Research and Knowledge Sharing

Throughout the years, the HKEAA has worked closely with stakeholders in the education community to promote assessment literacy and provided valuable feedback to schools to enhance learning and teaching. We also carried out research projects from time to time to provide equitable and valid services.

Research and Development

New Research Projects

Research projects completed in 2018/19 include:

- Effectiveness of double marking in the HKDSE Chinese Language writing examination
- Factor structure studies on Chinese and English Language examinations
- Longitudinal analysis of the level prediction study
- Rasch analysis of teachers' and schools' readiness in adopting onscreen marking and post-assessment data analysis
- Study on double marking in Chinese Language writing examination
- Comparison between a rater scale model and a rater effect model

Eight research projects covering seven HKDSE subjects were kick-started in 2018/19 and would be completed in the coming one to two years. Among these projects, Phase one of the HKDSE computer-delivered English Language Speaking paper feasibility study started in May 2019. A group of stakeholders from a wide range of educational institutions and educational backgrounds were invited to join our focus group meetings to express their views on computer-delivered speaking tests and to propose a format for a computer-delivered HKDSE speaking paper. Based on these proposals, several potential assessment designs were drawn up for the development of the IT platform scheduled for trial runs in early 2020.

Research Study on Predicted Levels of HKDSE Core Subjects

Reliable predicted subject results are useful for helping students decide on possible options for work or study ahead of the release of HKDSE results. In addition, an accurate predicted level in English Language can enable students to make an appropriate choice in the graded Reading and Listening & Integrated Skills papers of HKDSE English Language before taking the examinations.

Aiming to estimate the reliability of schools' predictions of their students' results in the core subjects, namely Chinese Language, English Language, Mathematics (Compulsory Part) and Liberal Studies, the HKEAA has been conducting a research study on predicted levels of these four subjects since 2013, with 24 schools joining the pilot study. Over the years, the number of participating schools has increased, reaching 154 with data from more than 17,000 candidates in 2019.

A survey was conducted in 2019 to collect information on schools internal grading methodology. The results showed that the research study on predicted levels of HKDSE core subjects helped teachers in various aspects such as advising students on whether to choose the easy or difficult part of the English Language papers, choosing the appropriate pathways before the release of HKDSE results, improving the accuracy of future level predictions, etc. It was also useful for improving schools' internal assessment practices.

Benchmarking Study on HKDSE English Language

The first benchmarking study between the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and HKDSE English Language was conducted in 2012. Currently, the HKDSE English Language examination is recognised by more than 150 overseas tertiary institutions as a proof of students' English standard. In 2019, the HKEAA is launching a new study to update the benchmarking information. It is anticipated that the findings of the study will help maintain the worldwide recognition of the HKDSE and better facilitate the use of HKDSE English Language results by overseas institutions for student admissions.

Enhancing Learning and Teaching

Developing an HKDSE School Feedback System

To promote assessment for learning, a project to develop an HKDSE School Feedback System was initiated in August 2019. Apart from providing schools with item statistics of their students in the current HKDSE School Statistical Report, this system will provide diagnostic feedback reports, which will highlight the strengths and weaknesses of their students with respect to different learning domains or skill sets.

Quality Assessment Management Accreditation Scheme

Since its launch in 2007, the Quality Assessment Management Accreditation Scheme (QAMAS) offered by the HKEAA has been well received by the school sector. With the implementation of the new accreditation framework in 2018, accredited schools were more aware of risk management. The accredited schools also actively participated in the online training sessions, and over 400 teachers joined the training in 2019.
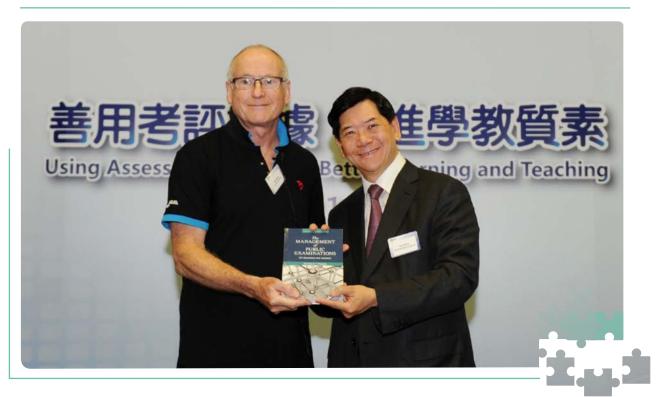
By August 2019, 33 schools were accredited or given certificate renewal in the QAMAS, in recognition of their commitment to quality examination and assessment management.

Assessment Quality-assurance Platform

New functions are being developed to enhance the Assessment Quality-assurance Platform (AQP), a proprietary platform developed to facilitate assessment data analysis. To automate post-assessment procedures for schools using the AQP, an electronic marking module will be available allowing item marks entry and recording during the marking process for later analysis. The enhanced module also allows teachers to select and archive examples of students' works during marking, facilitating better feedback to students.

The Quality Assessment Management Accreditation Scheme (QAMAS) has endorsed and recognised schools that excel in providing quality examination and assessment management

Mr Samuel Yung Wing-ki, Chairman of the HKEAA (right), presenting souvenir to keynote speaker, Prof David Coniam of the Education University of Hong Kong

HKEAA Research Forum

The HKEAA organised its inaugural Research Forum on the theme of 'Using Assessment Data for Better Learning and Teaching' in October 2018, to promote the use of examination and assessment data analytics to improve feedback for schools, and to enrich students' learning experience. The Forum was attended by more than 400 teachers, school leaders, academics and researchers who exchanged knowledge and experiences in educational assessment research.

Assessment Literacy Training

In September and October 2018, we conducted three sessions of Assessment Literacy Trainings (ALT) for a total of 114 tutors of the Course Providers of HKDSE Category B Applied Learning (ApL) Chinese and ApL subjects. In addition, we also offered a 10-session training course for 20 secondary school teachers focusing on key areas of English Language testing from October to December 2018, enabling them to acquire a deeper understanding of key areas of English language testing.

During February to March 2019, the HKEAA provided training to over a hundred secondary school teachers on the major assessment principles and practices adopted in the HKDSE, covering three major areas, namely Basic Understanding of Assessment, Quality Assurance in Public Assessment and Assessment for Learning. Participating teachers found the programme useful and their feedback was positive.

In 2018/19, we also conducted ALT for other professional bodies such as the Hong Kong Police College, the Hong Kong Construction Industry Council, Employees Retraining Board, the Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department and the Hong Kong Fire Services. Six training sessions were conducted for over 300 personnel involved in assessment design and/or implementation.