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1 September 2020

HONG KONG DIPLOMA OF SECONDARY EDUCATION EXAMINATION 2021 Examination Circular No. (2) 2020/2021

Revised Examination Timetable and Streamlining of Public Examination and School-based Assessment

- 1. This circular is to inform schools of the revised examination schedule and the streamlining of the public examination and School-based Assessment (SBA) for the 2021 Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE), and to seek schools' support and co-operation to ensure the smooth conduct of the examinations.
- 2. Since the outbreak of COVID-19 in late January 2020, the Government has implemented a series of antiepidemic measures to strengthen the protection of public health and well-being of students. As the epidemic
 situation continues and keeps fluctuating, the Education Bureau (EDB) has announced that face-to-face
 teaching activities and other on-campus activities should be suspended when the 2020/21 school year begins.
 The extended class suspension has severely disrupted normal school operation in the school years 2019/20
 and 2020/21, thus adversely affected the learning and teaching for the cohort of students sitting the 2021
 HKDSE. In this connection, the HKEAA and EDB have explored one-off contingency measures on the 2021
 HKDSE to provide more flexibility for this specific cohort of students. The proposed measures were
 considered and approved by the Public Examinations Board in its meeting on 31 August 2020.

Revised Examination Timetable

- 3. To allow current S6 students to have more time for learning and studying in the coming school year, the start of the written examinations of the 2021 HKDSE Category A subjects will be postponed until 23 April 2021 and the speaking examinations of both Chinese Language and English Language will not take place. The PE/Music practical examinations will be streamlined and tentatively scheduled for mid-February to mid-April 2021. Due to the rescheduling of written examinations, the release of the 2021 HKDSE results will tentatively be deferred to 21 July 2021.
- 4. The 2021 revised examination timetable has been slightly compressed and shortened to 20 examination days lasting three and a half weeks to cope with epidemic situation:
 - (a) The four core subject examinations are scheduled from 26 April to 30 April and 3 May 2021. Candidates will sit for Liberal Studies, English Language and Chinese Language examinations on five consecutive days while Mathematics (Compulsory Part) will be examined on the following Monday.
 - (b) Two or more subjects will be scheduled on the same day (morning or afternoon) if there is no overlap of candidates. The examination dates of Design and Applied Technology, Technology and Living, Physical Education and Music will be finalised after the normal closing date of registration, around early November 2020.
 - (c) Some small-entry subjects are scheduled in the afternoon, meaning that a small number of candidates may have to sit two elective subject examinations on the same day.
 - (d) In drawing up the compressed examination timetable, consideration has been given to the 2020 subject combination statistics with a view to minimising the number of candidates who have to sit examinations (other than core subjects) for two to three consecutive days as well as more than one elective subjects on the same day. The Authority would fine-tune the examination timetable once the entry data are available.
 - (e) In case no examination is scheduled for 18 May 2021, it will be used as a reserve examination date. In addition, 20 May will be reserved for contingency purposes.

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- 5. The 2021 revised examination timetable at *Annex 1* has been uploaded on the HKEAA website (http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/DocLibrary/HKDSE/Exam_Timetable/2021_DSE_Timetable.pdf). This supersedes the original examination timetable promulgated to schools and the public vide Examination Circular No. (7) 2019/2020 on 22 May 2020.
- 6. According to the latest advice of Cambridge Assessment International Education, the speaking and written examination sessions of HKDSE Category C subjects will be held in October 2020 according to the published schedule. Schools and candidates will be updated of any change in the examination schedule in case of unforeseeable situations.
- 7. In the event of epidemic situation that necessitates further postponement of the 2021 written examinations, the examination pattern and principles stated in paragraph 4 above would still be followed, as far as practicable. To meet the expectations of major stakeholders, the written examinations would start on 3 June 2021 in order that the HKDSE examination results are available latest by 31 August 2021.
- 8. To ensure the smooth conduct of the 2021 HKDSE, the cooperation and collaborative support from all participating schools is indispensable. The accommodation requirements for the 2021 Examination will be sent to schools in early October 2020.

Changes in Assessment Frameworks resulting from Streamlining of the 2021 Public Examination and School-based Assessment

- 9. The Assessment Frameworks of respective Category A subjects have been changed as a result of the implementation of one-off contingency measures to streamline the public examination and SBA for the 2021 HKDSE. The main changes are summarised as follows:
 - (a) Cancellation of speaking examinations of Chinese Language and English Language
 - (b) Cancellation of SBA of 9 Category A subjects and streamlining of the remaining 5 subjects
 - (c) Streamlining of the practical examinations of Physical Education and Music
 - (d) Streamlining of the requirements of the written examinations of 9 Category A subjects including reducing the number of questions to be attempted and/or turning some compulsory questions optional
 - (e) As a result of the changes in (a) to (d) above, the weighting of the remaining papers will be adjusted according to the assessment structure of the subjects concerned
- 10. According to the changes in the public examinations of some subjects/papers, the examination time of the following subjects/papers have been adjusted:

Subject/Paper	Original examination time	Revised examination time
Geography Paper 1	2 hours 45 minutes	2 hours 30 minutes
History Paper 1	2 hours	1 hour 45 minutes
Tourism and Hospitality Studies	1 hour 45 minutes	1 hour 15 minutes
Paper 2		
Design and Applied Technology	2 hours	1 hour 15 minutes
Paper 2		

In addition, the Assessment Schemes of some Category B Applied Learning subjects may also be slightly modified where necessary.

11. The revised Assessment Frameworks for the 2021 HKDSE are available for viewing on the HKEAA website (http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/assessment/assessment_framework/). Highlights of the changes in the Assessment Frameworks of the Category A subjects concerned are provided in *Annex 2*.

Action Required

- 12. Principals are requested to draw the attention of their teachers and students concerned to the revised 2021 HKDSE examination timetable and revised Assessment Frameworks/Schemes of the Categories A and B subjects concerned as appropriate.
- 13. For enquiries, please contact Ms Gladys Cheng (Tel: 3628 8950) for examination timetable and Mr Dickson Pang (Tel: 3628 8070) for Assessment Frameworks.

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2021年香港中學文憑考試時間表(2020年9月1日修訂版) Examination Timetable for 2021 HKDSE (Revised on 1 September 2020)

Examination Timetable for 2021 FRDSE (Revised on 1 September 2020)			
日期及時間 Date & Time		應考科目 Subjects to be examined	
四月二十三日(星期五) Apr. 23 Fri	AM PM	Visual Arts 1,2 Physical Education 1,2 (Note 2) / Music 1A & 1B (Note 2) / Technology & Living 1,2 (Note 2) / Design & Applied Technology 1,2 (Note 2)	視覺藝術 (一)及(二) 體育(一)及(二)(註 2)/音樂 1A及 1B (註 2)/科技與生活(一)及(二)(註 2)/ 設計與應用科技(一)及(二)(註 2)
四月二十四日(星期六) Apr. 24 Sat	AM PM	Chemistry 1,2 / Combined Science (Chemistry)	化學(一)及(二)/組合科學(化學)
四月二十六日(星期一) Apr. 26 Mon	AM PM	Liberal Studies 1,2	通識教育 (一) 及 (二)
四月二十七日(星期二) Apr. 27 Tue	AM PM	English Language 1,2	英國語文(一)及(二)
四月二十八日(星期三) Apr. 28 Wed	AM PM	English Language 3 (Listening and Integrated Skills)	英國語文(三)(聆聽及綜合能力考核)
四月二十九日(星期四) Apr. 29 Thu	AM PM	Chinese Language 1,2	中國語文 (一) 及 (二)
四月三十日(星期五) Apr. 30 Fri	AM PM	Chinese Language 3 (Listening and Integrated Skills)	中國語文(三)(聆聽及綜合能力考核)
五月三日(星期一) May 3 Mon	AM PM	Mathematics Compulsory Part 1,2	數學 必修部分(一)及(二)
五月四日(星期二) May 4 Tue	AM	Literature in English 1 / Design & Applied Technology 1,2 (Note 2)	英語文學 (一)/設計與應用科技 (一)及 (二)(註 2)
五月五日(星期三) May 5 Wed	AM DM	Literature in English 2 Integrated Science 1,2 / Physics 1,2 / Combined Science (Physics)	英語文學 (二) 綜合科學 (一)及(二) / 物理 (一)及 (二) /組合科學 (物理)
五月六日(星期四) May 6 Thu	PM AM PM	History 1,2 Health Management & Social Care 1,2	歴史 (一)及(二) 健康管理與社會關懷 (一)及(二)
五月七日(星期五) May 7 Fri	AM PM	Information & Communication Technology 1,2	資訊及通訊科技(一)及(二)
五月八日(星期六) May 8 Sat	AM PM	Geography 1,2	地理(一)及(二)
五月十日(星期一) May 10 Mon	AM PM	Biology 1,2 / Combined Science (Biology)	生物(一)及(二)/組合科學(生物)
五月十一日(星期二) May 11 Tue	AM PM	Chinese Literature 1,2 / Technology & Living 1,2 (Note 2) / Design & Applied Technology 1,2 (Note 2)	中國文學 (一)及(二)/科技與生活 (一)及(二)(註 2)/設計與應用科技 (一)及(二)(註 2)
五月十二日(星期三) May 12 Wed	AM PM	Business, Accounting & Financial Studies 1,2	企業、會計與財務概論(一)及(二)
五月十三日(星期四) May 13 Thu	AM PM	Chinese History 1,2	中國歷史 (一)及(二)
五月十四日(星期五) May 14 Fri	AM PM	Tourism & Hospitality Studies 1,2	旅遊與款待(一)及(二)
五月十五日(星期六) May 15 Sat	AM PM	Economics 1,2	經濟(一)及(二)
五月十七日(星期一) May 17 Mon	AM PM	Mathematics Extended Part Modules 1,2 Ethics & Religious Studies 1,2 / Music 1A & 1B (Note 2)	數學 延伸部分 單元 (一)及(二) 倫理與宗教(一)及(二)/音樂 1A及 1B (註 2)
五月十八日(星期二) May 18 Tue	AM	Physical Education 1,2 (Note 2) / Music 1A & 1B (Note 2) / Technology & Living 1,2 (Note 2) / Reserve	體育 (一)及(二)(註 2)/音樂 1A及 1B(註 2)/科技與生活(一)及(二)(註 2)/後備
五月二十日(星期四) May 20 Thu	AM PM	Reserve	後備

(1) 2021 年 5 月 1 日(勞動節), 2021 年 5 月 19 日(佛誕) 1 May 2021 (Labour Day), 19 May 2021 (Buddha's Birthday) (2) 設計與應用科技、音樂、體育及科技與生活科的考試日期,將會在 2020 年 11 月,即一般報考日期完結後落實,倘沒有重覆的考生報考,兩個或以上科目將會安排於同日(上午或下午)進行考試。

The examination dates for Design & Applied Technology, Music, Physical Education and Technology & Living will be finalised around early November 2020 after the normal closing date of registration and two or more subjects will be scheduled on the same day (morning or afternoon) if there is no overlap of candidates.

實習考試日期 Examination Period for Practical Examinations

體育(實習考試) : 2021年2月下旬至3月中旬
Physical Education – Practical : late February – mid-March 2021 音樂(實習考試) : 2021年2月下旬至4月中旬
Music – Practical : late February – mid-April 2021

放榜日期(暫定) Date of Release of Results (tentative)

2021年7月21日 21 July 2021

<u>Highlights of the changes in the Assessment Frameworks of Category A subjects:</u>

Subject	Assessment Framework	Details of Streamlining Arrangements for 2021 HKDSE Examination
Chinese Language	卷一	卷一閱讀理解甲部指定閱讀篇章:收窄範圍,由 12 篇改為 10 篇。刪減篇目:
	24% 32%	《岳陽樓記》(去年佔7分); 《六國論》(去年佔5分)
	卷二	沒有改動
	24%-32%	
	卷三	沒有改動
	18%- 26%	
	卷四	取消
	14%	估分比重按比例分配至卷一至三
	校本評核	取消選修部分,保留必修部分:閱讀活動,呈交 1 個分數,佔 10%。
	20% - 10%	其餘佔分比重(10%)按比例分配至卷一至三
English Language	Paper 1 20% 23%	No change
	Paper 2 25% 28%	No change
	Paper3 30% 34%	No change
	Paper 4	Cancelled
	10%	Percentage weighting re-allocated to Papers 1, 2 and 3.
	SBA 15%	1 task (speaking).
Mathematics (Compulsory Part)	Paper 1 65%	No change
	Paper 2 35%	No change
Mathematics (Extended Part)	Paper 100%	No change

Subject	Assessment Framework	Details of Streamlining Arrangements for 2021 HKDSE Examination
Liberal Studies	Paper 1 50% 56%	No change
	Paper 2 30% 34%	No change
	SBA 20%-10%	Streamlined. Candidates are only required to complete Parts A and B of the IES while Parts C and D will be cancelled. The weighting of the SBA will be adjusted to 10%. This covers Problem Definition and Identification of Concepts/Knowledge, Presentation and Organisation, and Initiative. The remaining percentage weighting (10%) re-allocated to Papers 1 and 2.
Chinese Literature	卷一 25% 34%	沒有改動
	卷二 60%-66 %	沒有改動
	校本評核 15%	取消 佔分比重按比例分配至卷一和卷二
Literature in English	Paper 1 50% 62%	No change
	Paper 2 30% 38%	No change
	SBA 20%	Cancelled Percentage weighting re-allocated to Papers 1 and 2.
Chinese History	卷一	第一部分必答題分拆為兩題,考生只需選答一題
	70%	第二部分原分甲部及乙部,各設三題,考生須各選一題,共答兩題; <mark>建議考生可從六題中自由選答兩題,不受從甲部及乙部各選答</mark> 一題的限制。考試時間維持不變。
	卷二 30%	沒有改動(三題中自由選答兩題)

Subject	Assessment Framework	Details of Streamlining Arrangements for 2021 HKDSE Examination
Economics	Paper 1 30%	No change (Multiple Choice Questions)
	Paper 2 Section A 26% 30%	No change (Short questions on Compulsory Part)
	Paper 2 Section B 35% 40%	No change (Structured/essay-type/data response questions on Compulsory Part)
	Paper 2 Section C 9%	Cancelled (Structured questions on Elective Part) Percentage weighting re-allocated to Sections A and B in Paper 2. Examination time of the paper remains unchanged.
Ethics and Religious Studies	Paper 1 50%	Part A: Turn the compulsory questions into optional questions. Candidates are required to answer 3 out of 4 questions. Part B: No change Examination time of the paper remains unchanged.
	Paper 2 50%	No change
Geography	Paper 1 75%	 Instead of answering one compulsory fieldwork-based question (FBQ) in Section B and 2 (out of 4) data-based questions (DBQs) in Section C, candidates will be allowed to choose any 2 questions (out of 5) by combining both Section B & Section C. The total number of FBQ & DBQs to be answered is reduced from 3 to 2 (out of 5), and the examination time is reduced by 15 minutes (from 2¾ hours to 2½ hours); AND Trim the coverage of the fieldwork-based question from 3 designated modules to 1 module only (Combating Famine) for 2021 HKDSE. No change in the parts of MC questions (Section A) and short essay questions (Section D).
	Paper 2 25%	No change

Subject	Assessment Framework	Details of Streamlining Arrangements for 2021 HKDSE Examination
History	Paper 1 60%	Turn all 4 data-based questions (DBQs) in Paper 1 optional, and candidates can choose 3 out of 4 DBQs. Examination time is reduced from 2 hours to 1 hour 45 min.
	Paper 2 40%	No change
Tourism and Hospitality Studies	Paper 1 45%	No change
	Paper 2 55%	Trim Paper 2: Essay Questions Instead of answering 3 out of 5 questions, candidates can choose to answer 2 out of 5 questions. Examination time is reduced from 1 hour 45 mins to 1 hour 15 mins.
Biology	Paper 1 60% 75%	No change
	Paper 2 20% 25%	No change
	SBA 20%	Cancelled Percentage weighting re-allocated to Papers 1 and 2.
Chemistry	Paper 1 60% 75%	No change
	Paper 2 20% 25%	No change
	SBA 20%	Cancelled Percentage weighting re-allocated to Papers 1 and 2.

Subject	Assessment Framework	Details of Streamlining Arrangements for 2021 HKDSE Examination
Physics	Paper 1 60% 75%	No change
	Paper 2 20% 25%	No change
	SBA 20%	Cancelled Percentage weighting re-allocated to Papers 1 and 2.
Combined Science: Biology Part	Paper 4 0% 50%	No change
	SBA 10%	Cancelled Percentage weighting re-allocated to Paper.
Chemistry Part	Paper 4 0% 50%	No change
	SBA 10%	Cancelled Percentage weighting re-allocated to Paper.
Physics Part	Paper 40% 50%	No change
	SBA 10%	Cancelled Percentage weighting re-allocated to Paper.
Integrated Science	Paper 1 45% 56%	No change
	Paper 2 Section A 15% 19%	No change
	Paper 2 Section B 20% 25%	No change
	SBA 20%	Cancelled Percentage weighting re-allocated to Papers 1 and 2.

Subject	Assessment Framework	Details of Streamlining Arrangements for 2021 HKDSE Examination
Business, Accounting and Financial Studies	Paper 1 40%	No change
	Paper 2 60%	To maintain the assessment standard without affecting the paper structure, it is suggested turning questions of Section B in Paper 2 optional without changing the weighting of each section in the paper: Paper 2A (Accounting module) Section B (36 marks) for application problems – turning 3 compulsory application problems optional, i.e. choose to answer 2 out of 3 questions and each question still carries 12 marks. Paper 2B (Business Management module) Section B (36 marks) for case studies – turning 2 compulsory case studies optional, i.e. choose to answer 1 out of 2 questions and each question still carries 18 marks. Remarks No change on the time allowed for Papers 2A and 2B.
Design and Applied Technology	Paper 1 30% 40%	No change
	Paper 2 30% 40%	Candidates are to choose 2 elective modules among 5 electives in the existing arrangement. Candidates are required to answer only one elective. Candidates still have to answer two questions among three in one of the chosen modules. Examination time is reduced from 2 hours to 1 hour 15 min.
	SBA 40% 20%	To retain the SBA with a reduction of subject weighting from 40% to 20%. Candidates are only required to submit the first half part (Sections 1 to 4 – Design ideas development) of the SBA (20%). The remaining percentage weighting (20%) re-allocated to Papers 1 and 2.
Health Management & Social Care	Paper 1 46% 57%	No change
	Paper 2 34% 43%	No change
	SBA 20%	Cancelled Percentage weighting re-allocated to Papers 1 and 2.

Subject	Assessment Framework	Details of Streamlining Arrangements for 2021 HKDSE Examination
Information & Communication Technology	Paper 1 55% 70%	No change
	Paper 2 25% 30%	Candidates can choose to answer 3 out of the 4 questions in the examination papers for the Elective Part, i.e. 2A, 2B, 2C and 2D. Examination time of the paper remains unchanged.
	SBA 20%	Cancelled Percentage weighting re-allocated to Papers 1 and 2.
Technology & Living	Paper 1 30% 43%	No change
	Paper 2 4 0% 57%	No change
	SBA 30%	Cancelled Percentage weighting re-allocated to Papers 1 and 2.
Music	Paper 1 40% 50%	No change
	Paper 2 20%	Cancelled Percentage weighting re-allocated to Papers 1, 3, 4A/4B/4C.
	Paper 3 20% 25%	For Paper 3 (Creating I), trim the total duration of the composition works from 6-15 minutes to 4-12 minutes.
	Paper 4A, Paper 4B, Paper 4C (choose 1 Paper) 20% 25%	No change
Visual Arts	Paper 1 / 2 50%	No change
	SBA 50%	1 research workbook + 2 pieces of artworks/critical studies

Subject	Assessment Framework	Details of Streamlining Arrangements for 2021 HKDSE Examination
Physical Education	Paper 1 42%	No change
	Paper 2 18%	No change
	Paper 3 40%	 Trim Paper 3 Physical Activity (20%) - Merge Physical Activity 1 (PA1) with Physical Activity 2 (PA2) Candidates to choose 1 activity from either PA1 or PA2 For the activity to be chosen from PA1 - Assess only on basic skills (Cancel game assessment) For the activity to be chosen from PA2 - Assess only on 1 event instead of 2 events Physical fitness (20%) - Assess only on sit-ups, sit-and-reach and pull-ups/flexed arm hang (Cancel 1609m run) Note: PA1 includes 6 options to be chosen from: Badminton/Basketball/Football/Volleyball/Table Tennis/Handball. PA2 includes 3 options to be chosen from: Athletics/Swimming/Gymnastics. In the original assessment plan, candidates will be assessed on their performance in both basic skills demonstration and games in PA1, and also their performance in two events in PA2. If any of the PA examinations have to be cancelled due to the pandemic or venues reasons, the results of these examinations will be projected by proportional adjustment using the results obtained in the physical fitness part of the practical examination. If all the PA examinations have to be cancelled due to the pandemic or venue reasons, the 20% for Physical Activity will be allocated to the written examination where the weighting will be adjusted from 60% to 80%.

Streamlining Arrangement for Applied Learning subjects:

Subject	Assessment Framework	Details of Streamlining Arrangements for 2021 HKDSE Examination
Applied Learning	6 to 10 Assessment Tasks (ATs) conducted by respective ApL course providers (CPs)	Some ATs have already been completed. For the remaining ATs: if feasible, to be conducted with modification (e.g. mode, scope) ATs (especially practical ATs) that cannot be feasibly conducted or modified are to be exempted [CDI-HKEAA-CPs to propose on ATs to be modified and/or cancelled] [HKEAA-CPs to propose mark re-allocation]