the Compulsory Part	May consider releasing lesson time, up to 50 hours for the three years
4. Students who need more time to concentrate on the more foundational learning content	Foundation Topics and part of the Non-foundation Topics of the Compulsory Part	Not applicable

The following diagram helps illustrate the above:

Senior secondary Mathematics

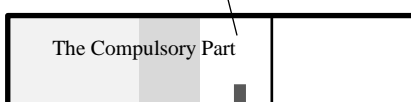


1. General students: studying the whole Compulsory Part



2. Students who have keen interest in Mathematics or need more mathematical knowledge and skills: studying M1 or M2 together with the Compulsory Part

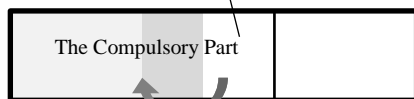
Not taking some NFT



Lesson time released

3. Non-Mathematics-inclined students: studying FT and part of NFT and use the lesson time thus released (up to 50 hours for the three years) on the enhanced study of other subjects or OLE

Not taking some NFT



Lesson time saved for other topics

4. Students who need more time to concentrate on the more foundational learning content: studying FT and part of NFT and use the time thus saved to focus on the learning of FT and the remaining topics

- The fact that, under the current assessment design, a good mastery of Foundation Topics of the Compulsory Part is sufficient for candidates who perform well in the HKDSE Examination MATHEMATICS Compulsory Part to attain up to Level 4 in the Examination, would be explained. This is not a new arrangement, but an actual situation under the current assessment design, which is explained to provide students and parents with a more concrete idea about the proportion of Foundation Topics and Non-foundation Topics in the curriculum content and public assessment, so that they could have a more concrete reference for considering whether to study all the Non-foundation Topics. The purpose of this explanation is not to encourage students to study only the Foundation Topics in an attempt to obtain a Level 4 result, nor saying that such a way is a short-cut for Level 4. The choice of studying only part of the Non-foundation Topics would provide students with space to study more in-depth the Foundation Topics / other chosen subjects, or engage in OLE, etc.

The table below shows an outline of the current assessment design of the Compulsory Part, which would be kept unchanged, including the current design that each paper consists of Section A and Section B.

Component		Weighting	Duration
Public Examination	Paper 1 Conventional questions	65%	2¼ hours
	Paper 2 Multiple-choice questions	35%	1¼ hours

- Schools are suggested to adopt block-timetabling and grouping arrangements to arrange students into different classes / groups for offering different combinations of the Compulsory Part and the Extended Part, i.e. Foundation Topics with part of Non-foundation Topics, the whole Compulsory Part, and the Compulsory Part plus M1 / M2, within the regular school timetable. Schools may note that -
 - they could flexibly adopt school-based arrangement on whether or not and at which year level to offer classes / groups for non-mathematics-inclined students in accordance with school contexts;
 - the advantage of block-timetabling and grouping is that schools may consider allowing students to move from one group to another if they fulfil the school-based criteria;
 - regarding the arrangement of lessons of M1/M2 of the Extended Part in the regular school timetable, if schools plan to add an additional common block for elective subjects through the optimising measures of core subjects, the schools may place M1/M2 lessons in this common block. Schools may also make use of the lesson time released by the optimising measures of core subjects to allow students in some classes to take the Compulsory Part together with M1 or M2 of Mathematics in lesson time outside the common block for elective subjects; and
 - mechanisms similar to schools' existing ones for handling selection of senior secondary subjects and streaming of students within subjects could be adopted to cater for learner diversity in senior secondary Mathematics.

Citizenship and Social Development (S4–S6)**Optimising Measures****Introduction**

For optimising the senior secondary curriculum, proposals are formulated by the four core subjects to create space and cater for learner diversity. For Liberal Studies, the government announced the direction of the reform of senior secondary Liberal Studies in late November 2020, which included

- renaming the subject;
- keeping the subject compulsory for public assessment;
- marking the public examination as “attained” and “not attained” to release students’ examination pressure;
- stating clearly the important learning concepts in the curriculum to strengthen the coverage of knowledge, so as to build a solid knowledge base for students;
- reorganising and reducing the curriculum content, including lesson time, to cover about half of the original so as to free up space for student learning;
- removing Independent Enquiry Study (IES) to reduce the workload of both teachers and students;
- attaching importance to cultivating students’ positive values and attitudes, sense of national identity, their learning about national development, the Constitution, the Basic Law and the rule of law;
- broadening students’ international perspectives, helping them connect knowledge across different subjects, developing their critical thinking skills and teaching them to analyse contemporary topics in a rational manner through studying important topics related to Hong Kong, the nation and global developments;
- providing Mainland study opportunities for students to gain a first-hand understanding of our country and its development; and
- putting in place a Recommended Textbook List for the subject.

In alignment with the other three core subjects, the re-structuring and streamlining of the curriculum of the subject aims to create space for senior secondary students and cater for learner diversity. The following parts include the curriculum rationale, aims and broad learning outcomes, as well as the curriculum and assessment framework of Citizenship and Social Development.

Curriculum Rationale

The curriculum of Citizenship and Social Development adheres to the rationale of senior secondary Liberal Studies. The curriculum emphasises on helping senior secondary students understand the situations of Hong Kong, the country and the contemporary world, as well as their pluralistic and interdependent nature. Through the learning process, students can connect the knowledge learnt in various subjects at the junior and senior secondary levels, and understand, study and explore different topics from multiple perspectives, so as to construct more knowledge relevant to various themes and build up a more solid knowledge base. Furthermore, students can understand the complexities, major considerations and priorities involved in the topics, decision-making process and different solutions to problems, in order to help students:

- acquire a broad knowledge base, and understand contemporary issues that may affect their daily life at personal, community, national and global levels;
- become informed and responsible citizens with a sense of national identity and global perspective;
- respect pluralism of cultures and views, and become critical, rational, reflective and independent thinkers; and
- acquire skills necessary to life-long learning, and to be confident in facing future challenges.

Curriculum Aims

The aims of Citizenship and Social Development are to help students:

- (i) enhance understanding of the complexities of society, the country, the human world, the physical environment and related knowledge;
- (ii) develop multiple perspectives on contemporary mature topics in different contexts (e.g. cultural, social, economic, political and technological contexts);
- (iii) become independent thinkers; be able to adapt to the ever-changing personal, social, national and global circumstances and construct knowledge; understand the complexities of the topics, and the challenges and processes involved in decision-making for making law-abiding, rational and affective analysis, and learning how to handle conflicting values;
- (iv) inherit Chinese culture and heritage in a pluralistic society, deepen understanding and sense of identity of individuals with Chinese nationality and Chinese citizenship, and at the same time appreciate, respect and embrace diversity in cultures and views;
- (v) develop skills relevant to life-long learning and strengthen their ability to integrate and apply knowledge and skills, including critical thinking skills, creativity, problem solving skills, communication skills, collaboration skills, data management skills, self-management skills, self-learning skills, and information technology skills;
- (vi) develop positive values and attitudes towards life, so that they can become informed and responsible citizens of society, the country and the world.

Broad Learning Outcomes

Through studying the subject, students should be able to:

- (i) understand the constitutional basis of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, its relationship with the country and the latest development of the country, so as to explore the opportunities and challenges of the interactive development between Hong Kong and the Mainland;
- (ii) understand the contemporary mature topics related to individuals, the society, the country, the human world and the physical environment, so as to construct knowledge and promote self-directed learning;
- (iii) understand the interplay among individuals, society, the country and the world in relation to environmental, economic and social development through studying the topics of common human concerns covered in the curriculum framework, and based on the above understanding to explore how to resolve difficulties, promote development and reap mutual benefits;
- (iv) develop a sense of national identity with global perspective, and understand the interconnectedness among areas of economy, science, technology, sustainable development, public health, etc., as well as the development of the contemporary world and the related impact; and recognise the roles of Hong Kong, the country, and the international community;
- (v) identify different views and the values behind various topics; and apply in an integrative manner critical thinking skills, problem solving skills, creativity, data management skills and self-learning skills in examining the background, content, developmental trends and the values of the topics from multiple perspectives, so as to make law-abiding, rational and affective judgements and decisions based on facts and evidence; as well as develop positive values and attitudes;
- (vi) present arguments clearly based on facts and evidence, demonstrate objective, fair and empathetic attitudes towards the opinions and views held by other people;
- (vii) understand, appreciate and inherit Chinese culture and treat other cultures with respect, receptiveness and appreciation, and be willing to become responsible and committed citizens.

Themes and Learning Points

Theme		Topic	Learning Focus
1	Hong Kong under “One Country, Two Systems” (45–50 hours)	The meaning and implementation of “one country, two systems”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Brief introduction to the origin of the question of Hong Kong (the three unequal treaties and the background) and the process of Hong Kong’s return to China ● Constitutional relationship between the country and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) (China has indisputable sovereignty and jurisdiction over Hong Kong), “one country, two systems” and its legal basis ● Significance of safeguarding national security (i.e. a holistic approach to national security); the National Security Law and promoting long-term development of Hong Kong; and striking the balance between rule of law and human rights ● Political structure of the HKSAR ● Significance of rule of law: law-abidingness; judicial independence; equality before the law; fair and open trial ● Fundamental rights and duties of Hong Kong residents as stipulated in the Basic Law
		Situation of the country and sense of national identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Brief introduction to the contemporary situation of the country: political structure of the country; composition of the Chinese nation; concept of Chinese nationality and Chinese citizens ● The national symbols (national flag, national emblem, national anthem) and stipulations as stated in Annex III to the Basic Law ● Achievements of the country in different areas in recent years (new high-end technologies, medical care and public health, culture education, infrastructures, poverty eradication) ● Benefits and contributions of the HKSAR’s participation in national affairs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - benefits: the country’s policies supporting the development of Hong Kong; enabling Hong Kong to have the advantage of “one country, two systems” - contributions: Hong Kong promoting the development of and exchange with the Mainland in different areas; donations for natural disasters and supporting the needs of the developing regions of the Mainland

Theme		Topic	Learning Focus
		Characteristics of cultural diversity of the Hong Kong society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Factors shaping the characteristics of cultural diversity with Chinese culture as the mainstay in the Hong Kong society: brief introduction to the development of Hong Kong, the impact of Chinese traditional culture integrating with different cultures on the Hong Kong society ● Positive significance of the characteristics of cultural diversity to the Hong Kong society: promoting inclusion of cultures, facilitating cultural innovations and reflections, promoting harmony among different ethnic groups, nurturing citizenship rooted in Chinese culture with a global perspective
2	Our Country since Reform and Opening-up (45–50 hours)	Reform and opening-up and the change in people's life and overall national strength	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Brief introduction to the development of China's reform and opening-up (key stages) and related strategies ● Changes and enhancement of people's quality of life (income, mode of consumption, educational level, standard of medical care, life expectancy, poverty eradication, etc.) ● Enhancement of overall national strength (economy, culture, natural resources, education, technology, national defence, etc.)
		The latest development of our country and the integration of Hong Kong into the overall national development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The focuses and policies of the recent Five-Year Plans of our country, and the connection of these focuses and policies with the promotion of the development of our country and Hong Kong ● The development plans and policies related to Hong Kong (the development of the Greater Bay Area, The Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA)) and its relationship with the promotion of the development of Hong Kong
		Participation in international affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The notion of multifaceted diplomacy since the 21st century ● Actions and initiatives: rescues of various nature and assistance to other countries; setting up international organisations and organising international forums; the Belt and Road Initiative ● Impact of participation in international affairs on the country's overall development, and the active role played by Hong Kong

Theme		Topic	Learning Focus
3	Interconnectedness and Interdependence of the Contemporary World (45–50 hours)	Economic globalisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interdependence of economies of all countries, and cooperation of international economic organisations; development of multinational corporations; global labour and financial market integration; development of new economies; and the impact on individuals' consumption and employment and the development of Hong Kong and our country
		Technological development and information literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Brief introduction to the latest technology advancement around the world: artificial intelligence, big data, cloud storage of data ● Development features of information technology: the Internet, social networking sites, instant messaging software ● Relationship between information literacy and positive values; identifying false information; morals and conduct in using technologies; observing the relevant laws
		Sustainable development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The rationale of sustainable development and the practical experiences of environmental conservation of our country, Hong Kong and other regions ● The roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders in promoting environmental conservation
		Public Health and human health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Functions and roles of the World Health Organisation in global public health matters ● Contributions of our country and Hong Kong to global public health (particularly in preventing and controlling infectious diseases) ● Individuals' responsibilities in promoting public health (particularly in responding to infectious diseases)

Mainland Study Tour (Not involving public examination)

Theme	Topic	Learning Focus
Chinese Culture and Modern Life (10-hour learning time)	Nature of traditional Chinese culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Online self-learning of articles introducing the special characteristics of traditional Chinese culture ● Conservation and inheritance of cultural heritage (including tangible and intangible cultural heritage), including applying technology in conservation works
	Introduction to the Mainland study tour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Study tour to the Mainland to experience the conservation and inheritance of Chinese culture in society <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Detailed planning and reading information before the study tour - Methods of on-site collection of information - Study tour report drafting requirements

Assessment Framework

Introduction

The assessment of this subject is based on the Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4-6) (pending) jointly prepared by the Curriculum Development Council and the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority. Candidates have to refer to the Guide for the knowledge, understanding and skills that they are required to demonstrate in the assessment.

Assessment Objectives

The objectives of this assessment are to evaluate candidates' abilities:

- to demonstrate an understanding of the key knowledge covered in the subject;
- to apply relevant knowledge in analysing mature contemporary topics;
- to recognise the influence of personal and social values in analysing contemporary topics;
- to understand and analyse the interconnectedness and interdependence among individuals, the society, the country, the human world and the physical environment;
- to master the ever-changing personal, social, national and global circumstances, understand and analyse the complexities of the topics, and the challenges and processes of decision making;
- to analyse matters, solve problems, and make reasonable judgments, evaluations and suggestions, using multiple perspectives, creativity and appropriate thinking skills (including being in line with social moral values);
- to discern views, attitudes and values stated and implied in the given information, and to draw general conclusions;
- to interpret information from multiple perspectives, and to consider and comment on different viewpoints;
- to select appropriate information and ideas, and to present arguments and views in a systematic way;
- to demonstrate an understanding, appreciation and respect of different cultures and values; and
- to demonstrate empathy in the handling of different topics.

Mode of Assessment

The table below outlines the public assessment of this subject in the 2024 HKDSE:

Mode	Description	Weighting	Duration
Public Examination	Data-response questions	100%	2 hours

The examination of this subject consists of one paper only.

Data-response questions

Candidates will be required to answer all questions with the data provided by the questions.

Various types of questions will be set, such as multiple choice questions, short questions, short essay questions, etc. depending on the nature of data and topics.

Note: In this examination, the term “data” is to be interpreted in the broadest possible sense to mean any type of information. The data provided in the questions of the examination may include, but not limited to, the following:

- articles, news items, reports, memos, letters, and advertisements;
- written dialogues;
- tables, charts, maps; and
- cartoons, pictures and illustrations.