

Section 2 : Assessment Mechanism

(1) Basic Competency Assessments

Target

The Basic Competency Assessments comprise the Student Assessment (SA) and the TSA. The SA is an online assessment programme to help teachers better understand the learning needs and problems of students in Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics so that timely assistance can be provided to enhance their learning effectiveness. The TSA provides the school management with useful information on students' standards at the end of each key learning stage (P3, P6 and S3) in the three subjects mentioned above. Thus, the TSA facilitates feedback on learning and teaching, curriculum enrichment and improvement of teaching. The Government will provide support to schools in need of assistance.

Progress

- The online SA system has been made available to primary and secondary schools since June 2003 and January 2005 respectively. As at December 2006, more than 60% of primary schools and 80% of secondary schools have used the online system to assist learning and teaching. It has received international recognition and was awarded a silver medal for innovative excellence at the prestigious Geneva-based competition – le Salon International Des Inventions 2005.
- The TSA began at the P3 level in 2004. In 2006, all students at P3, P6 and S3 took part in the TSA. A total of some 220 000 students from 708 primary schools and 452 secondary schools took part in the TSA in 2006.
- An important milestone in the implementation of the BCA has been reached as quality information on the basic competencies of students at the end of key learning stages has been made available through the TSA.
- It is encouraging to note that there is continued improvement across the years in the percentage of students achieving basic competency at P3 and P6 in all the three subjects.

Tasks Ahead

- The development of the online item bank is on-going. The number of items in the item bank will be increased to facilitate learning and teaching in schools.
- Workshops will be organized for teachers to enhance their understanding of assessment for learning and to equip them with the skills to use TSA data to enhance learning and teaching.
- The provision of online SA and support services will be further disseminated to different stakeholders, including teachers and parents. Moreover, efforts will be made to enable them to have a better understanding of the objectives of the TSA.
- With a view to coming up with improvement measures, a review of the administrative arrangements will be conducted based on the experience of administering the TSA in the past three years.

(2) Public Examination Reforms

Target

To enhance the validity and reliability of the public examination system with a view to improving its interface with the curriculum reform and providing a more comprehensive assessment of students' performance.

Progress

- The HKEAA has continued to conduct seminars to enhance communication with teachers and to share with them the rationale underlying the setting of questions and what is expected of candidates. In addition, the HKEAA has continued to set appropriate questions for HKCEE and HKALE to put more emphasis on the assessment of candidates' ability to apply what they have learned to solve problems. A flexible approach in awarding marks has also been adopted to encourage independent and critical thinking.
- The HKEAA has reviewed the subjects in the HKCEE based on curriculum changes and needs. Two new subjects, namely Science & Technology and Integrated Humanities, and the merged subject of Computer & Information

Technology (from Computer Studies and Information Technology) were introduced in the 2005 HKCEE. Based on the CDC's proposal, the HKEAA has approved abolishing five HKCEE subjects and three HKALE subjects in 2007.

- The HKCEE Chinese Language and English Language examinations have been revised. Reading, writing, listening, speaking skills and integrated language skills will be assessed in the new examinations to be introduced in 2007. Standards-referenced reporting will also be adopted for these two subjects.
- The HKEAA has continued to extend SBA to more subjects for the HKCEE and HKALE. SBA has been introduced in HKCEE Science & Technology, Integrated Humanities, Computer & Information Technology, Visual Arts and HKALE Chinese Literature for the 2005 examinations; and in HKCEE Chinese History and History in 2006. SBA has been implemented in a total of 13 HKALE subjects and 13 HKCEE subjects in the 2005/06 school year.

Tasks Ahead

- SBA will continue to be extended to HKCEE Chinese Language and English Language as well as HKALE Computer Studies in 2007. The phasing in of SBA for the two HKCEE language subjects will occur over the three years 2007-2009. For 2007, about one third of schools have opted to submit SBA results for Chinese Language and English Language, and to have these results reported as part of the overall assessment of the subjects on the certificates of candidates.
- The HKEAA will continue with assessment development and research activities to further improve public examinations, e.g. by way of comparability studies between the results of different examinations.
- The HKEAA will work out plans for the implementation of onscreen marking in Chinese Language and English Language in the 2007 HKCEE.
- The HKEAA will continue setting appropriate questions in HKCEE and HKALE to assess students' ability to apply what they have learned to solve problems.
- The HKEAA will finalize the assessment framework of various subjects for the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE) to be adopted in 2012.

- The HKEAA will finalize direct recognition of the current HKCEE and HKALE for admission purposes by North American universities (already secured for all key British and Australasian universities) and continue to work with relevant overseas bodies on securing advance recognition of the new HKDSE.