



PRESS RELEASE

Inclusion of Urdu (International) in Category C (Other Languages) Subjects for the 2026 HKDSE and Beyond

Starting from the 2025 Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE), new arrangements will be implemented for Category C (Other Languages) subjects, under which candidates will have to take the stipulated language examinations administered by the official organisations. The Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) announced today (12 September) that the number of Category C subjects offered will increase from five to six in **the 2026 HKDSE and beyond**, adding Urdu (International), which will be administered by the Federal Board of Intermediate & Secondary Education (FBISE) Islamabad, Pakistan. Candidates' results of grade E or above will be included in the HKDSE Category C results.

As announced in June 2022, the Cambridge Assessment International Education Advanced Subsidiary level question papers will no longer be used for Category C (Other Languages) subjects from the 2025 HKDSE onwards, and candidates will be required to take stipulated official language examinations. Five Category C (Other Languages) subjects will be offered in the 2025 HKDSE, namely French, German, Japanese, Korean and Spanish. Candidates' results that meet the stipulated proficiency level will be included in the HKDSE results.

The HKEAA has recently signed an agreement with the FBISE for the inclusion of Urdu (International) as one of the Category C (Other Languages) subjects from the 2026 HKDSE onwards. Same as the examination arrangements for the other five subjects, candidates should enroll in Urdu (International) directly with the FBISE within two years preceding the HKDSE they sit (for example, for the 2026 HKDSE, candidates may take the Other Languages examinations in 2024 and 2025, and should complete the examinations by the end of 2025). They also need to register for the relevant language subject during registration for the HKDSE. Candidates' results meeting the stipulated proficiency level, i.e. grade E or above in the Urdu (International), will be included in the HKDSE Category C results.

The Urdu (International) is provided under the national curriculum of Pakistan, consisting of two papers, Reading & Writing and Essay Writing. The examination will be benchmarked with the Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC), which is the qualifications for students who have completed 11 or 12 grades in Pakistan. Since Urdu (International) is provided as a component of the national curriculum of Pakistan, the certificate issued by the FBISE enjoys recognition in the country. Holders of the aforementioned qualification will duly satisfy the Urdu language prerequisite for admission into higher education institutions in Pakistan, provided they also fulfill the other requirements stipulated by the respective tertiary institutes.

Prof Wei Xiang-dong, the Secretary General of the HKEAA, said, 'The HKEAA is thankful for the Consulate General of Pakistan for their assistance in enabling the examination arrangements concerned. The new examination not only addresses the demand of schools and students concerned, but also caters for the different learning progress and needs of students.'

The new arrangements for Category C (Other Languages) subjects for the 2026 HKDSE and beyond have been approved by the Public Examinations Board and the HKEAA Council. Please refer to the annex for details. For details of the Urdu (International), please visit the FBISE website: https://fbise.edu.pk/hongkong_papers.php

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Date: 12 September 2023

Annex

Category C (Other Languages) Subjects in 2026 HKDSE and Beyond

Subject	French	German	Japanese	Korean	Spanish	Urdu
Exam	(i) Diplôme d'Études de Langue Française (DELF) (ii) Diplôme Approfondi de Langue Française (DALF)	Goethe-Zertifikat	Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (JLPT)	Test of Proficiency in Korean (TOPIK)	Diplomas de Español como Lengua Extranjera (DELE)	Urdu (International)
Exam provider (official organisation)	Alliance Française de Hong Kong (AFHK)	Goethe-Institut Hong Kong	Japan Foundation	National Institute for International Education (NIIED), Korea	Instituto Cervantes (Shanghai)	The Federal Board of Intermediate & Secondary Education (FBISE), Islamabad
Exam administrator	AFHK	Goethe-Institut Hong Kong	Society of Japanese Language Education, Hong Kong (SJLEHK)	NIIED, Korea Implementing agency: Korean International School, HKEAA	University of Wollongong (UOW) College HK Spanish World HK and other DELE exam centres that may open in the future in HK	FBISE, Islamabad
Language proficiency level to be accepted into the HKDSE results	A2 or above	A2 or above	N3 or above	TOPIK II: Grade 3 or above	A2 or above	Grade E or above
Exam component	Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking	Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking	Language Knowledge (Vocabulary / Grammar), Reading, Listening	Reading, Writing, Listening,	Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking	Reading and Writing, Essay Writing
Time of exam*	March/April, November	April to June	July, December	April, July, October	May, November	April-May, September-October
Website	www.afhongkong.org/en/exams/delf-dalf/	www.goethe.de/ins/cn/en/sta/hon/prf.html	www.japanese-edu.org.hk/zh/jlpt/jlpta.html	www.topik-hk.org/chi/index.asp	www.uowchk.edu.hk/study-at-uowchk/find-programmes/international-language-proficiency-tests/diplomas-de-espaol-como-lengua-extranjera-dele/	www.fbise.edu.pk/hongkong_papers.php

* Time of exam will be confirmed each year by the relevant exam provider / administrator

Remark: Urdu (International) will be offered from 2026 HKDSE while the other language exams will be offered from 2025 HKDSE