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1 November 2017

To: Principals of HKDSE Participating Schools

Dear Principal,

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

I am writing to provide you with the following updates for information and circulation to your teachers and students concerned:

### 1. Changes in Examination Requirements of the 2018 HKDSE

Subsequent to the New Academic Structure (NAS) Medium-term Review conducted in 2013-15, changes have been made to the public assessment of a number of subjects for implementation in the 2018 HKDSE. **Annex 1** shows a summary of the relevant changes. For details, you may refer to the circulars entitled '*HKDSE – First Batch of Recommendations for the New Academic Structure Medium-term Review*' issued on 15 April 2014 and '*Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination – 2018 Assessment Frameworks*' issued on 13 July 2015, which are available in the 'Circular' section of the HKDSE webpage (<http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/admin/circulars/circulars.html>), and the 2018 Assessment Frameworks of the respective subjects, which are available in the HKEAA website ([http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/assessment/assessment\\_framework/](http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/assessment/assessment_framework/)).

In addition, effective from the 2018 HKDSE, the reporting of candidates' performance in Applied Learning subjects will be refined from the two levels of 'Attained' and 'Attained with Distinction' to 'Attained', 'Attained with Distinction (I)' and 'Attained with Distinction (II)'. 'Attained with Distinction (I)' would be comparable to level 3 while 'Attained with Distinction (II)' would be comparable to level 4 or above of the Category A subjects of the HKDSE. For Applied Learning Chinese (for non-Chinese speaking students), two levels of results, i.e. 'Attained' and 'Attained with Distinction', will continue to be used, with refinement of levels to be considered when more data are collected. The corresponding results data file provided in the school results pack will therefore incorporate a new grade coding for the Applied Learning subjects concerned. For technical details, please refer to the revised results data file specification and the sample data available for download from the main page 'Examination Results' of the HKDSE Examination Online Services (<https://www.hkdse.hkeaa.edu.hk>).

### 2. Updates in Examination Administration for the 2018 HKDSE

Please note the following updates regarding the examination administration of the respective subjects/papers with effect from the 2018 HKDSE:

Subject/Paper	Updates in 2018 HKDSE
Chinese Language Paper 4 (Speaking examination)	<p>The number of the group to which the candidates are assigned will be printed on the labels for candidates. Candidates will be labelled as A to E, instead of 1 to 5.</p> <p>Apart from the above, other arrangements of the speaking examination remain unchanged.</p>
Design and Applied Technology Paper 1	<p>(i) Paper 1 will be printed in the form of a Question-Answer Book (QAB). Answers to Paper 1 must be written in the QAB and no separate worksheet will be provided.</p> <p>(ii) No separate marks will be allocated for effective communication in Paper 1 Question 1. Candidates' communication skills will continue to be assessed in relevant parts of the question and the total mark of the question remains unchanged.</p>
Information and Communication Technology	<p><b>All Papers:</b> The marks allocated to each sub-question will be indicated on the question papers.</p> <p><b>Paper 2D:</b> Candidates must specify the programming language they use (C, Java, Pascal or Visual Basic) in <u>each relevant question</u>.</p>
Integrated Science Papers 1 and 2	<p>A revised list of formulae and relationships will be printed in the Question-Answer Book for Paper 1 and the Question Paper for Paper 2.</p> <p>The revised list of formulae and relationships has been uploaded to the HKEAA website (<a href="http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/assessment/subject_information/category_a_subjects/hkdse_subj.html?A2&amp;2&amp;22_5">http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/assessment/subject_information/category_a_subjects/hkdse_subj.html?A2&amp;2&amp;22_5</a>) and relevant information will be included in the 2018 Handbook for Candidates.</p>

The above updates will be included in the 2018 Handbook for Candidates to be issued to schools and candidates in December 2017.

### 3. Independent Enquiry Study (IES) of Liberal Studies in the 2019 HKDSE

In order to provide flexibility for students in completing their Independent Enquiry Study (IES), starting from the 2019 HKDSE, two versions of Table of Contents of the IES Report are provided. Version I is the Table of Contents currently in use which consists of four Parts, namely, A: Problem Definition, B: Relevant Concepts and Knowledge/Facts/Data, C: In-depth Explanation of the Issue and D: Judgement and Justification. Version II is an additional one which consists of three Parts, i.e. A, B and C, where Part C is an integrated presentation of In-depth Explanation of the Issue, and Judgement and Justification (i.e. Parts C and D of Version I). Students can adopt either of the two versions for their reports. The two versions of Table of Contents are available on the HKEAA website ([http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/sba/sub\\_info\\_sba/dse\\_subject.html?3&5](http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/sba/sub_info_sba/dse_subject.html?3&5)).

Apart from the above, all other requirements and Marking Guidelines of the IES remain unchanged. Please refer to the Liberal Studies SBA Teachers' Handbook 2019 for details ([http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/DocLibrary/SBA/HKDSE/SBAhandbook-2019-LS-E\\_Revised.pdf](http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/DocLibrary/SBA/HKDSE/SBAhandbook-2019-LS-E_Revised.pdf)).

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. Hui', written in a cursive style.

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

## Changes for the 2018 HKDSE

The table below summarises the changes made to the public examination of a number of subjects in the 2018 HKDSE. Principals and subject teachers may also refer to the circulars entitled ‘HKDSE – First Batch of Recommendations for the New Academic Structure Medium-term Review’ issued on 15 April 2014 and ‘Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination – 2018 Assessment Frameworks’ issued on 13 July 2015, which are available in the ‘Circular’ section of the HKDSE webpage (<http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/admin/circulars/circulars.html>), and the 2018 Assessment Frameworks of the respective subjects, which are available on the HKEAA website ([http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/assessment/assessment\\_framework/](http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/assessment/assessment_framework/)).

Subject	Highlight of changes
Chinese History 中國歷史	<p>不實施校本評核</p> <p><u>因應校本評核的轉變而作出相應改動：</u></p> <p><u>試卷一</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 第一部分必答資料題的分數由 25 分增至 40 分</li> <li>• 全卷考試時間增加 15 分鐘，由 2 小時增至 2 小時 15 分鐘</li> <li>• 佔分比重由 48% 增至 70%</li> </ul> <p><u>試卷二</u></p> <p>佔分比重由 32% 調整至 30%</p>
Chinese Language 中國語文	<p><u>試卷一</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 試卷一分甲、乙兩部，甲部考核指定文言經典學習材料，佔全卷 30%；乙部為閱讀理解（擷取若干篇章，文白兼備），佔全卷 70%。</li> <li>• 試卷一甲、乙兩部分的文言篇章考核，總佔分不多於全卷 50%。</li> <li>• 考時增至 1 小時 30 分鐘</li> </ul>
Geography	<p><u>Paper 2</u></p> <p>Remove the restriction of question choice in Section D and Section E. Candidates can choose both questions in Paper 2 from the same or different electives.</p>

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Highlight of changes</b>
History	<p>Not implement SBA</p> <p><u>Corresponding changes made in accordance with the change to SBA:</u></p> <p><u>Paper 1</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weighting increases from 50% to 60%</li> <li>• Total paper mark increases from 50 to 60</li> <li>• Examination time increases by 15 min (from 1 hour 45 min to 2 hours)</li> </ul> <p><u>Paper 2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weighting increases from 30% to 40%</li> </ul>
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	<p>Further streamline SBA requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project assignment is replaced with guided tasks</li> <li>• The guided tasks focus on two assessment categories, namely ‘Design &amp; Implementation’ and ‘Testing &amp; Evaluation’</li> <li>• Students are required to do the guided tasks during class hours and submit their work by two stages.</li> </ul>
Music	<p><u>Paper 2 (Performing I)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Duration of ensemble performance is reduced from ‘10 to 15 minutes’ to ‘6 to 12 minutes’</li> <li>• ‘Viva voce’ is substituted by ‘oral presentation’</li> </ul> <p><u>Paper 4B (Performing II)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of solo pieces is reduced from ‘three or more solo pieces’ to ‘two or more solo pieces’ with the total duration unchanged</li> </ul>
Physical Education	<p><u>Paper 3 (Practical exam)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In athletics for male candidates, 100m hurdles is replaced by 110m hurdles.</li> </ul>
Visual Arts	<p><u>Paper 1 and Paper 2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relax linkage between Part A (Art/Design Appreciation and Criticism) and Part B (Art making / Design)</li> <li>• Candidates are still required to complete Parts A and B. However, they are not required to write an artwork/design work statement to explain the relationship between the practical work and the appreciation of artwork</li> </ul>