



PRESS RELEASE

New Arrangements for Category C (Other Languages) Subjects for the 2025 HKDSE and Beyond

The Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) announced today (22 June) that Cambridge Assessment International Education (Cambridge International) Advanced Subsidiary (AS) level question papers will no longer be used for Category C (Other Languages) subjects from the 2025 Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE) onwards. Instead, HKDSE candidates will be required to take stipulated official language examinations. Under the new arrangements, five language subjects will be offered: the existing subjects of French, German, Japanese and Spanish, with the addition of Korean. Candidates' results that meet the stipulated proficiency level will be included in the HKDSE Category C results. The existing Hindi and Urdu examinations will be discontinued from 2025 HKDSE onwards.

Since the first HKDSE in 2012, Cambridge International AS level question papers have been used for Category C (Other Languages) subjects, with the number of candidates ranging from over 200 to around 500 each year. Following a comprehensive review of its examination and assessment services, Cambridge International has decided to cease offering AS level Japanese and Hindi examinations from 2024 onwards. It has also informed the HKEAA that it will not be able to continue to provide candidates' results for Category C (Other Languages) subjects. Consequently, the existing arrangements for Other Language subjects cannot be continued. The last administration of the current Cambridge International AS level examinations for Category C (Other Languages) subjects will be in November 2023, i.e. for the 2024 HKDSE.

After deliberation among relevant stakeholders and considering different alternatives, the HKEAA has decided to adopt official language examinations for HKDSE Category C (Other Languages) subjects for French, German, Japanese, Korean and Spanish. These will be administered by official cultural organisations and will start from the 2025 HKDSE. Candidates will have to enroll directly with the administrators of the stipulated language examinations and opt for the respective Category C subject during HKDSE registration. The respective examination providers will then pass the candidates' results in the stipulated language examinations to the HKEAA. Candidates' results obtained in these examinations at the stipulated proficiency level or above (refer to the Annex) will be included in the HKDSE Category C results.

Candidates may take the language examinations more than once within the two years preceding the HKDSE they sit (for example, for the 2025 HKDSE, candidates may take the language examinations in 2023 and 2024, and should complete the examinations by the end of 2024). Only the highest language proficiency level and result attained by the candidates will be reported for the HKDSE Category C subjects. A separate results notice

and certificate will be issued to each candidate for the Category C subjects. In addition to the overall subject results attained by the candidates, the component results (if applicable) will be reported in the HKDSE results notice and certificate in order to facilitate tertiary institutions' or employers' understanding of the candidates' proficiency and standard in the respective subjects.

Professor Wei Xiang-dong, Secretary General of the HKEAA, said, 'Collaborating with the official cultural organisations of the five countries in providing Category C subject examinations for HKDSE candidates not only gives greater flexibility, it also allows students to take the examinations according to their learning progress, aspiration and interest. Moreover, these language examinations are recognised by the respective countries and are well accepted internationally. Under the new arrangements, candidates who take one examination can obtain two certificates at the same time, namely the language proficiency qualification awarded by the respective official cultural organisation, and the HKDSE certificate. We hope to encourage more candidates to learn other languages and take relevant examinations to enrich their learning experience.'

Professor Wei continued, 'The new arrangements are made possible with the recommendations and liaison support offered by the Consulates General of the five countries in Hong Kong. My gratitude goes to the various cultural organisations for their active cooperation and valuable advice in enabling the relevant arrangements. In view that young people's interest in the Korean language has been increasing, the Korean examination was specially added to meet students' needs. Hindi and Urdu will no longer be offered in Category C examinations from the 2025 HKDSE as no suitable examinations have been identified so far.'

The new arrangements for Category C (Other Languages) subjects were supported by the Education Bureau and the Curriculum Development Council, and have been approved by the HKEAA Council and the Public Examinations Board. A letter was issued to participating schools today and an online briefing will be organised in late July to inform the school community of the detailed arrangements. Please refer to the Annex for details of the stipulated examinations, reporting of results and proficiency level requirements.

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Date : 22 June 2022

Details of Category C (Other Languages) Subjects for the 2025 HKDSE and Beyond

Relevant Information	Japanese	French	Spanish	German	Korean
Stipulated Language Exam	Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (JLPT)	(i) Diplôme d'Études de Langue Française (DELF) (ii) Diplôme Approfondi de Langue Française (DALF)	Diplomas de Español como Lengua Extranjera (DELE)	Goethe-Zertifikat	Test of Proficiency in Korean (TOPIK)
Exam Provider (Official Cultural Organisation) / Exam Administrator	Japan Foundation (Exam administrator: Society of Japanese Language Education, Hong Kong)	Alliance Française de Hong Kong (AFHK)	Instituto Cervantes (Shanghái) (Exam administrator: University of Wollongong College Hong Kong)	Goethe-Institut, Hong Kong	National Institute for International Education (NIIED), Republic of Korea (Exam administrator: Korean International School, Hong Kong)
Issuing Organisation	Japan Foundation	French Ministry of Education	Instituto Cervantes	Goethe-Institut	National Institute for International Education (NIIED), Republic of Korea
Level of Exam and Reporting of Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exams at different proficiency levels are offered: N1, N2, N3, N4, N5 (N1 is the highest; N5 is the lowest) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on Common European Framework of Reference for Languages Exams at different proficiency levels are offered: DELF: A1, A2, B1, B2 DALF: C1, C2 (C2 is the highest; A1 is the lowest) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on Common European Framework of Reference for Languages Exams at different proficiency levels are offered: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2 (C2 is the highest; A1 is the lowest) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on Common European Framework of Reference for Languages Exams at different proficiency levels are offered: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2 (C2 is the highest; A1 is the lowest) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TOPIK I – Grades 1- 2 TOPIK II – Grades 3-6 (Grade 6 is the highest; Grade 1 is the lowest) Results will be reported based on the total scores obtained by candidates. Scores lower than the requirement for Grade 1 (TOPIK I)/ Grade 3 (TOPIK II) will be reported as 'Fail'
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A passing score is set for each proficiency level. For those who pass the exam will be awarded the qualification of the respective proficiency level. 				

Relevant Information	Japanese	French	Spanish	German	Korean
Language Proficiency Level Requirement for University Entry in Respective Country	N2 or above	B2 or above	B2 or above	B2 or above (German programmes) A1-A2 or above (Programmes taught in English)	Grade 3 or above (University entrance for foreign students) Grade 2 or above (Entrance to some vocational institutes for foreign students)
Language Proficiency Level(s) to be Reported under the HKDSE (Learning Hours)	N3 or above (Learning hours : 180-200)	A2 or above (Learning hours : 120-270)	A2 or above (Learning hours : 180-200)	A2 or above (Learning hours : 180-220)	TOPIK II : Grade 3 or above (Learning hours : 180-320)
Exam Paper/ Component	Language Knowledge (Vocabulary, Grammar) Reading, Listening	Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking	Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking	Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking	Reading, Writing, Listening
Exam Schedule	July, December	March/April, November	May, November	April to June	April, July, October
Schedule for Release of Exam Results	July exam: August/September December exam: January/March	March/April exam: April/May November exam: November/December (3 weeks after the exam)	May exam: August November exam: February (about 3 months after the exam)	April to July (14 days after the exam date, depending on candidature)	April exam: May July exam: August October exam: November (about 1 month after the exam)
Relevant Website	www.japanese-edu.org.hk/jp/jlpt/en/news.html	www.afhongkong.org/en/exams/	www.uowchk.edu.hk/study-at-uowchk/find-programmes/international-language-proficiency-tests/diplomas-de-espaol-como-lengua-extranjera-dele/	www.goethe.de/ins/cn/en/sta/hon/prf.html	www.topik-hk.org/eng/index.asp