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Ref.: DSE/PO 4

9 May 2013

To: Principals of Participating Schools

Dear Principal

**Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) Examination
Revised Regulations and Assessment Frameworks (R&AF) for 2014-2016 Examinations**

Subsequent to the review of the New Senior Secondary (NSS) curriculum and assessment, schools have been informed of the changes to the Assessment Frameworks for 2014 to 2016 HKDSE Examinations vide our letter dated 30 April 2013. A number of changes have also been made to the Examination Regulations for 2014 to 2016 examinations and are summarized in this letter.

Regulations for 2014 and 2015 HKDSE regarding School-based Assessment

For school candidates, there is an SBA component for 12 subjects. Schools have to fulfill the SBA requirements for subjects entered by candidates of their schools. SBA is also applicable to school candidates who repeat Secondary 6. To state the requirement more explicitly, the last paragraph under Section 3.6 of the 2014 and 2015 HKDSE Examination Regulations has been modified and elaborated to remind schools that school repeaters will have to be re-assessed in S6 and meet the SBA requirements of the respective subjects entered. If the schools do not offer the elective subject(s) that the candidates wish to re-take, the candidates may apply for exemption from the SBA for the particular subject(s). This special exemption does not apply to the core subjects – Chinese Language, English Language and Liberal Studies.

Regulations for 2015 and 2016 HKDSE regarding Applied Learning (ApL) subjects

The provisional lists of ApL subjects to be offered in 2015 and 2016 have been updated in Section 2.6 of respective Regulations, subject to the final list being confirmed by EDB.

With effect from the 2016 Examination, some of the ApL courses may be introduced from the second term of Secondary 4 and will finish in the first term of Secondary 6. The timing could help avoid clashing of teaching / activity time between schools and course providers so that students would have ample time to concentrate on preparing for the DSE public examination. The proposed early commencement of ApL courses was supported by the majority of schools in the NSS school survey conducted in December 2012. In this connection, Section 2.4 has been amended to the effect that two-year ApL courses can be offered by course providers to Secondary 4 students (from the second term of Secondary 4 to the first term of Secondary 6) and/or Secondary 5 students (from the first term of Secondary 5 to the second term of Secondary 6) through schools.

Under Sections 2.5 and 3.2, the provision of allowing Secondary 5 repeaters to enter for 'ApL subjects only' as school candidates will be extended to Secondary 4 repeaters. Similarly, special approval may be given to candidates entering for 'ApL subjects only' as private candidates if the students have entered for the HKDSE as school candidates but left school before the completion of Secondary 5 or Secondary 6.

Updating of the Regulations for 2014 and 2015 HKDSE

The following sections of the 2014 and 2015 Examination Regulations have also been updated for clarification purposes:

Section	Description	Reasons for amendments
5.13	Time for issuance of admission forms	To specify an earlier time for the issuance of admission forms due to the early start of the examination.
5.16	Handling of answer scripts submitted by candidates to the Authority	To spell out the various forms of answer scripts and works submitted by candidates to the Authority, which include portfolios / audio or video recordings / practical examination / SBA works and specify the Authority's power to use, reproduce and /or publish the scripts and works in an anonymous manner.
5.17	Personal Data Statement	To add 'and the subsequent assessment of their performance' in addition to conducting the Examination as one of the ways in which the personal data of candidates collected would be used. To include Student Financial Assistance Agency (SFAA) in item (3) as one of the personal data users for checking candidates' eligibility for examination fee remission.
6.1	Disqualification	Minor updating of the circumstances under which candidates may be penalised for breaching the examination regulations.

Schedule for Production of 2014 – 2016 HKDSE R&AF

Schools are requested to note the following arrangements regarding the production of the 2014 to 2016 HKDSE R&AF:

- a) The electronic version of the revised 2014 and 2015 HKDSE R&AF has been uploaded to the HKEAA website;
- b) The printed copy of the 2015 HKDSE R&AF will be published and disseminated to schools around late June 2013. No hardcopy of the revised 2014 HKDSE R&AF will be provided.
- c) The electronic version of the 2016 HKDSE R&AF has been uploaded to the HKEAA website. The printed copy of the 2016 HKDSE R&AF will be published around June 2014.

Schools may download the electronic version of the 2014 – 2016 HKDSE R&AF from the HKEAA website (http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/Exam_Regulations/) or (http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/Assessment_Framework/).

School principals are requested to bring the attention of their teachers and students to the above changes in the HKDSE Examination Regulations. In case of enquiries, please contact Mr KW Lok (Tel: 3628 8950).

Yours faithfully



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