

## NSS Curriculum Planning and Timetabling Arrangement

New Senior Secondary Section  
Curriculum Development Institute  
Education Bureau  
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## Elective Subject Combinations — *students' choices*

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## A Story

- A newly-established school in 1996
  - offered five S1 and five S4 classes
  - condition of the S4 students: .....
- Principal: "*Can we cater for students' interest in S4 elective subject combinations?*"
  - Consideration: "pastoral care"
- Teachers' expertise
  - Econ, Commerce, P.A., T&T
  - Chi. Lit., Chi. Hist., Geog
  - Phy, Chem, Bio, A.Math., C.S., H.Bio.

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## Workflow

- Collected students' inclination (選科意向調查)
  - showed their preference in order (from 1 to 13)
  - generated 35 combinations (after "moderation")
- Students showed preference from the 35 combinations
  - 23 combinations: fulfill a 92% success rate
- Arranged the 4 elective time slots
  - adopted "5-class-7-group" model
  - allocation of students
- Assigned students in five classes
  - students with "similar combinations"

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## Example: 4A Class Timetable

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
8:00 – 8:20	Home Room Period				
8:20 – 9:10	Chi	Eng	Eng	Elec 1	Elec 3
9:10 – 10:00	Chi	Elec 3	Eng	Elec 1	Elec 3
10:00 – 10:30	Recess				
10:30 – 11:20	Elec 1	Elec 4	Elec 2	Math	Math
11:20 – 12:10	Math	Elec 4	Elec 2	Eng	Chi
12:10 – 1:10	Lunch				
1:10 – 2:00	Elec 2	Chi	Elec 3	Elec 4	Elec 2
2:00 – 2:50	Eng	Math	PSHE	P.E.	Eng
2:50 – 3:40	Elec 4	Elec 1	PSHE	P.E.	Eng

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## Example: 4A Student Timetable

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
8:00 – 8:20	Home Room Period				
8:20 – 9:10	Chi	Eng	Eng		
9:10 – 10:00	Chi		Eng		
10:00 – 10:30	Recess				
10:30 – 11:20				Math	Math
11:20 – 12:10	Math			Eng	Chi
12:10 – 1:10	Lunch				
1:10 – 2:00		Chi			
2:00 – 2:50	Eng	Math	PSHE	P.E.	Eng
2:50 – 3:40			PSHE	P.E.	Eng

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## Example: 4A Student Elective List

Name	Class No.	Elective Subject 1	Elective Subject 2	Elective Subject 3	Elective Subject 4
Chan One	1	Chi. Lit.	Geog	Chi. Hist.	H. Bio.
Chan Two	2	Chi. Lit.	Geog	Econ	H. Bio.
Chan Three	3	Chi. Lit.	Geog	T&T	H. Bio.
Chan Four	4	Chi. Lit.	Geog	T&T	H. Bio.
Chan Five	5	Chi. Lit.	Geog	Chi. Hist.	T&T
Chan Six	6	Chi. Lit.	Geog	Econ	T&T
Chan Seven	7	Chi. Hist.	Geog	Econ	Comm
Chan Eight	8	Chi. Hist.	Geog	Chi. Hist.	H. Bio.
Chan Nine	9	Geog	Econ	T&T	H. Bio.
⋮					
⋮					

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## Advantage

- Employed idea of universities
  - blurred the boundary between Arts and Science
- Students' preferences were highly respected
  - students' feeling: good
- No excuse
  - could not say that they were forced to study certain subjects
- "Small class" teaching
  - more interactive and diversified pedagogy

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## Problems to be faced/tackled

- Difficulties in human resources management
  - required additional manpower, "late decision"
- More constraints on timetable
  - too many "blocks" → unsatisfactory timetable
- Weaken class cohesion
  - too many "types" of students (study different subject combinations)
  - major difference between university / secondary school life
- "Inter-lesson ripples"
  - "lesson changing time"
  - discipline & guidance
- "Complaints" from elective subject teachers
  - taking attendance
  - elective seating plan
  - follow up: unsatisfactory assignment
  - supplementary lessons

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## Reflection

- Why?
  - cater for "losers"
- First choice:
  - also important to bright students?

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## Back to NSS

- reduce no. of elective
  - 2 to 3 elective subjects → simpler
- Supporting Measures to deal with technical problems
  - Student Option Program (SOP)
    - collecting students' preference
    - arranging the elective subject-classes in the time blocks with a view to maximize students' satisfaction rate
    - allocating elective subjects to students according to schools' selected algorithm
    - providing support for schools to cater for students' change requests
  - SOP is **not** a timetabling program
    - Pre-timetabling

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## Some features of SOP

- highest satisfaction rate
- flexible priority for “unsuccessful cases”, e.g.
  - according to S3 academic result
  - random
  - fulfill “first choice” of one elective
- number of “blocks”
  - 2X, 3X, 2 or 3X, 2+1X, 1+2X

e.g.

	4A	4B	4C	4D
Elective 1	Econ	BAFS	Bio	Chem
Elective 2	VA / Geog / Phy / Econ / Hist			
Elective 3	BAFS / Bio / C Hist / C Lit / CS_PC			

- number of groups in each block

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## Supporting Measures for SOP

- SOP trial version has been uploaded onto 334 Web Bulletin
  - <http://sop.edb.hkedcity.net/>
- SOP Manual & DVD were distributed to schools in October 2008
- 37 Training Workshops on SOP were scheduled from Oct to Dec 2008
- Upgrading of the WebSAMS – Nov/Dec 2008 (EDB CM No. 54/2008)

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## Reminder

- Students' interest
- Conditions and Constraints
- Suitability
  - e.g. Applied Learning Courses

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## Timetabling Arrangement

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## Different “Types”

- Cycle / Week ?
- Multi-term-multi-timetable?
  - Two-term-one-timetable
  - Two-term-two-timetable
  - Four-term-four-timetable
- Period Length
  - 35 min, 40 min, 45 min, 50 min, 60 min, 65 min
  - combination of short and long periods
- may refer to the paper
  - [Variations of Timetabling – from past experience to preparation for New Senior Secondary Curriculum](#)

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## “New” Issues

- OLE
  - will be clarified in the subsequent session
- Elective / Extended Modules of Language Subjects
  - Chi, Eng, Math
- LS (with IES)
- “Blocks” for core subjects
- ApL
- SBA
- Double cohort (use of spaces)

Sch year	Current SS	NSS
2009/10	S5, S6, S7	S4
2010/11	S6, S7	S4, S5
2011/12	S7	S4, S5, S6

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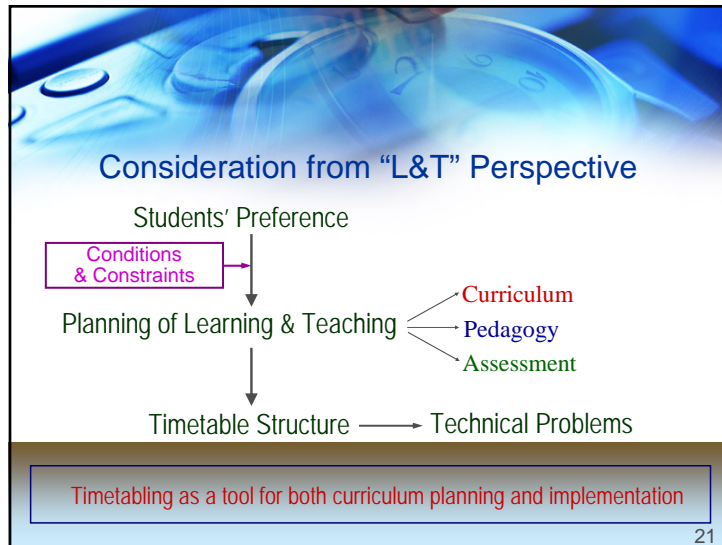
## Concluding Remarks

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## Consideration from “Needs”

- Designer, producer, user: *first person*
  - Problem solving perspective + student-focused
- “Buffet” Elective Subject Combination
  - Cater for “losers”
- Multi-term-multi-timetable System
  - Preserve Weekly System
  - Reasons behind (school visit, staff dev....)
- Long Period
  - Pedagogical change

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- ### Consideration from “Nurturing” Perspective
- For school principals:
    - An element of Leadership: *Nurturing*
      - Provide opportunities (teacher empowerment towards distributed leadership)
  - For middle managers:
    - Instrumental (task completion) vs. **problem solving**
    - **technician** vs. **engineer**
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- ### Final Remarks
- *School administration should support teaching and learning (in a broad sense).*
  - *After changing the timetable structure, we should remember our original purpose (so that curriculum, pedagogical and assessment changes should occur)*  
*An empty beautiful vase is useless.*
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