

## HONG KONG CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION EXAMINATION 2011 REGULATIONS

### INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination ("the Examination") is a public examination conducted by the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority ("the Authority") in accordance with the provisions of the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority Ordinance.
- 1.2 The primary purpose of the Examination is to assess the attainment of students who have completed a full-time five-year secondary school course. The Examination is conducted annually, mainly in April and May.
- 1.3 With the introduction of the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination in 2012, the last cohort of Secondary 5 students will take the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination ("the Examination") in 2010. The 2011 Examination will be offered to private candidates only. *Therefore, the term "candidates" used in this document refers to "private candidates".*

### SUBJECTS OF THE EXAMINATION

- 2.1 The following 22 subjects will be offered:

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Language in which subject is to be examined</b>
Additional Mathematics	Chinese or English
* Biology	Chinese or English
+ Buddhist Studies	Chinese only
* Chemistry	Chinese or English
Chinese History	Chinese only
Chinese Language	Chinese only
Chinese Literature	Chinese only
Commerce	Chinese or English
* Computer and Information Technology	Chinese or English
Economics	Chinese or English
English Language	English only
Geography	Chinese or English
History	Chinese or English
Integrated Humanities	Chinese or English
Mathematics	Chinese or English
* Physics	Chinese or English
Principles of Accounts	Chinese or English
Putonghua	Chinese only
+ Religious Studies	Chinese or English
Science and Technology	Chinese or English
Travel and Tourism	Chinese or English
Visual Arts	Chinese or English

Notes: + Forbidden combination : See Regulation 2.3

\* Practical subject : See Regulation 2.5

- 2.2 In any subject with a syllabus examinable in both Chinese and English, only one language version may be entered for in the same Examination.
- 2.3 For the subjects of Buddhist Studies and Religious Studies, only one may be entered for in the same Examination.
- 2.4 No candidate may enter for more than 10 subjects at any one Examination.
- 2.5 A candidate (see Regulation 3.1) may enter for a practical subject only if he/she can provide evidence of having sat the subject in a previous Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination or in an equivalent public examination.
- 2.6 Candidates who enter for Computer & Information Technology and Science & Technology **may not opt to use their previous teacher-assessed mark** to substitute the requirement for submission of independent study/coursework. They must submit a new independent study/coursework for assessment.
- 2.7 Candidates who enter for Chinese History, History and Integrated Humanities **may not opt to use their previous teacher-assessed mark** to substitute the requirement for school-based assessment (SBA). Their subject result will be based entirely on their public examination mark.
- 2.8 Candidates who enter for Chinese Language and English Language may not opt to use their previous school-based assessment mark. Their subject result will be based entirely on their public examination mark.

#### **PARTICIPATION IN THE EXAMINATION BY CANDIDATES**

- 3.1 A person may enter for the Examination as a candidate provided he/she has satisfied the requirements set out at (1) or (2) or (3) below:
  - (1) The person has sat a previous Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination.
  - (2) The person has reached the age of 18 by 1st January in the year of the Examination.
  - (3) The person has completed or is currently pursuing a non-local school curriculum equivalent to Secondary 5 in the year preceding the Examination.
- 3.2 Entry forms will be available in September in the year preceding the Examination. Registration arrangements will be announced in the press and the Authority's web site.
- 3.3 Examination fees must be paid on or before the date specified by the Authority.

#### **GENERAL**

- 4.1 The subjects of the Examination will be examined in accordance with a timetable, which will normally be announced in September in the year

- preceding the Examination.
- 4.2 Although the Authority will endeavour to ensure that all examinations will be conducted on the dates and at the times specified in the examination timetable, it cannot guarantee that this will be so. In the event of an examination having to be rescheduled or cancelled, the Authority will not accept any liability in respect of claims for expenses or other damages. However, it may at its discretion refund the whole or part of the fees paid in respect of an examination which has to be cancelled.
  - 4.3 Examination fees will be announced before September in the year preceding the Examination.
  - 4.4 Candidates shall pay an initial fee and the subject fees.
  - 4.5 Candidates may not submit more than one entry for the Examination, whether for the same or different subjects.
  - 4.6 The Authority reserves the right to reject an application for entry to any examination conducted by the Authority if it is satisfied that the applicant has been involved in any serious irregularity, misconduct or dishonesty in any examination conducted by the Authority, or in connection with certificates, statements of results or similar documents.
  - 4.7 Under special circumstances the Authority may at its discretion,
    - (1) admit a candidate after the normal closing date for entry, on payment of a supplementary fee in addition to the normal examination fee;
    - (2) allow the addition or substitution of a subject or subjects to a candidate's entries after they have been accepted, on payment of a supplementary fee (For the purpose of this regulation, a change of language version will be regarded as a change of subject.);
    - (3) allow changes in a candidate's choice of paper, or sections within a paper, on payment of a supplementary fee;
    - (4) accept a script submitted by a candidate in a language medium other than that for which the candidate entered, or for a subject/syllabus other than that for which he/she entered, on payment of a supplementary fee.
  - 4.8 Candidates with special needs may apply for exemption from part(s) of the requirements in an examination or special examination arrangements. Such applications must be made in writing to the Secretary General within a period prescribed by the Authority together with full supporting documents (e.g. medical certificates).
  - 4.9 Entries of candidates will not be regarded as having been accepted until the fees payable have been received in full by the Authority.
  - 4.10 A copy of the (1) Candidate Entry Information Checklist and a copy of the (2) Instructions to Candidates will be issued to candidates in early December in the year preceding the Examination. Candidates will be responsible for checking their entry data to see that the entries they made at the time of registration have been correctly processed. The Secretary General must be notified in writing before 16th December in the year preceding the Examination of any discrepancies discovered. In the

absence of such notification, the entry data will be regarded as having been confirmed. Any subsequent request for changes will be subject to the provisions of Regulation 4.7.

- 4.11 Applications for amendments to a candidate's personal particulars received after 15th December in the year preceding the Examination may be accepted at the discretion of the Secretary General.
- 4.12 A candidate withdrawing from the Examination may receive a partial refund of the fees paid provided that the Secretary General is notified in writing of the candidate's withdrawal before 16th December in the year preceding the Examination. The Authority may, at its discretion, consider special applications of exceptional circumstances. There will be no refund for partial withdrawal. Examination fees are not transferable from one examination to another, nor from one person to another. Examination fees will not be refunded to candidates who are disqualified (see Regulation 5.1).
- 4.13 Admission forms will be issued to candidates in March in the year of the Examination.
- 4.14 On application by a candidate, a duplicate admission form may be issued to replace one which has been lost, subject to payment of a supplementary fee.
- 4.15 Electronic calculators, including programmable calculators, may be used in any examination session (except for language subjects) provided that the calculators are battery-powered, silent in operation and with neither print-out nor graphic/word-display facilities and do not use dot-matrix technology in the main display. Other electronic devices with graphic/word-display facilities (such as databank watches) are not permitted.
- 4.16 All answer scripts submitted by candidates, including the practical work in practical examinations, shall be the property of the Authority and as such, shall be handled by the Authority at any time and in any way it deems appropriate. While the Authority will exercise reasonable care to protect and preserve the scripts, in the event of any loss or damage, as a result of which the candidate's performance cannot be assessed based on the scripts, the candidate concerned will waive all claims, if any, against the Authority.
- 4.17 Personal data of candidates will be used for the purpose of conducting the Examination. The personal data, including examination results, may also be used for the following purposes:
  - (1) assisting tertiary institutions and other government/public organizations in their admission processes;
  - (2) assisting government/public organizations in respect of their requests for information in granting scholarships;
  - (3) certifying candidates' examination results in response to legitimate requests; and
  - (4) conducting educational research and analysis in an anonymous format in which the identities of candidates are not traceable.In compliance with the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance, access to all

personal data will be made available, on payment of a fee, to anyone who can establish his/her right to be informed of such data as are retained by the Authority.

- 4.18 All correspondence should be addressed to the Secretary General. (Address : Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority, 12th Floor, Southorn Centre, 130 Hennessy Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.)

### **DISQUALIFICATION**

- 5.1 A candidate may be disqualified from part or whole of the Examination or suffer a mark or grade penalty, without refund of the examination fees paid if the candidate
- (1) provides false personal particulars in his/her entry form;
  - (2) improperly obtains knowledge of examination papers prior to the Examination;
  - (3) is found to have unauthorized article(s) on/in the examination desk or on his/her person;
  - (4) communicates or attempts to communicate improperly with any person inside or outside the examination room during an examination session;
  - (5) copies from notes, books or materials stored in electronic devices brought into the examination room or from the answers of another candidate during an examination session;
  - (6) attempts to take away from the examination room any examination material, such as answer sheets, backing sheets or graph paper;
  - (7) leaves the examination room without permission;
  - (8) starts to work on the question paper before being instructed to do so or continues to write after being told to stop writing at the end of an examination session;
  - (9) passes off work done by someone else as his/her own, in any part of a project where original work is required;
  - (10) breaks any of the examination instructions as laid down in the Instructions to Candidates referred to in Regulation 4.10 (2);
  - (11) disobeys the instructions of the centre supervisor or an invigilator;
  - (12) disregards the Authority's written warning in connection with misbehaviour in any examination conducted by the Authority.
- 5.2 Appeals against decisions to disqualify or to refuse entry to examinations within the purview of the Authority should be made in writing to the Secretary General.

### **RESULTS**

- 6.1 Except for the subjects of Chinese Language and English Language, the performance of candidates in individual subjects will be recorded in terms of six grades, namely, A, B, C, D, E and F, of which A is the highest and F the lowest. Achievements below grade F will be designated as "unclassified".
- 6.2 For the subjects of Chinese Language and English Language, the

performance of candidates will be recorded in terms of five levels, with Level 1 being the lowest and Level 5 the highest. Achievements below Level 1 will be designated as "unclassified". Level 5 candidates with the best performance will have their results indicated by the symbol\*.

- 6.3 Grade C or above in all subjects, whether taken in Chinese or in English, is recognised as the equivalent of an “O” level pass in a British GCE overseas examination.
- 6.4 The results in Chinese Language and English Language are recognized as equivalent to the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) results as follows:

Levels in HKCEE	5*	5	4	3
Grades in IGCSE	A*	A	B	C

- 6.5 The results will normally be issued in mid August in the year of the Examination.
- 6.6 A results notice will be issued to each candidate at the time of the publication of results. This will record  
 (1) the results obtained in individual subjects sat; and  
 (2) subjects entered for, but not sat.  
 The language medium used by candidates will not be recorded on the results notice.
- 6.7 Applications for appeal must be submitted within a period prescribed by the Authority. Each candidate may apply for full appeal (rechecking of marks and remarking of scripts) and rechecking of marks only for a number of subjects as stipulated by the Public Examinations Board. A fee will be charged per subject/component. The fee will be refunded if the candidate's result is upgraded. Applications must be supported by adequate reasons.
- 6.8 Certificates are normally issued to candidates in October in the year of the Examination.
- 6.9 Grades or levels awarded for individual subjects will be recorded on the certificate. The language medium used by candidates in the Examination will not be recorded. Subjects for which the candidate was absent and subjects with results designated as "unclassified" will not be recorded. Component grades/levels for Chinese Language, English Language, Computer and Information Technology, Putonghua and Science & Technology will be reported on the certificate. Candidates who were absent from all subjects or who obtained unclassified results in all subjects will not be issued a certificate.
- 6.10 Where a candidate has been exempted from part(s) of the requirements of an examination, his/her results for the affected part(s) will be assessed. The details of any such assessment will be listed on a second page to the candidate's certificate, and an indication will be printed on the first page that a second page has been used. However, the reason for granting the

exemption will not be recorded on the certificate. In the case of special assistance (e.g. extra time allowance, provision of braille or enlarged question papers), such assistance provided will not be recorded on the certificate as long as the candidate has completed the full requirements of the examination.

- 6.11 On application by a candidate, a duplicate results notice may be issued to replace one which has been lost, subject to the payment of a fee.
- 6.12 On application by a candidate, a statement of results may be issued, subject to the payment of a fee.

#### **AMENDMENTS TO REGULATIONS**

- 7.1 The Regulations are subject to revision.
- 7.2 Major amendments to the Regulations will be published before 15th September in the year preceding the Examination. Candidates will be notified of subsequent amendments, if any.