

FAQs on UCAS Tariff Points Awarded to HKDSE

Implications of UCAS study results on HKDSE recognition in other regions

- 1. What is the impact of including the HKDSE in the UCAS Tariff? Does the result imply that all the universities in UK recognise the qualification of HKDSE?**

For applications to the UK universities, the UCAS Tariff will be used and tariff points will be acceptable for entry to a wide range of undergraduate as well as higher education programmes and courses. In our meetings with overseas universities, they indicated that they welcome the inclusion of HKDSE into the UCAS tariff point system, for this will enable them to better understand the standards of the new examination and to develop admission policies.

- 2. If the UCAS Tariff is mainly for UK, what will the HKEAA do to promote HKDSE to the US, Canada and other countries?**

The HKEAA will continue to promote acceptance of the HKDSE for entry to overseas universities. We will inform universities in the US, Canada and Australia about the HKDSE and the results of the UCAS study. HKEAA will write to universities asking them for their views/recognition of the HKDSE for admission to under-graduate programmes.

- 3. Why is Level 5** not awarded with tariff points at this stage? Does it imply that UCAS does not have confidence in the qualification?**

5** reflects a high level of academic performance. Tariff points will be allocated with further evidence after the administration of HKDSE in 2012, when live data of HKDSE actual performance are available. This arrangement is consistent with that for other awards such as the Cambridge Pre-U.

Tariff points for compulsory and extended parts of Mathematics

- 4. While there are aspects where the Mathematics tariffs are higher than other HKDSE subjects/certain grade at AS Level (as it should be half of AL), there are also aspects where the tariffs for Mathematics are less favourable (e.g. Level 4 for the compulsory module is awarded 35 instead of 40; the combined tariff for Level 5 for the compulsory part and extended part is only 105 which is lower than 120 as in other HKDSE subjects.). Does it mean that UCAS is more demanding in Mathematics than other subjects or are the HKDSE extended mathematics papers easier than the current AL mathematics papers?**

Mathematics includes two separate components: the compulsory part and the extended part, and results are reported separately. As this subject adopts a different structure, the tariff points awarded cannot be compared directly with other subjects. In the New Academic Structure, Mathematics is a core subject, but in the GCE A Level Examination, Mathematics is not a core subject. Only students who intend to pursue Mathematics or Mathematics related programs have to meet the requirements set in the compulsory and extended components.

UCAS Tariff Points for other subjects

- 5. In Applied Learning (ApL), students awarded "Attained with Distinction" will be deemed to have performed at a level comparable to Level 3 or above in the Standards-referenced Reporting of HKDSE. How is the international recognition of ApL obtained?**

The academic ability of "Attained with Distinction" in ApL subjects is deemed comparable to Level 3 or above in HKDSE Category A subjects. Level 3 in these Category A subjects are also accepted by UCAS as comparable to a Grade E in GCE A-Level. Therefore, for international recognition for the purpose of future study, "Attained with Distinction" in ApL subjects is deemed comparable to Grade E in GCE A-Level.

- 6. Are the 6 other languages recognized as AS Levels? What are their tariff points?**

Tariff points are the same as the GCE AS Level subjects since CIE AS level papers will be used for the 6 other languages.

General Questions about UCAS Tariff

(from the UCAS website: http://www.ucas.com/students/ucas_tariff/)

- 7. Who decides on the allocation of UCAS Tariff points?**

Tariff points are allocated to qualifications following a set of procedures devised by UCAS and the University of Oxford, Department of Education. A team of experts is convened and included representatives from UCAS, universities and colleges. This team works to make collaborative professional judgements on how well specific qualifications help prepare students for higher education study. Qualifications are systematically compared against GCE Advanced levels to judge how attainment reflects the development of the knowledge, skills, attitudes and dispositions deemed important for progression into and success in higher education. Recommendations to bring qualifications into the UCAS Tariff are generally considered by the UCAS Board on a quarterly basis.

- 8. Do all universities use UCAS Tariff points to make offers?**

Universities and colleges publish entry requirements for their higher education courses. Many will offer places subject to applicants meeting specific conditions. These conditional offers are generally made based on:

1. UCAS Tariff points
2. qualification grades
3. a combination of 1 and 2.

Entry to certain subjects may require a minimum level of performance in particular subjects. For example, a mathematics degree may require applicants to have a minimum of a B grade at A level mathematics.

All entry requirements for specific courses are at the discretion of the individual college or university. If a qualification does not currently attract Tariff points,

please refer to [UCAS Course Search](#) to view the entry requirements for courses of interest.

9. Are UCAS tariff points used for any purpose other than for higher education admissions?

UCAS do not endorse the use of UCAS Tariff points for any other purpose other than for entry to higher education. However, many higher education performance indicators use Tariff points in their calculations. There is also evidence that some employers consider Tariff scores for recruitment, but UCAS Tariff points are designed to reflect utility for progression to a higher level of study.