

# 2025 HONG KONG DIPLOMA OF SECONDARY EDUCATION EXAMINATION REGULATIONS (Revised in March 2023)

## INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE) ('the Examination') is a public examination conducted by the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority ('HKEAA') in accordance with the provisions of the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority Ordinance (Cap. 261).
- 1.2 The primary purpose of the HKDSE is to measure the attainment of candidates who have completed a full-time three-year senior secondary course in Hong Kong schools or qualified schools outside Hong Kong (Regulation 3.1). The Examination is conducted annually, mainly in March to May.
- 1.3 Each HKDSE subject is assessed based on the Curriculum and Assessment (C&A) Guide (Secondary 4 to 6) jointly prepared by the Curriculum Development Council and the HKEAA for that particular subject. The overall aim of the assessment is to evaluate candidates' achievement of the learning targets and objectives of the curriculum and so the learning outcomes that are assessed and examined through the HKDSE are aligned with the learning goals of the secondary curriculum in general, as well as with the aims/learning objectives/learning targets of individual HKDSE subjects as detailed in respective C&A Guides.

## SUBJECTS OF THE EXAMINATION

- 2.1 There are three categories of subjects:

### Category A

These refer to the Senior Secondary subjects.

### Category B

These refer to the Applied Learning (ApL) subjects approved by the Education Bureau (EDB).

### Category C

These refer to the other language subjects where the stipulated language examinations are administered in Hong Kong by official cultural organisation(s) of the respective countries.

- 2.2 The Category A subjects are as follows:

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Language in which subject is to be examined</u>
Biology**	Chinese or English
Business, Accounting and Financial Studies	Chinese or English
Chemistry**	Chinese or English
Chinese History	Chinese only
Chinese Language	Chinese only
Chinese Literature	Chinese only
Citizenship and Social Development	Chinese or English
Design and Applied Technology**	Chinese or English
Economics	Chinese or English
English Language	English only
Ethics and Religious Studies	Chinese or English
Geography	Chinese or English
Health Management and Social Care	Chinese or English

History	Chinese or English
Information and Communication Technology	Chinese or English
Literature in English	English only
Mathematics#	Chinese or English
Compulsory Part	
Extended Part	
Module 1. Calculus and Statistics	
Module 2. Algebra and Calculus	
Music	Chinese or English
Physical Education	Chinese or English
Physics**	Chinese or English
Technology and Living**	Chinese or English
Tourism and Hospitality Studies	Chinese or English
Visual Arts	Chinese or English

**Note:**

In any Category A subjects examinable in both Chinese and English, only one language version may be entered for in the same Examination.

\*\* Subjects that require laboratory/workshop facilities (see Regulation 3.4(3))

# There are two parts in the subject of Mathematics: the compulsory part and the extended part. Candidates may choose to take either the compulsory part only or the compulsory part plus **one** of the modules of the extended part.

**2.3** The Applied Learning subjects in Category B are grouped under six areas of studies:

Creative Studies  
Media and Communication  
Business, Management and Law  
Services  
Applied Science  
Engineering and Production

Besides, Applied Learning Chinese (for non-Chinese speaking students) has been introduced.

An ApL subject is a two-year course offered by a course provider to students through schools in Hong Kong. Entries from qualified schools outside Hong Kong (Regulation 3.1) or private candidates will normally not be accepted (see Regulation 2.4 for private candidates). Normally, the first year of study (Y1) commences in the first or second term of Secondary 4 or the first term of Secondary 5, and the second year (Y2) is completed in Secondary 5 and/or Secondary 6. At the time of registration, candidates must indicate the name of the subject entered according to the list of subjects approved by the EDB.

**2.4** Students who repeat Secondary 4 or Secondary 5 in schools but will complete Y2 of ApL subjects may enter for 'ApL subjects only' as school candidates with the support of school principals and course providers. Such entries must be endorsed by the school principal during registration.

Special approval may be given to candidates entering for 'ApL subjects only' as private candidates under the following circumstances:

- (1) Students who have left schools at the end of Y1 but will complete Y2 with the support of course providers.
- (2) Students who have entered for the HKDSE as school candidates but left schools before the completion of Secondary 4, Secondary 5 or Secondary 6. These students, irrespective of whether they meet the entry requirements for private candidates

(Regulation 4.1), may seek special approval from the HKEAA to enter for ApL subjects with the support of course providers if they can complete Y2.

2.5 The list of ApL subjects to be offered in 2025 is shown below:

<b>Area of Studies</b>	<b>Course Cluster</b>	<b>Course</b>
<b><i>Creative Studies</i></b>	1. Design Studies	Fashion Image Design Interior and Exhibition Design Jewellery Design in Digital Age
	2. Media Arts	Computer Game and Animation Design Digital Comic Design and Production Popular Music Production
	3. Performing Arts	Taking a Chance on Dance The Essentials of Theatre Arts
<b><i>Media and Communication</i></b>	4. Films, TV and Broadcasting Studies	Digital Media and Radio Production Film and Transmedia
	5. Media Production and Public Relations	Digital Brand Communication Multimedia Storytelling PR and Multimedia Communication
	6. Language and Culture	Applied Learning (Vocational English) – English Communication Applied Learning (Vocational English) – English for Business Services Applied Learning (Vocational English) – English for Service Professionals Creative English – Biz and Media Creative English – PR and Marketing Practical Translation (CHI-ENG) Applied Japanese and Japanese Culture Everyday Japanese and Japanese Culture Korean Language and Culture
<b><i>Business, Management and Law</i></b>	7. Accounting and Finance	Accounting for e-Business
	8. Business Studies	AI in Business Data Application for Business Introduction to Fintech Marketing and Online Promotion
	9. Legal Studies	Law Enforcement in Hong Kong
<b><i>Services</i></b>	10. Food Services and Management	Modern Southeast Asian Cuisine Pâtisserie and Café Operations Western Cuisine
	11. Hospitality Services	Airport Passenger Terminal Operations Hospitality Services in Practice Hotel Operations
	12. Personal and Community Services	Child Care and Development Child Care and Education Fundamental Cosmetology
<b><i>Applied Science</i></b>	13. Food Science	Food Innovation and Science
	14. Medical Science and Health Care	Animal Care Foundation in Chinese Medicine Health Care Practice Medical Laboratory Science Rehabilitation Care Practice
	15. Psychology	Applied Psychology Practical Psychology
	16. Sports	Exercise and Fitness Coaching Exercise Science and Health Fitness

<b>Engineering and Production</b>	17. Civil, Electrical and Mechanical Engineering	Digital Construction Electrical and Energy Engineering
	18. Information Engineering	AI and Robotics Computer Forensic Technology eSports Technology Tech Basics
	19. Services Engineering	Aviation Studies Railway Studies
<b>Applied Learning Chinese (for non-Chinese speaking students)</b>		Chinese in Business Service Chinese in Practical Context Practical Chinese

\* The final list of ApL subjects is subject to confirmation by the EDB.  
There is no language indicator for entry to Applied Learning subjects.

2.6 The Category C subjects are as follows:

French  
German  
Japanese  
Korean  
Spanish

Candidates have to take the stipulated language examinations administered in Hong Kong by the official cultural organisations which are the official providers of the language examinations concerned. Candidates should enroll themselves directly with the examination administrators of the stipulated language examinations according to the schedule of the examinations.

Candidates' results obtained in these examinations at the stipulated minimum proficiency level or above will be included in the HKDSE Category C results. The HKDSE accepts results obtained in the language examinations taken within two years preceding the HKDSE the candidate sits. If a candidate takes the language examinations more than once at the same or different levels, only the highest level and result attained will be reported under the HKDSE Category C subjects.

Candidates registering for the HKDSE Category C subjects must give consent to allow the respective examination providers to pass their results in the stipulated language examinations to the HKEAA for inclusion as the Category C subject results.

*(Note: The examinations of Category C subjects will only be offered and conducted in Hong Kong subject to the agreement of the examination providers.)*

2.7 The list of stipulated language examinations and the minimum proficiency level to be reported in the HKDSE for each Category C subject are as follows:

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Stipulated Language Examination</b>	<b>Examination provider (official cultural organisation) / <del>examination administrator</del></b>	<b>Language proficiency level(s) to be reported under the HKDSE</b>
French	Diplôme d'Études de Langue Française (DELF); Diplôme Approfondi de Langue Française (DALF)	Alliance Française de Hong Kong	A2 or above
German	Goethe-Zertifikat	Goethe-Institut, Hong Kong	A2 or above

Japanese	Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (JLPT)	Japan Foundation <del>Exam administrator: Society of Japanese Language Education, Hong Kong (SOJLEHK)</del>	N3 or above
Korean	Test of Proficiency in Korean (TOPIK)	National Institute for International Education (NIIED), Republic of Korea  <del>Exam administrator: Korean International School, Hong Kong</del>	TOPIK II, Grade 3 or above
Spanish	Diplomas de Español como Lengua Extranjera (DELE)	Instituto Cervantes (Shanghái)  <del>Exam administrator: University of Wollongong College Hong Kong</del>	A2 or above

- 2.8 Candidates may take up to a maximum of eight subjects. These subjects may come from any of Categories A, B or C. If a candidate chooses to take the extended part of Mathematics, the result of the extended part will be reported separately from the compulsory part. The extended part is not regarded as an additional subject.
- 2.9 A candidate may only enter for the Examination either as a school candidate or as a private candidate but not both in the same examination year.

### **PARTICIPATION IN THE EXAMINATION BY SCHOOLS**

- 3.1 The participation of schools in the Examination shall be subject to the prior approval of the HKEAA. At the time of application for participation, the school in Hong Kong should provide evidence that it is a registered school under the Education Ordinance (Cap. 279) and is running courses and operating classes in accordance with the EDB registration requirements, or for a school outside Hong Kong, it should provide evidence that it has been approved to offer the HKDSE curriculum which is certified by the relevant authorities recognised by the HKEAA and/or EDB to have met the equivalent requirements; and that the school agrees to comply with the examination regulations. In these Regulations, ‘qualified schools outside Hong Kong’ shall be construed accordingly. The HKEAA may seek advice from the EDB where necessary. In its consideration and determination of an application, the HKEAA reserves the right to refuse such an application and to make such conditions, in addition to those conditions contained within these Regulations, as it considers appropriate.
- 3.2 Only bona fide Secondary 6 students of registered schools in Hong Kong approved for participation or bona fide Secondary 6 (or Secondary 6 equivalent) students of qualified schools outside Hong Kong approved for participation may be entered as school candidates. The students must be studying at the registered address of the schools as per HKEAA’s records. The principal’s certification to this effect will be required at the time of registration. Exceptional entry for Applied Learning subjects only at Secondary 4 or Secondary 5 is subject to the endorsement of school principals (see Regulation 2.4).
- 3.3 Schools wishing
- (1) to enter candidates for the first time; or
  - (2) to enter candidates for any subject that requires laboratory/workshop facilities for the first time,

must make a written application to the Secretary General of the HKEAA for approval by 30 June, three years preceding the Examination. Exceptional cases may be considered and approved by the Secretary General of the HKEAA.

**3.4** Schools are required to apply for first participation in HKDSE and comply with the following conditions:

- (1) Schools will be required to make a declaration that they must make their school premises available as may be required for the conduct of examinations and place their teaching staff at the reasonable disposal of the HKEAA (see Regulation 3.5). Under the home cum district centre arrangements for core subjects (i.e. Chinese Language, English Language, Mathematics Compulsory Part and Citizenship and Social Development), schools are obligated to accommodate all of their own candidates and external candidates including private candidates. For schools that cannot comply with the requirement, the HKEAA reserves the right to ask such schools to meet the costs incurred by hiring other examination venues and/or invigilators to accommodate their candidates. (*Note: Qualified schools outside Hong Kong may be required to comply with the same requirement subject to the discretion of the HKEAA.*)
- (2) Schools will have to submit the application by 30 June, three years before the Examination. Exceptional cases may be considered and approved by the Secretary General of the HKEAA.
- (3) For some subjects, schools will have to declare that they can provide the laboratory/workshop facilities for practical work. These subjects include Biology, Chemistry, Design & Applied Technology, Physics and Technology & Living.

**3.5** Schools presenting candidates for the Examination must provide teaching staff to undertake invigilation duties in relation to the total number of subject entries. For schools that are unable to provide examination venues or teaching staff to serve as invigilation staff in a particular year, application for exemption must be made to the Secretary General before 30 September of the year preceding the Examination with valid reasons. Schools that do not have proper venues or cannot provide examination venues are required to provide extra invigilation staff. Schools that are unable to provide the required number of invigilation staff may, at the discretion of the Secretary General, be allowed the option of paying the costs of hiring invigilators.

**3.6** For school candidates, there will be a School-based Assessment (SBA) component for the following subjects:

Biology  
Chemistry  
Chinese Language  
Chinese Literature  
Design and Applied Technology  
English Language  
Health Management and Social Care  
Information and Communication Technology  
Literature in English  
Physics  
Technology and Living  
Visual Arts

Schools are required to fulfill the SBA requirements for subjects entered by candidates of their schools. The HKEAA will not accept entries for subjects from candidates presented by schools which do not join the SBA scheme.

School candidates who repeat Secondary 6 in schools have to be re-assessed in S6 and meet the SBA requirements of the respective subjects entered. If the schools do not offer the elective subject(s) that the candidates wish to re-take in the examination, the candidates may

apply for exemption from the SBA for the particular subject(s). The candidates' subject result will be based entirely on their public examination result (see also Regulation 7.9). Special approval must be sought from the HKEAA prior to registration. This special exemption does not apply to the subjects Chinese Language and English Language.

- 3.7** Compliance by schools with Regulations 3.4 to 3.6 will be regarded as a condition of participation in the Examination.
- 3.8** The Secretary General will notify schools of the decisions of the HKEAA under Regulations 3.1 and 3.3, normally not later than 31 August, three years preceding the Examination, or for schools outside Hong Kong, within a period as specified by the HKEAA. Any appeal against the HKEAA's decisions under Regulations 3.1 and 3.3 should be made in writing to the Secretary General within 30 days from the date of the above notification.
- 3.9** Under exceptional circumstances, a school may be given provisional approval for participation in the Examination or in a subject that requires laboratory/workshop facilities; the final approval being subject to the school fulfilling the conditions under which the provisional approval was given.
- 3.10** Participation in the Examination and in subjects that require laboratory/workshop facilities will be subject to annual review by the HKEAA. The Secretary General will inform schools of any decision of the HKEAA to withdraw permission for the schools to participate or to impose conditions for continued participation, normally not later than 31 August, three years preceding the Examination, or for schools outside Hong Kong, within a period as specified by the HKEAA. Nonetheless, schools that have not presented candidates for three consecutive years will be removed from the list of participating schools for the following examination year.
- 3.11** Notwithstanding Regulation 3.10, the HKEAA may by notice rescind the participation of any school upon receipt of notification from the EDB that:
- (1) the registration of the said school under the terms of the Education Ordinance (Cap. 279) has been cancelled; OR
  - (2) registration of the premises or part of the premises of the said school under the terms of the Education Ordinance (Cap. 279) has been refused; OR
  - (3) the said school has been found to be operating in premises all or part of which are not registered under the terms of the Education Ordinance (Cap. 279); OR
  - (4) for a school outside Hong Kong, the said school no longer meets the equivalent requirements of the relevant authorities recognised by the HKEAA and/or EDB.
- The participation of any such school shall cease with effect from the date of the said notice, or with effect from such other date as the HKEAA may specify in the said notice.
- 3.12** Should permission to participate be withdrawn under Regulation 3.10 or 3.11, a school may make application to participate again in accordance with Regulations 3.1 and 3.3 as if applying to enter candidates for the first time.
- 3.13** The list of schools approved for participation in the Examination together with approved subjects that require laboratory/workshop facilities is available at the HKEAA's offices, District Offices and the HKEAA's website ([www.hkeaa.edu.hk](http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk)) from 1 June in the year preceding the Examination. This applies to both Hong Kong schools and qualified schools outside Hong Kong.

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

- 4.1** A person may enter for the Examination as a private candidate provided he/she has satisfied the requirements set out at (a) or (b) or (c) below:
- (a) The person has sat the previous Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE) or an equivalent examination, or
  - (b) The person has reached the age of 19 by 1 January of the year of the Examination, or

- (c) The person has completed or is currently pursuing a non-HKDSE curriculum equivalent to Secondary 6 as determined by the HKEAA in the year preceding the Examination.
- 4.2** The HKEAA may consider applications from persons possessing other qualifications or pleading special circumstances. Persons who have sat other public examinations are expected to demonstrate a suitable level of competence in the same subject(s) entered for the Examination and may be required to provide supporting documents from their schools, if applicable. Persons who are currently pursuing an HKDSE curriculum will not normally be considered for special entry to the Examination. Exceptional cases may be considered on a case-by-case basis. Applications under this regulation must be made in writing to the Secretary General before the normal closing date for entry.
- 4.3** A private candidate may enter for a subject which requires laboratory/workshop facilities (subjects in 2.2 marked with \*\*) only if the candidate can produce evidence of having sat the subject in a previous HKDSE or in an equivalent public examination, or having completed or is currently pursuing the study of the subject up to a level equivalent to the HKDSE in the year preceding the Examination. [Notwithstanding this provision, the HKEAA will not accept entries from private candidates for Design and Applied Technology.]
- 4.4** For Category A subjects with an SBA component, private candidates are not required to complete the SBA component of the subjects entered (except Visual Arts). Their subject marks will be based entirely on their public examination results (see also Regulation 7.9). For Visual Arts in which the SBA component carries a weighting of 50%, private candidates will be required to submit a portfolio in lieu of the SBA.

## **GENERAL**

- 5.1** The subjects of the Examination will be examined in accordance with a timetable, which will normally be announced in November in the year preceding the Examination. A provisional examination timetable will be provided to participating schools by May in the year preceding the Examination.
- 5.2** All the dates and times stated in the Regulations and the examination timetable are subject to change. Although the HKEAA will endeavour to ensure that all examinations will be conducted on the dates and at the times as specified in the relevant examination timetable, it cannot guarantee that this will be so. The HKEAA will also not be liable for any delay, non-performance, claim, complaint or dispute arising from circumstances or causes such as epidemic or pandemic, terrorist attack, demonstrations or riots, social unrest or public disorder; explosion, fire, natural disasters or inclement weather conditions; destruction, suspension, unavailability or break-down of transport, telecommunication, electricity or other public utility; labour disturbance including but without limitation to boycott and strike; quarantine measures or restrictions; immigration or border controls; compliance with any law or governmental order, rule, regulation or direction, etc. Candidates themselves shall be solely responsible for obtaining all necessary visa, entry permit, etc. to cover the Examination period and, in the event of any epidemic or pandemic situations in Hong Kong or elsewhere, for fulfilling all the prevailing entry and quarantine requirements in accordance with the laws of Hong Kong or elsewhere in order to take part in the Examination. Candidates themselves shall also be solely responsible for full compliance with any applicable visa or stay conditions and quarantine requirements, etc., and the HKEAA shall have no responsibility for any consequences if they fail to comply or have any difficulty in doing so.
- 5.3** The HKEAA may at its sole discretion determine how to conduct and deal with the Examination as it considers necessary or advantageous and proper, and this includes rescheduling, cancelling or changing the mode of examination and/or assessment for the whole Examination or any part thereof for all candidates or individual candidates, or refusing, restricting or withdrawing participation in the Examination by certain candidates as



- and when necessary (e.g. due to public health or disease prevention reasons). In any of the above events, the HKEAA will not accept any liability in respect of claims for expenses, refunds or other damages. If the whole Examination or any part thereof is cancelled, the HKEAA may at its discretion refund the whole or part of the fees paid after deducting any costs incurred.
- 5.4** Examination fees will be announced before June in the year preceding the Examination. For the avoidance of doubt, different examination fees may be applicable to different types of candidates (including school candidates of Hong Kong schools, school candidates of qualified schools outside Hong Kong, private candidates in Hong Kong or outside Hong Kong) and different examination subjects.
- 5.5** Candidates may not submit more than one entry for the Examination, whether for the same or different subjects, and whether as school or private candidates.
- 5.6** The HKEAA reserves the right to reject an application for entry to any examination conducted by the HKEAA if it is satisfied that the applicant has been involved in any serious irregularity, misconduct or dishonesty in any examination conducted by the HKEAA, or in connection with certificates, statements of results or similar documents.
- 5.7** Under special circumstances the HKEAA 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 modules 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/paper/module other than that for which he/she entered, on payment of a supplementary fee;
  - (5) permit a school candidate who has ceased to attend the school which submitted the candidate's entry to change his/her status to that of a private candidate (subject to his/her satisfying the relevant entry requirement), on payment of the initial fee and a supplementary fee.
- 5.8** 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 (via schools in the case of school candidates) to the Secretary General within a period prescribed by the HKEAA, together with full supporting documents (e.g. medical certificates).
- 5.9** School candidates who are unable to take the examinations because of hospitalisation as a result of an accident or serious illness, or because of special circumstances, may, with the support of the school principal, apply for special consideration.
- 5.10** Entries of candidates will not be regarded as having been accepted until the fees payable have been received in full by the HKEAA.
- 5.11** Candidates will be responsible for checking their entry data to ensure that the entries they made at the time of registration have been correctly processed. The Secretary General must be notified in writing before a specified date 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 5.6 and will not be accepted after a date stipulated by the HKEAA.
- 5.12** Applications for amendments to a candidate's personal particulars received after a specified date may be accepted at the discretion of the Secretary General.

- 5.13** 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 a date stipulated by the HKEAA. The HKEAA may, at its discretion, consider special applications under exceptional circumstances. There will be no refund for partial withdrawal. Examination fees are neither 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 6.1).
- 5.14** Admission forms will be issued to candidates (via schools in the case of school candidates) in February / March in the year of the Examination (for Category A subjects). Schools should not, for whatever reasons, withhold the admission forms of their students.
- 5.15** 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.
- 5.16** Electronic calculators, including programmable calculators, may be used in any non-language examination session 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.
- 5.17** All answer scripts submitted by candidates (including portfolios and audio/video recordings for speaking and practical examinations) and all works submitted to the HKEAA under the SBA and ApL subjects (including coursework and audio/video recordings), shall be the property of the HKEAA. All scripts and works submitted may be handled by the HKEAA at any time and in any way it deems appropriate, in particular the HKEAA may (and may authorize third parties to) use, reproduce and/or publish those scripts and works, or any part thereof in an anonymous format in which the identities of applicants are not traceable. Also, the HKEAA will exercise reasonable care to protect and preserve the scripts and works submitted, but in the event of any loss or damage, as a result of which the candidate's performance cannot be assessed based on the scripts and/or the works submitted, the candidate concerned will waive all claims, if any, against the HKEAA.
- 5.18** Personal data of candidates will be used for the purpose of conducting the Examination and the subsequent assessment and reporting of their performance. The personal data, including examination results, may also be used for the following purposes:
- (1) assisting tertiary institutions and other government/public organisations in their admission processes;
  - (2) assisting government/public organisations in respect of their requests for information in granting scholarships;
  - (3) confirming with relevant Government authorities the eligibility of candidates for examination fee remission by transferring necessary data of the school candidates concerned to these Government authorities for verification;
  - (4) certifying candidates' examination results in response to legitimate requests;
  - (5) conducting educational research and/or analysis in an anonymous format in which the identities of candidates are not traceable; and
  - (6) processing of any refund or payment in relation to the examination by the HKEAA's designated banks (or their appointees).

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 HKEAA.

- 5.19** 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.) School candidates should normally write to the HKEAA via their schools.

## **DISQUALIFICATION**

- 6.1** A candidate may be disqualified from part or whole of the Examination or suffer a mark penalty or downgrading, without refund of the examination fees paid if the candidate
- (1) does not meet the candidate requirements under these Regulations, for example, a school candidate who is not a bona fide Secondary 6 (or Secondary 6 equivalent) student of the school which presented him/her for the Examination;
  - (2) provides false personal particulars in his/her entry form;
  - (3) improperly obtains knowledge of examination papers prior to the Examination;
  - (4) brings unauthorised article(s) (not limited to those perceived as related to cheating) to the examination, whether on/in the examination desk or his/her body or otherwise;
  - (5) communicates or attempts to communicate in any form with any persons inside or outside the examination room during an examination session in an attempt to gain unfair advantage;
  - (6) copies from notes, books or materials stored in electronic devices brought into the examination room or from the work of other candidates during an examination session;
  - (7) takes away the question papers during the examination or removes any materials supplied by the HKEAA from the examination room, such as answer books, answer sheets and barcode labels; or displays the barcode labels electronically or publicly;
  - (8) leaves the examination room without permission;
  - (9) starts to read or work on the question paper before being instructed to do so or continues to hold any stationery or work on the answer script after being told to stop working at the end of an examination session;
  - (10) passes off work done by someone else as his/her own, in any part of a project/portfolio/SBA where original work is required;
  - (11) breaks any of the examination instructions as laid down in the Handbook for Candidates/Instructions to Candidates;
  - (12) repeatedly disobeys the reasonable instructions of the centre supervisor or an invigilator;
  - (13) disregards the HKEAA's/centre staff's verbal/written warning in connection with misbehaviour in any examination conducted by the HKEAA.
- 6.2** Appeals against decisions to disqualify or to refuse entry to examinations within the purview of the HKEAA should be made in writing to the Secretary General.

## **REPORTING OF RESULTS**

- 7.1** For Category A subjects except Citizenship and Social Development, results will be reported in five levels (1-5), with Level 1 being the lowest and Level 5 the highest. Achievements below Level 1 will be designated as 'unclassified'. To give recognition to outstanding candidates, top candidates within Level 5 will be awarded Level 5\* and Level 5\*\* as appropriate. Component levels for Chinese Language and English Language will be reported on the certificate. One-level reporting will be adopted for Citizenship and Social Development, the results of which will be reported as 'Attained'. Achievements below 'Attained' will be designated as 'Unattained'.
- 7.2** For Category B subjects, assessment will be undertaken by course providers. After moderation by the HKEAA, the final results will be recorded on the HKDSE certificate. The results for Category B subjects will be reported as 'Attained', 'Attained with Distinction (I)' and 'Attained with Distinction (II)' except for Applied Learning Chinese subjects (for non-Chinese speaking students), the results of which will be reported as 'Attained' and 'Attained with Distinction'. Achievements below 'Attained' will be designated as 'Unattained'.
- 7.3** For Category C subjects, marking and grading will be conducted by the respective examination providers of the stipulated language examinations. The results provided by the examination providers to the HKEAA will be included under Category C subjects. The language proficiency level attained by candidates will be reported for the overall subject and

the components (if applicable). Achievement below the minimum requirement for attaining the language proficiency level of respective language examinations sat by the candidates will be designated as 'Fail' (For Korean, achievement below the minimum requirement for Grade 3 will be designated as 'Fail').

- 7.4** A results notice will be issued to each candidate (via schools in the case of school candidates) at the time of the publication of results in July. This will record
- (1) the provisional 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. A separate results notice will be issued to each candidate for Category C other language subjects. Results recorded in the results notice in case of absence in the paper(s) of Category C other language subjects will follow those provided by the respective examination providers in accordance with their standard procedures.
- 7.5** Each school will receive a summary showing the results obtained by its candidates.
- 7.6** 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.
- 7.7** Certificates are normally issued to candidates (via schools in the case of school candidates) in October in the year of the Examination.
- 7.8** Levels or grades awarded for individual subjects will be recorded on the certificate. The language medium used by candidates in the Examination will not be recorded. A separate certificate will be issued for Category C other language subjects. Subjects for which the candidate was absent and subjects with results designated as 'Unclassified' (i.e. below level 1 for the subjects in Category A), 'Unattained' for Citizenship and Social Development in Category A and for subjects in Category B or 'Fail' for the subjects in Category C will not be recorded. Candidates who were absent from all subjects or who obtained Unclassified/Unattained/Fail results in all subjects will not be issued a certificate.
- 7.9** For Category A subjects with a school-based assessment component (Regulation 3.6), the subject results of candidates will be annotated if they are not required to undertake the school-based assessment.
- 7.10** Where a candidate has been exempted from component(s)/part(s) of an examination, his/her results for the affected component(s)/part(s) will be assessed. The details of the component(s) exempted will be indicated on the candidate's certificate. 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.
- 7.11** School principals are required to return all unclaimed certificates to the HKEAA at the time when certificates for the Examination in the following year are collected. Certificates unclaimed by 31 December, two years after the Examination, will be destroyed.
- 7.12** On application by a candidate, a statement of results may be issued, subject to the payment of a fee.
- 7.13** The Examination Report will be posted on the HKEAA website, normally in December in the year of the Examination.

## **APPEALS**

- 8.1** For Category A subjects, applications for appeal must be submitted within a period prescribed by the HKEAA. Each candidate may apply for rechecking and/or remarking of scripts for a number of subjects as stipulated by the Public Examinations Board. A fee will be charged per subject. The fee will be refunded if the result is upgraded. For the SBA component, all disputes on assessment decisions should be resolved within the school before marks are submitted to the HKEAA for moderation. Candidates are not allowed to appeal for re-assessment after the release of examination results. They may apply for rechecking of marks only.
- 8.2** For Category B subjects, course providers are required to establish procedures to allow candidates to appeal against assessment decisions. The course providers should keep a complete record of all complaint cases and resolve all complaints from candidates before submitting the assessment results to the HKEAA for moderation. Candidates are not allowed to appeal against assessment decisions made by course providers once the results are submitted to the HKEAA for moderation. They may apply for rechecking of marks only.
- 8.3** For Category C subjects, queries / appeals for other language subjects will be handled by the respective examination providers in accordance with their standard policies and procedures. Candidates should contact the respective examination providers directly and resolve any queries on the results before 1 March of the year of the Examination.
- 8.4** School candidates should submit their applications through their schools. Private candidates may submit their applications to the HKEAA direct.
- 8.5** The Examination is deemed to be closed on 30 November of that examination year (unless otherwise decided by the HKEAA), after which the HKEAA will not consider or entertain any appeals, queries or requests in relation to the Examination.

## **AMENDMENTS TO REGULATIONS**

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