



Press Release

HKDSE Recognized by UK Higher Education Sector

The Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) announced today that the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) has been accepted by UCAS (the UK's higher education admissions service) onto the Tariff, a points-based system which benchmarks qualifications against the UK's A Level in order to assess their suitability for higher education.

Upon completion of a comparability study on HKDSE and GCE A Level, the UCAS Board endorsed the recommendations of an Expert Group to include the HKDSE in the UCAS Tariff system with tariff points awarded to 24 HKDSE subjects.

An overall subject point score is recommended for the HKDSE subjects except for Mathematics which carries a unique structure. For example, Level 5 of an HKDSE subject is awarded 120 points, implying attainment at this level is aligned to a Grade A of GCE A Level. Level 3 of an HKDSE subject is awarded 40 points, which is comparable to a Grade E in a GCE A Level subject.

With regard to Mathematics, the curriculum consists of a Compulsory Part and an Extended Part. Candidates' attainments in the Compulsory and Extended Parts will be reported independently and hence tariff points are awarded separately to the two parts of the subject.

Mathematics is one of the compulsory subjects for university admission in Hong Kong whereas there is no such requirement in the UK. Students who intend to pursue further studies in Mathematics or related disciplines are expected to take a module in the more advanced Extended Part in addition to the Compulsory Part which covers fundamental concepts and knowledge of the subject. When students apply for UK university programmes requiring Mathematics as an elective subject, the attainment and subsequent tariff points gained in both parts will be considered together. For example, a student getting Level 5* in the Compulsory Part and Level 5 in the Extended part will be awarded 120 points, which is aligned to a Grade A of GCE A Level.

Tariff points for the highest level of achievement, i.e. Level 5**, will be allocated when further evidence can be gathered after the first administration of the HKDSE examinations in 2012.

The UCAS tariff value for HKDSE

UCAS Tariff points for 23 HKDSE subjects, except Mathematics:

Grade	Tariff	Remarks
5**	NA	To be allocated after the first administration of the HKDSE Examinations in 2012.
5*	130	Between grades A and A* in the 2010 GCE A Level examination
5	120	Comparable to grade A in the 2010 GCE A Level examination
4	80	Comparable to grade C in the 2010 GCE A Level examination
3	40	Comparable to grade E in the 2010 GCE A Level examination

UCAS Tariff points for Mathematics:

**The overall performance is indicated by the combined tariff points to both parts.*

Grade	Compulsory Part	Extended Part	Remarks
5**	NA	NA	To be allocated after the first administration of HKDSE Examinations in 2012.
5*	60	70	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 130 points (60+70) for 5* in both compulsory and extended parts – Between grades A and A* in the 2010 GCE A Level examination• 120 points (60+60) for 5* in the compulsory part and 5 in the extended part – comparable to grade A in the 2010 GCE A Level examination
5	45	60	
4	35	50	
3	25	40	

Dr Francis Cheung, Secretary General of the HKEAA, is delighted that the HKDSE is admitted into the UCAS Tariff, which represents a significant milestone in the international recognition of the qualification for access to higher education.

“The UCAS Tariff covers a wide range of qualifications awarded by different examinations systems, including the Advanced Placement Programme in the US and Canada, the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma as well as the CIE Cambridge Pre-U Diploma. The inclusion of HKDSE in the UCAS Tariff allows broad comparisons to be made between applicants holding different qualifications,” Dr Cheung said.

Whilst most UK universities and colleges will formulate their admission policies with reference to UCAS Tariff points, the HKEAA will continue to promote the qualification to universities in popular destination countries for further education like Australia, Canada and the US and request for early indication of admission requirements for applicants holding the HKDSE.

Notes to editor:

- UCAS is the shared admissions service for higher education in the UK. They manage applications for full-time undergraduate courses.
- The Tariff, which benchmarks qualifications against the UK's A Level in order to assess their suitability for higher education, currently recognises 40 different qualification types.
- Currently, over 300 institutions across the UK use the UCAS tariff points system as part of their entry requirements.
- Tariff points awarded to major qualifications offered by different countries are shown in Annex 1.

- End -

Date: 25 January 2010

Tariff Points for HKDSE and Various International Awards

Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE)

UCAS Tariff points allocated to 23 HKDSE subjects, except Mathematics:

Level	Tariff	Remarks
5**	NA	To be allocated with further evidence after the first administration of the HKDSE examinations in 2012.
5*	130	Between grades A and A* in the 2010 GCE A Level examination
5	120	Comparable to grade A in the 2010 GCE A Level examination
4	80	Comparable to Grade C in the 2010 GCE A Level examination
3	40	Comparable to Grade E in the 2010 GCE A Level examination

UCAS Tariff points allocated to Mathematics:

**The overall performance is indicated by the combined tariff points to both compulsory and extended parts.*

Level	Compulsory Part	Extended Part	Remarks
5**	NA	NA	To be allocated with further evidence after the first administration of the HKDSE examinations in 2012.
5*	60	70	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 130 points (60+70) for 5* in both compulsory and extended parts – between grade A and A* in the 2010 GCE A Level examination
5	45	60	
4	35	50	
3	25	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 120 points (60+60) for 5* in the compulsory part and 5 in the extended part – comparable to grade A in the 2010 GCE A Level examination

Other International Awards

(1) Advanced Placement Programme – US & Canada

Grade	UCAS Tariff Points
5	120
4	90
3	60

(2) CIE Cambridge Pre-U Diploma

Grade	UCAS Tariff Points
D1	-
D2	145
D3	130
M1	115
M2	101
M3	87
P1	73
P2	59
P3	45

(3) GCE Advanced & AS Levels (from 2010)

AL Grade	UCAS Tariff Points	AS Grade	UCAS Tariff Points
A*	140	-	-
A	120	A	60
B	100	B	50
C	80	C	40
D	60	D	30
E	40	E	20

(4) International Baccalaureate Certificate (Higher Level)

Grade	UCAS Tariff Points
7	130
6	110
5	80
4	50
3	20

(5) Scottish Advanced Highers & Scottish Highers (from 2010)

Scottish Advanced Highers Grade	UCAS Tariff Points	Scottish Highers Grade	UCAS Tariff Points
A	130	A	80
B	110	B	65
C	90	C	50
D	72	D	36

Source: http://www.ucas.com/students/ucas_tariff/