

The HKDSE

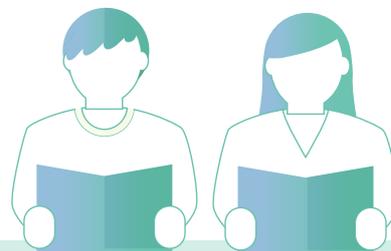
Held in its eighth year, the 2019 Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE) was conducted smoothly as before, providing multiple pathways for youngsters aspiring for further study or a practical career. We have also continued to support candidates with special educational needs (SEN) out of a commitment for inclusiveness.



Highlights of 2019 HKDSE



48,305 School candidates



7,854 Private candidates



Average no. of subjects entered: **6.1**



Average no. of subjects entered: **2.7**

No. of exam centres

Written exams

223

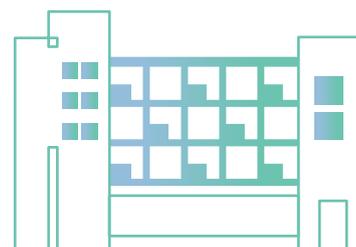
Classrooms

356

Halls

Speaking exams

113



Exam personnel



Invigilator-sessions

10,414

Markers / Marking assistants

4,665

Oral examiners

913



750,000

No. of scripts

Onscreen
Marking

HKEAA
Assessment Centres

5

On-campus
Assessment Centres

7

Total no. of
workstations

1,312

A total of 56,159 candidates entered the 2019 HKDSE. Among them, around 48,300 were school candidates from 482 secondary schools while around 7,850 were private candidates. With the dedicated support of participating schools, teachers and staff members, the examinations were held smoothly, with results released on 10 July 2019.

More than 33,700 candidates obtained level 2 or above in five subjects, including Chinese Language and English Language. These candidates are eligible to apply for local sub-degree programmes and relevant civil service posts. More than 20,200 candidates obtained level 3 or above in both Chinese Language and English Language, and level 2 or above in Mathematics Compulsory Part and Liberal Studies, meeting the general entrance requirements for local undergraduate degree programmes.

A total of 354 schools offered 356 halls and 223 classrooms as examination venues for the 2019 HKDSE and there were over 10,000 invigilator-sessions for the examinations. Most of the centre supervisors and invigilators were nominated by the participating schools while 7.2% of them were external invigilators appointed by the HKEAA.

An overview of the HKDSE process, examination administration and examination statistics are detailed in the 2019 HKDSE Exam Report.



Over 10,000 invigilator-sessions were recorded in the 2019 HKDSE

Improving Examination Administration

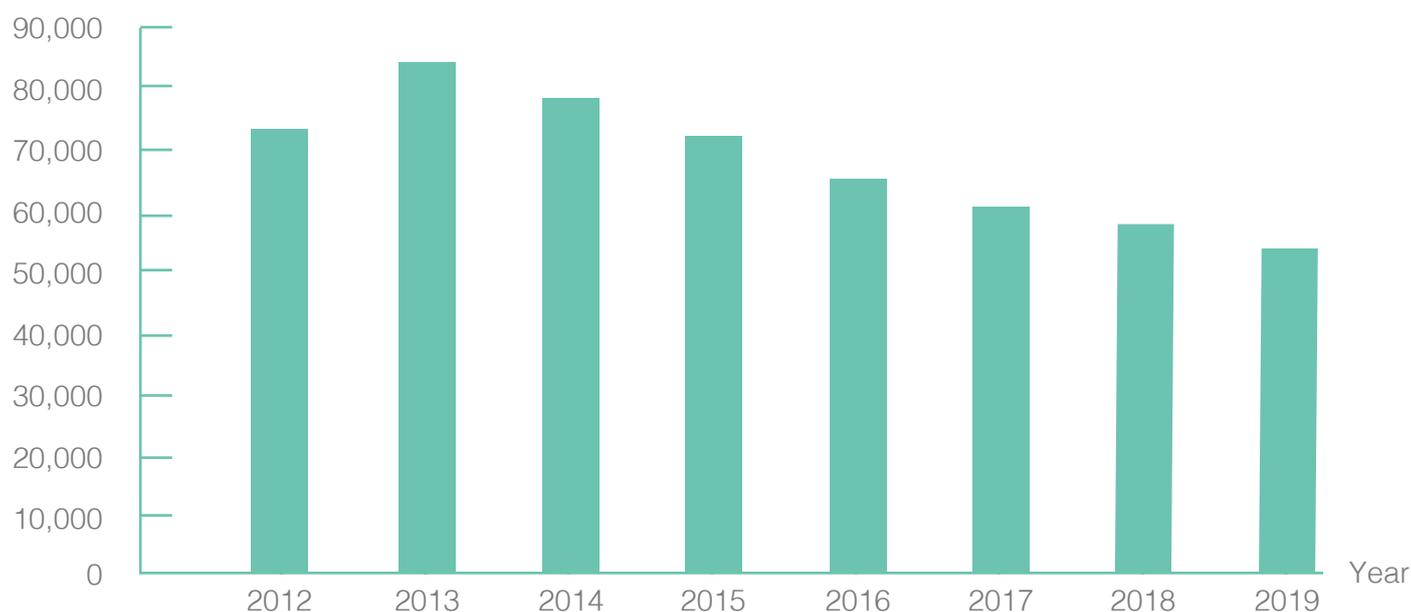
We have continued to deploy appropriate technology, including the Public Examinations Communication and Support System (PECSS), the Attendance and Script Tracking System (ASTS) and the Oral Recording System to enhance the administration of the examinations. The PECSS and ASTS were used in all hall centres to facilitate the conduct of written examinations. These systems have not only increased efficiency and accuracy in tracking the attendance of candidates and their answer scripts, but also strengthened the support for centre supervisors, boosted communication with the examination centres and expedited handling of irregularities. Video recording was also deployed in hall centres and designated classroom centres for candidates with special educational needs (SEN).

The listening components in the HKDSE were mainly broadcast via RTHK Radio 2 for candidates in an efficient and cost-effective manner. We also installed Infra-red (IR) Transmission System in 66 school halls, in area with poor radio reception for broadcasting the listening materials. In 2019 the IR system was used in 56 school halls to broadcast the listening components of English Language and Chinese Language examinations.

Our examination administration team conducted a trial run in all examination centres beforehand to ensure that the IT systems would operate effectively during the examination sessions. Throughout the various processes of assessment, the HKEAA would ensure that examination personnel have ample resources, support and guidance to carry out their duties, and would provide them with full administrative support, detailed instructions, and appropriate training.

Statistics for the HKDSE

No. of candidates entered



	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
No. of candidates entered								
- school candidates	71,745	71,168	66,576	62,199	57,127	52,058	51,636	48,305
- private candidates	1,329	11,115	12,996	11,932	11,001	9,566	7,364	7,854
No. of candidates sat	72,620	81,355	78,400	72,859	66,874	60,349	57,649	54,642
No. of exam centres (written exams)	395 *H 2,141 *C	397 *H 2,363 *C	403 *H 2,269 *C	398 *H 2,179 *C	397 *H 1,348 *C	397 *H 680 *C	373 *H 469 *C	356 *H 223 *C
No. of invigilator-sessions (written exams)	16,429	17,408	16,246	14,996	13,596	11,649	11,097	10,414
No. of markers/marketing assistants (written exams)	4,540	4,960	5,144	5,084	4,858	4,558	4,711	4,665
No. of scripts (written exams)	1,091,000	1,148,700	1,078,400	998,800	910,800	822,800	800,000	750,000

*H (Halls), *C (Classrooms)

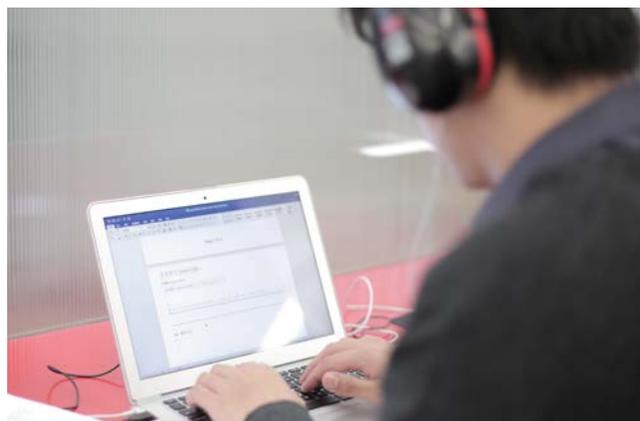
Strengthening Support for Candidates with Special Educational Needs

Over the years, the HKEAA has worked closely with schools, teachers, the Education Bureau and relevant experts to foster a more inclusive examination environment for an increasing number of SEN candidates. The total number of SEN candidates has gone up from around 1,000 in the inaugural HKDSE in 2012 to over 3,000 in 2019.

There were 144 home-centres for candidates with SEN, while 99 schools served as home cum district centres to accommodate their own students and other candidates who required similar arrangements for written examinations in the same district. Meanwhile, 20 special centres were set up to serve other SEN candidates.

In the 2019 HKDSE, about 6,600 special question papers are prepared for SEN candidates.

Applications for special examination arrangements (SEAs) are considered by the Committee on Special Needs Candidates (the Committee) and the Task Group on SEAs for Candidates with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) (the Task Group) in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the Public Examinations Board (PEB). The existing documentation requirements for extra time allowance from candidates with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and / or Attention-Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD) were reviewed by the Committee and the new recommendations were endorsed by the PEB. Apart from a valid diagnostic report, the candidates concerned should submit the rationale and recommendation for extra time allowance jointly made by the school and a relevant expert.

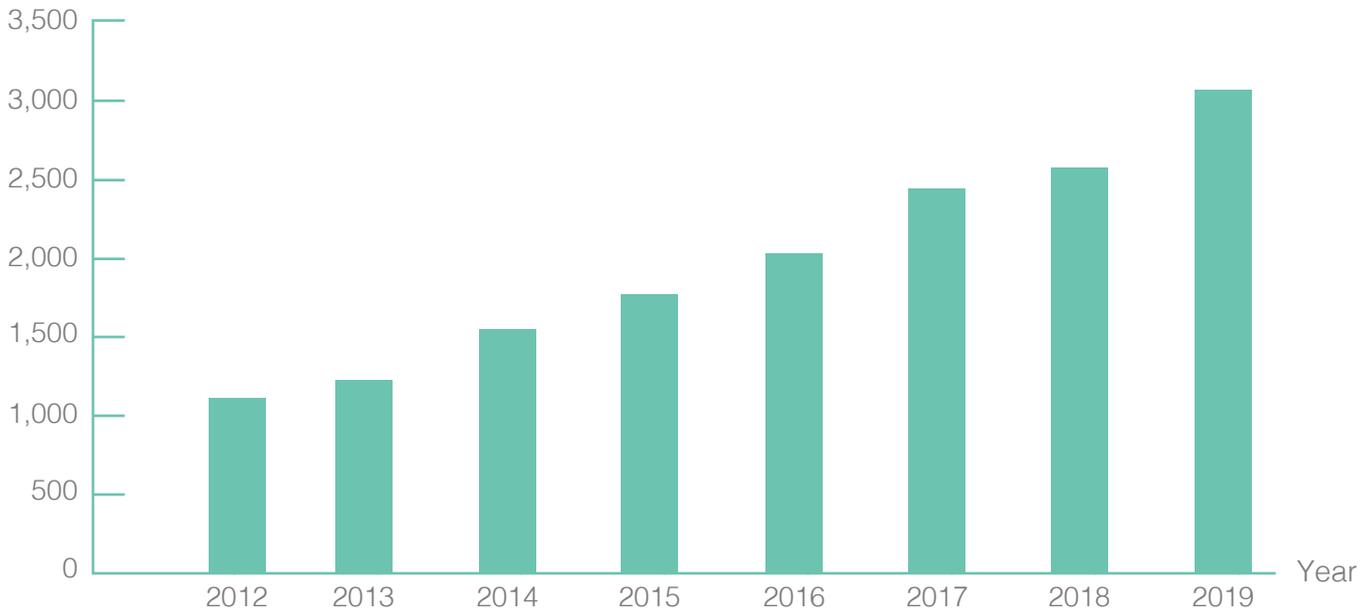


The use of the STT software will be extended to seven elective subjects starting from the 2020 HKDSE

Meanwhile, we continued to allow eligible candidates with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) to use the speech-to-text (STT) software in the HKDSE. A total of 190 candidates from 97 schools used the software in the Liberal Studies written examination. Based on the statistical analyses and advice from subject experts, eligible candidates will also be allowed to use the STT software in seven elective subjects, including Chinese History, Ethics and Religious Studies, Geography, Health Management and Social Care, History, Literature in English, Tourism and Hospitality Studies starting from the 2020 HKDSE.

Statistics on Candidates with SEN and Major Types of Special Examination Arrangements (SEAs)

No. of candidates with SEAs approved



	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
No. of SEN centres for written exams ¹	67	84	110	133	160	207	244	263
No. of SEN centres for speaking exams	16	11	14	17	21	25	25	25
Major types of SEAs for Candidates with SEN								
Special centre arrangements ²	847	1,135	1,522	1,689	2,002	2,404	2,619	3,044
Extra time allowance (ETA) ³	493	776	1,067	1,273	1,624	1,973	2,123	2,456
Supervised breaks	217	351	490	551	619	729	708	936
Use of screen reader	42	68	86	95	127	170	191	224 ₄
Use of speech-to-text software	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	144 ⁴	171 ⁴	225
Plain text labels/descriptions for ASD candidates	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	90	130	194	231
Exemption from component/part of an exam	96	101	105	82	82	82	76	81

Notes:

¹ Includes home-centres, district centres and special centres.

² Includes candidates who sat written and/or speaking exams in SEN centres.

³ Includes ETA in written exams and/or prolonged pauses and/or additional pauses in listening components of language subjects.

⁴ Includes candidates who confirmed to cancel the provision on the day of the exam.

Marking and Grading

Approximately 750,000 HKDSE scripts were marked onscreen at 12 assessment centres throughout the territory this year. The marking of the four core subjects was smoothly completed in late May and that of the elective subjects in early June 2019. More than 4,600 markers and marking assistants, as well as 900 oral examiners were appointed to assess candidates' performance.

Different processes, such as equating and School-based Assessment (SBA) mark submission and moderation, were completed smoothly as scheduled. As part of the Medium-term Review of curriculum and assessment, Chinese Literature, Literature in English, Health Management and Social Care, and Technology and Living implemented SBA for the first time in the 2019 HKDSE. Expert panel meetings for the grading of the core and elective subjects were held in June 2019 to ensure that the grades awarded are comparable across years.

Enhancing Learning and Teaching through Feedback

To cater for individual schools' needs, since 2012 we offer tailor-made School Statistical Reports for participating schools on subscription basis. This is a school-specific report showing results statistics of the school compared to the overall statistics of all day schools at three levels: school report, class report, and teaching group report.

For continuous enhancements, the report is complemented with the refinement of the reporting of students' performance in Category B Applied Learning subjects, i.e. from the existing two levels of 'Attained' and 'Attained with Distinction' to 'Attained', 'Attained with Distinction (I)' and 'Attained with Distinction (II)'. In response to suggestions from schools, the report is enriched with the refinement of grade point distribution reports in the best five subjects, and the incorporation of question-level analysis of speaking examinations for Chinese Languages and English Language, Visual Arts, and practical examinations for Physical Education and Music.

To help students, teachers and the public better understand the assessment requirements and standards of the HKDSE, authentic samples of answer scripts illustrating performance at different levels of Category A and B subjects are released on the HKEAA website. At the end of each examination cycle, we publish a collection of HKDSE Question Papers, including the marking guidelines and comments on candidates' performance.

Recognition of the HKDSE

The HKDSE qualification has gained wide recognition among various stakeholders, including local tertiary institutions and employers, as well as overseas authorities and governments. Students can apply directly to overseas universities or institutions using their HKDSE examination results. By the end of August 2019, a total of 284 overseas higher education institutions had announced their acceptance of the HKDSE qualification for admission to their undergraduate programmes, in addition to 112 Mainland institutions and some 140 Taiwanese institutions which admit students on the basis of their HKDSE results.

To promote recognition of the HKDSE we joined the information session at the EduCanada Fair run by the Consulate General of Canada in Hong Kong in September 2018. We also participated in the briefing session at the annual Mainland Education Expo organised



Ms Choy Siu-kwan, Assistant General Manager - Assessment Development gave a presentation at the StudyUK Education Exhibition in February 2019 to promote recognition of the HKDSE

by the EDB and an information seminar organised for admission officers of universities in Japan in November 2018. In addition, we gave presentations on the latest development of the HKDSE at the StudyUK Education Exhibitions held by the British Council in February and July 2019.

Overseas Higher Education Institutions Accepting HKDSE Results for Admission

Region	Country	No. of Institutions
Asia	Japan	9
	Malaysia	1
	Singapore	3
	South Korea	3
Australia and New Zealand	Australia	38
	New Zealand	6
Europe	Austria	1
	Belgium	1
	France	1
	Germany	2
	Ireland	15
	Spain	1
Switzerland	Switzerland	1
United Kingdom		121
North America	Canada	30
	USA	46