

29 October 2020

Dear Sir/ Madam,

### **Update on the 2021 Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE)**

Greetings from the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA). I am writing to provide an update on the HKDSE.

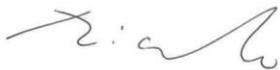
Since the outbreak of COVID-19 in early 2020, the extended class suspension in Hong Kong has severely disrupted normal school operation in the school years 2019/20 and 2020/21. Considering the impact on the learning and teaching for the student cohort sitting the 2021 HKDSE, the HKEAA has introduced a number of **one-off** contingency measures for the 2021 HKDSE, including streamlining of Assessment Frameworks for most of the Category A subjects. Below are some highlights of the changes:

- Except for Mathematics, the [Assessment Frameworks](#) of 23 Category A subjects have been revised, with a view to freeing up learning time and providing more flexibility for teachers and students. In particular, assessment tasks that require face-to-face contacts, need to be completed in school or require intensive individual teacher guidance have been cancelled or streamlined.
- The [School-based Assessment \(SBA\)](#) of nine subjects have been cancelled and five subjects have been streamlined. The written examination requirements of nine subjects, such as the total number of questions to be attempted, the number of compulsory and optional questions, etc. have been revised. The subject weighting of the remaining papers/parts are adjusted accordingly.
- The **speaking examinations** of both Chinese Language and English Language will be cancelled. For **English Language**, the four components, Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking, will continue to be assessed and reported for candidates sitting the 2021 HKDSE. It is worth to note that the speaking ability of candidates is assessed in the SBA of the HKDSE English Language. Please refer to the [2021 English Language School-based Assessment Teachers' Handbook](#) (Chapters 1 and 2 on P. 2-13) for full details of the speaking assessment.
- The written examinations of Category A subjects will be held between 23 April and 17 May next year and the **HKDSE results** are tentatively scheduled for release on **21 July 2021**. The HKEAA will ensure that during grading candidates' standard is maintained across years.

In formulating the contingency measures, we strive to maintain a good balance between catering for this specific cohort of students under the pandemic and maintaining the standards of the HKDSE. We are confident that we will be able to grade our students according to the standards established in previous administrations of the HKDSE.

For enquiries on the one-off contingency measures for the 2021 HKDSE and/or the recognition of the HKDSE qualification, please contact Ms May Chan, International Recognition Officer, at [international@hkeaa.edu.hk](mailto:international@hkeaa.edu.hk)

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ricardo Mak', written in a cursive style.

Ricardo Mak (Prof.)  
Director - Public Examinations  
Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority