

From Strength to Strength – Progress of Hong Kong Senior Secondary Education and the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination 2014

Welcome to another cohort of graduates under the New Academic Structure

With the implementation of the New Academic Structure (NAS), there have already been two cohorts of New Senior Secondary (NSS) graduates embarking on another phase of their life journey since 2012. This year, over 70,000 candidates have taken part in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) Examination, and their results will be released on 14 July 2014. Students taking higher diploma or associate degree programmes under the NAS will be graduating too. Overseas institutions will be receiving more and more applicants who are holders of the HKDSE qualification for degree or top-up degree programmes.

Wide recognition of HKDSE facilitating student articulation to multiple pathways worldwide

We are glad to share with you that the HKDSE qualification has gained wide recognition internationally. Up-to-date, more than 170 tertiary institutions worldwide, including those in the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, as well as European and Asian countries, have indicated their acceptance of the HKDSE qualification for admission purpose on the website of the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/recognition/hkdse_recognition/ircountry_hkdse.html). Amongst those, many have been admitting Hong Kong students to their programmes. This has opened up smoother multiple pathways with more progression opportunities for students to realise their aspirations in the globalised world.

Update on the positive impact of NSS education on students' further studies

The recent feedback collected has continued to show the positive impact of NSS learning experience on further studies. The "Survey on the Experience of the Second Cohort of NSS Graduates (2013): Impact of NSS Education on their First-year Experience of Further Studies in Hong Kong"¹ reflects that students have benefited from the NSS curriculum. For example, a majority of them agree that English Language, Mathematics and Liberal Studies have respectively strengthened their competence in reading and writing, developed their ability to use mathematics to solve problems, and enhanced their social awareness, multi-perspective and critical thinking ability; they also acknowledge the impact of Other Learning Experiences (OLE) on the development of their collaboration and communication skills, as well as School-based Assessment (SBA) on their organising information skills and analytical skills. Their feedback also suggests that the Seven Learning Goals of the NSS curriculum framework continue to be achieved by students.

Latest progress on the medium-term review and curriculum renewal

To optimise the implementation of the NSS curriculum and assessment, the NAS review has been conducted for the betterment of student learning. Since the launch of the NAS medium-term review in October 2013, we have been conducting a multi-level consultation through various channels to collect feedback from stakeholders, including school principals, teachers, tertiary institutions, parents, students and employers, on further fine-tuning the NSS curriculum. In parallel, professional discussion has been ongoing in relevant committees under the Curriculum Development Council and the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority, and up to May 2014,

¹ "Survey on the Experience of the Second Cohort of NSS Graduates (2013): Impact of NSS Education on their First-year Experience of Further Studies in Hong Kong". Number of respondents: 5,640 (from 8 publicly-funded and 23 self-financing institutions)

fine-tuning measures on 4 subjects have been endorsed for implementation in schools starting from the 2014/15 school year. Further fine-tuning measures on systemic issues as well as on other subjects are expected to be announced by July 2015.

As part of the curriculum renewal process, we have just launched the revised Basic Education Curriculum Guide 2014 for Learning to Learn 2.0 to strengthen the foundation in primary schools necessary for NSS to continue to excel.

Sustaining communication with overseas stakeholders

In enhancing communication with overseas stakeholders, we have paid visits to different countries to update them of the latest development of the NAS and promote Hong Kong as a regional education hub. In May 2014, the Secretary for Education visited European Union (EU) countries to strengthen Hong Kong's education ties with EU member states and learn more about the latest developments and good practices in the EU system, including the Bologna Process and the Erasmus+ Programme. It is encouraging to see that EU member states and Hong Kong are moving towards a similar vision of promoting internationalisation, student mobility and employability. For example, to nurture diversified talents to spur Hong Kong's development, the 2014 Policy Address announced the introduction of a new scholarship scheme to support outstanding students to study in renowned non-local universities and the provision of financial assistance to support students to participate in exchange programmes outside Hong Kong. Besides, the Policy Address also announced the setting up of a Task Force on Vocational Education to map out a strategy to promote vocational education.

Stay tuned with us

As our strategic partners, we are sure you are as excited as us to learn about the latest development of the NAS and the results of the HKDSE Examination this year. We will continue to maintain close communication with you. Stay tuned, and we will certainly keep you posted of the latest update!

Education Bureau

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region