Understanding the new HKCEE Standards-referenced Levels
(February 2009)
Starting in 2007, a new method will be used to report results in the two language subjects of the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examinations (HKCEE), known as Standards-referenced Reporting (SRR).

What this means is that candidates’ levels of performance will be reported in terms of a set of defined standards that are transparent and remain constant over time.

The new method is being adopted to provide more information on standards and on the performance of candidates, and to ensure that Hong Kong is internationally competitive and in alignment with best practice overseas.

For both Chinese Language and English Language, the old system of grades (A-F) have been replaced by five levels of performance (Levels 1 to 5). Those not attaining the Level 1 standard will receive an ‘Unclassified’ result (U). The top performing Level 5 candidates will be awarded Level 5*.

For each of the five levels, there is a detailed set of written descriptors to describe the typical performance at this level. For each of the Levels, samples of student work are available that illustrate the standards.

These may be viewed online at the HKEAA website: www.hkeaa.edu.hk.

Following the release of HKCEE results in August 2007, candidates are provided with a Results Notice. Each candidate will receive an overall Level for the subject, as well as Levels for the various components, as follows:

- **Chinese Language**
  - Reading
  - Writing
  - Listening
  - Speaking
  - Integrated Skills

- **English Language**
  - Reading
  - Writing
  - Listening & Integrated Skills
  - Speaking

The new HKCEE Chinese Language and English Language standards are recognized as equivalent to the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) results, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HKCEE Levels</th>
<th>5*</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IGCSE grades</td>
<td>A*</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following is a list of the Chinese and English Language requirements of different organizations.

**Education Bureau (EDB)**
For the purpose of Sixth Form Admission, candidates are given points as follows:
- Level 5* = 5 points
- Level 5 = 4 points
- Level 4 = 3 points
- Level 3 = 2 points
- Level 2 = 1 point

**Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA)**
For the purpose of meeting the entry requirement for the HKALE, candidates must have achieved Level 2 in both languages.

**Civil Service Bureau (CSB)**
Level 3 and 2 in English and Chinese Languages in the 2007 HKCEE will be accepted administratively as comparable to Grade C and E respectively in English Language (Syllabus B) and Chinese Language attained in previous HKCEEs for civil service appointment purposes.

Level descriptors and samples of student work are available for reference.

### Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA)

#### Level descriptors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>五</td>
<td>聽說讀寫及綜合能力發展充分，具較高的語文的駕馭能力。語文理解深入；善用語言策略。透徹理解書面及口語材料。書面及口語表達流暢。能綜合多元信息，並結合相關經驗妥善完成工作。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>四</td>
<td>聽說讀寫及綜合能力發展甚佳；語文理解正確，運用恰當；語言策略運用良好。準確理解書面及口語材料。書面及口語表達通順切題。能綜合多元信息，並結合相關經驗恰當完成工作。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>三</td>
<td>聽說讀寫能力發展尚佳；語文理解及運用一般。正確理解書面及口語材料。書面及口語表達大體通順切題。能粗略綜合多元信息，基本完成工作。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>二</td>
<td>聽說讀寫能力初步發展；語文理解及運用可滿足基本需要。能理解書面及口語材料的大要。能基本表達與問題相關的意念。能引用部分信息，概述相關見解。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>一</td>
<td>略具聽說讀寫能力。能找出書面及口語材料的明顯事實和大意。書面或口語表達能傳遞零碎意念。複述或概述部分信息，能作粗略回應。</td>
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### HKCEE English Language Subject Descriptors (Summary)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 5     | - Understands a wide range of texts and speech on a range of topics in a variety of accents at near-native speed. Can identify attitudes and intentions and take relevant notes while listening.  
      - Expresses a range of ideas well both in spoken and written English. Uses a wide vocabulary, accurate spelling and punctuation, and mainly correct grammar. Pronounces English well and can participate actively in discussions. |
| 4     | - Understands most simple texts and more complex texts on familiar topics. Understands speech delivered at moderate speed. Can identify functions of straightforward intonation and stress and take notes when information is given clearly.  
      - Expresses most ideas clearly and correctly in both writing and speech. Writes with mostly correct grammar and makes few mistakes in spelling and punctuation. Pronounces familiar words well and can sustain conversations with sympathetic partners. |
| 3     | - Understands most of simple texts and some of more complex texts on familiar topics. Understands speech on familiar topics when delivered at moderate to slow pace. Can identify and record appropriate factual information when given clearly and slowly.  
      - Expresses ideas reasonably clearly both in writing and speech. Basic grammatical structures, spelling and punctuation mainly correct. Pronounces most familiar words accurately and can take part in short conversational exchanges. |
| 2     | - Understands factual information in simple texts and slow speech on familiar topics. Can record simple, clearly expressed information.  
      - Expresses some simple ideas in writing and speech, with some grammatical accuracy. Spelling of familiar words and punctuation mostly correct in writing. Pronounces some words accurately and can sustain short conversations on familiar topics. |
| 1     | - Understands and locates relevant information in simple texts where the vocabulary is familiar, and can follow simple written instructions. Understands slow and clear speech on familiar topics and can record some simple factual information.  
      - Expresses some simple ideas on familiar topics in writing and speech with some accuracy in basic structures but with limited vocabulary. Can take part in short, predictable conversational exchanges if given support. |