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2 December 2015

To: Principals of HKDSE Participating Schools

Dear Principal,

Updates on Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE)

Further to the letter dated 11 November regarding Chinese Language, I am writing to provide the following updates on other subjects for your information and circulation to your teachers and students concerned:

1. Changes in Examination Requirements of the 2016 HKDSE

Subsequent to the New Academic Structure (NAS) Short-term Review conducted in 2012-13, changes have been made to the public examination of a number of subjects for implementation in the 2016 HKDSE. *Annex 1* shows a summary of the changes for the relevant subjects. For details, you may refer to the circular entitled ‘Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination - 2014-2016 Assessment Frameworks’ issued on 30 April 2013, which is available in the ‘Circulars’ section of the HKDSE webpage (<http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/admin/>), and the 2016 Assessment Frameworks of the respective subjects which are also available on the HKEAA website (http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/assessment/assessment_framework/).

2. Updates on Examination Administration for the 2016 HKDSE

Please note the following updates regarding the examination administration of the respective subjects/papers in the 2016 Examination:

Subject/Paper	Updates in 2016 HKDSE
English Language Paper 4 (Speaking examination)	The ‘One-minute left’ sign for indicating the amount of time remaining in the group discussion will no longer be used from the 2016 examination. Candidates can monitor the time remaining in the discussion by looking at the timer which will be facing them. If a candidate cannot see the timer when seated in the examination room, he/she should indicate this to the oral examiner before the start of the examination. For details, please refer to the 2016 Handbook for Candidates, which will be distributed to candidates and uploaded to the HKEAA website by mid-December 2015.

Subject/Paper	Updates in 2016 HKDSE
Technology and Living (Fashion, Clothing and Textiles)	Candidates will continue to be allowed to bring miniature figures and basic blocks in 1/5 scale to the examination centre as in previous years. Samples of acceptable miniature figures and basic blocks will be uploaded to the 'Other Resources' section of the HKDSE Technology and Living webpage (http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/assessment/subject_information/) in early December 2015 for reference of teachers and students in order to further enhance their understanding of the relevant materials.
Visual Arts Papers 1 and 2	Candidates will continue to be allowed to bring appropriate reference materials to the examination centre as in previous years. A reminder about the proper use of reference materials has been added to the 2016 Handbook for Candidates. Some background information and Frequently Asked Questions about the use of reference materials are given in <i>Annex 2</i> .

3. Revised Mark Scale of History from 2018 HKDSE

In 2015 HKDSE, the maximum paper mark of Paper 2 of History examination was 30, with the paper carrying a subject weighting of 30% and each essay question allocated a maximum of 15 marks. In the 2016 and 2017 HKDSE, the Paper 2 mark scale and subject weighting will remain identical to those in the 2015 HKDSE. Starting from the 2018 HKDSE (S4 students in 2015/16), School-based Assessment will not be implemented in History. Due to this change, the maximum mark for Paper 2 will be changed to 50 and the subject weighting to 40%, with each essay question carrying a maximum of 25 marks. Details of the revised mark scale and related sample scripts are available in the 'Other Resources' section of the HKDSE History webpage (http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/HKDSE/assessment/subject_information/).

School principals are requested to bring the attention of relevant staff members and students to the above updates regarding the HKDSE. In case of enquiries, please contact Ms Maria Fung at 3628 8070.

Yours sincerely



Margaret Hui (Ms)
General Manager
School Examinations and Assessment Division

Changes in Examination Requirements for the 2016 HKDSE

The table below summarises the changes made to the public examination of a number of subjects in the 2016 HKDSE. Principals and subject teachers may also refer to the circular entitled ‘*Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination - 2014-2016 Assessment Frameworks*’ issued on 30 April 2013 which is available in the ‘Circulars’ section of the HKDSE webpage (<http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/admin/>), and the 2016 Assessment Frameworks of the respective subjects which are available on the HKEAA website (http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/assessment/assessment_framework/).

Subject	Changes in Examination Requirements
Chinese History 中國歷史	<p>卷一(第一部分必答題)分數由 50 分減至 25 分(佔全卷 1/3)。</p> <p>卷一(第二部分選答題)學生在甲部及乙部各選答一題,每題佔 25 分(各佔全卷 1/3)。</p> <p>卷二每個單元設三題,考生在同一單元選答兩題完卷,每題 25 分。</p> <p>註:卷一第一部分樣本試題已於 2013 年 11 月上載香港中學文憑考試中國歷史科網頁之「樣本試題」欄,供教師及考生參考: http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/tc/hkdse/assessment/subject_information/</p>
Chinese Language 中國語文	<p>整合以往的試卷三(聆聽能力)和試卷五(綜合能力考核),設為試卷三(「聆聽及綜合能力考核」)。</p> <p>註:詳細資料可參閱本局於 2015 年 11 月 11 日予學校就香港中學文憑中國語文科考試最新消息的信函。</p>
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	<p>A revised list of SQL commands and spreadsheet functions will be provided in examination papers for candidates’ reference. The list is available in the ‘Other Resources’ section of the HKDSE ICT webpage: http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/assessment/subject_information/</p>
Literature in English	<p>Sets 1 & 2 of the set texts have been merged and changes made to the design of the two examination papers. The Essay Writing paper is renamed as Paper 1 and the Appreciation Paper as Paper 2. Starting from the 2016 HKDSE, the duration of Paper 2 (Appreciation) is reduced from 2.5 hours to 2 hours and Section A of Paper 2 (Appreciation) will carry a maximum of 20 marks per question. Each question will have 2 to 3 sub-questions.</p>

Subject	Changes in Examination Requirements
Physical Education	The weighting of the theoretical component (Papers 1 and 2) has been decreased from 70% to 60% and that of the practical component (Paper 3) increased from 30% to 40%. Papers 1 and 2 will carry 42% and 18% respectively.
Visual Arts	<p data-bbox="456 461 804 495">School-based Assessment</p> <p data-bbox="456 515 1359 734">The maximum number of sample pages of the Research Workbook to be submitted for moderation has been increased from 12 to 24. Starting from the 2016 HKDSE, the upload space for submitting each sampled student's work to the HKEAA will be increased from 20 MB to 40 MB.</p>

Updates on the 2016 HKDSE Visual Arts Examination

Background

Each year, upon review of the previous year's examination, the HKEAA will update the Handbook for Candidates for reference of teachers and candidates. Subsequent to the 2015 Visual Arts examination, there were queries about candidates not being aware of the proper use of reference materials when sitting the examination. The issue was discussed by the HKDSE Visual Arts Subject Committee in the post examination review exercise and views from Visual Arts teachers, CDC-HKEAA Committee on Visual Arts and other stakeholders have been solicited. While no changes are made to the current requirements, supplementary clarifications have been added to the relevant section of the 2016 Handbook for Candidates to remind candidates about the proper use of reference materials in the examination.

2016 Handbook for Candidates

The following reminders have been added under Visual Arts in Section E of the 2016 Handbook for Candidates:

- ◆ *Candidates are reminded that reference materials should be used for reference only.*
- ◆ *During the examination, invigilation staff may examine the materials which candidates have brought into the examination centre.*

Please refer to the Handbook for the full version of the instructions. The Handbook will be distributed to candidates and uploaded to the HKEAA website by mid-December 2015.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

The following FAQs have been prepared to facilitate better understanding of the proper use of reference materials in the Visual Arts examination. The FAQs will also be uploaded to the HKEAA website in December 2015 for reference of teachers and candidates.

1.	Q.	Are reference materials allowed in the Visual Arts examination?
	A.	As in the past HKDSE, appropriate reference materials are allowed in the examination.
2.	Q.	What kinds of reference materials are allowed to be brought into the examination centre?
	A.	No changes have been made to the materials allowed. Details are provided in Section E of the 2016 Handbook for Candidates.

3.	Q.	Have any new regulations or requirements been introduced in the 2016 HKDSE Visual Arts examination regarding the use of reference materials?
	A.	There are no new regulations or requirements.
4.	Q.	Are candidates allowed to copy directly from reference materials during the examination?
	A.	<p>Candidates are reminded that reference materials should be used for reference only and not for direct copying. It should be noted that according to the Assessment Framework, candidates are required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● choose one question from the five given, ● create a piece of artwork / solve design problem(s), and ● present an artwork / a design work statement in response to the relationship between the practical work and the appreciation of artwork / design(s). <p>Apart from being incompatible with the assessment objectives of the public examination, direct copying from reference materials may result in works that cannot demonstrate candidates' own abilities to produce original works based on the chosen theme by means of transference or association during the examination.</p>
5.	Q.	Will invigilation staff examine the materials that candidates have brought into the examination centre?
	A.	During the Visual Arts examination, as in the examination of all other HKDSE subjects, invigilation staff may examine the materials which candidates have brought into the examination centre and report any irregularities to the HKEAA as appropriate.
6.	Q.	Under what circumstances would an irregularity be reported?
	A.	As in the past HKDSE, Centre Supervisors will exercise their professional judgment in deciding whether there is a need to report any irregularities to the HKEAA for follow up. The guidelines provided to invigilation staff will be further strengthened to facilitate better understanding and to enhance standardisation across examination centres.
7.	Q.	How will irregularity reports be handled by the HKEAA?
	A.	All irregularity reports will be dealt with by the Standing Committee of the HKEAA according to the procedures and guidelines stipulated by the Public Examinations Board (PEB). The Standing Committee will scrutinise all irregularity cases before deciding on the outcome and ensure that they are handled in a fair and consistent manner. Recommendations of the Standing Committee will be presented to the PEB for endorsement.