# English Language

## Introduction

1.      The English Language Education curriculum comprises two closely related subjects: English Language and Literature in English.   English Language is the core subject for students from primary to senior secondary level (i.e. P1 – SS3), and Literature in English is an elective subject for students at senior secondary level (i.e. SS1 – SS3).   In the proposed new senior secondary curriculum, English Language will continue to be a core subject.   The other core subjects include Chinese Language, Mathematics and Liberal Studies.

2.      As suggested in the following diagram, the design of the Senior Secondary English Language curriculum is built on the existing S4-5 English Language curriculum and Sixth Form Use of English.   It also follows the general direction for development of the English Language Education curriculum set out in the *English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (P1 – S3) (2002)*.   English Language at senior secondary level extends the prior knowledge, skills and positive values and attitudes that students develop through the English Language curriculum for Basic Education from Primary 1 to Secondary 3.
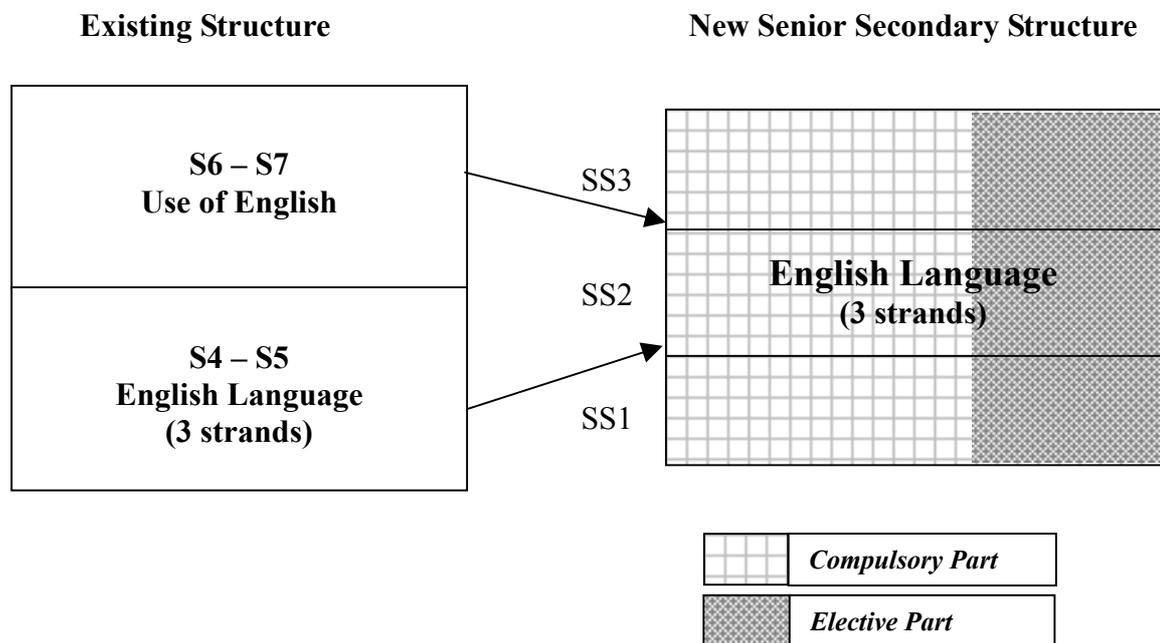
**Existing Structure**                                **New Senior Secondary Structure**

| S6 – S7<br>**Use of English** |
| --- |
| S4 – S5<br>**English Language**<br>**(3 strands)** |

SS3

SS2

**English Language**
**(3 strands)**

SS1

| | *Compulsory Part* |
| --- | --- |
| | *Elective Part* |

*Diagram showing the structure of the existing*
*and the proposed new senior secondary curriculum*

## Rationale

3.    The rationale for studying English Language as a core subject at senior secondary level is as follows:

✧    English is the language of global communication.   It is not only a powerful learning tool, a medium by which people gain access to knowledge from around the world, but also a medium through which they develop positive values and attitudes, establish and maintain meaningful relationships with people, increase their cultural understanding and expand their knowledge and world-views.

✧    English is the language of international business, trade and professional communication.   Traditionally much emphasis has been placed on English language learning in school.   Such a tradition must be continued, since proficiency in English is essential for helping Hong Kong maintain its current status and further strengthen its competitiveness as a leading finance, banking and business centre in the world.

✧    English plays a crucial role in empowering learners with the capabilities necessary for lifelong learning, critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, innovation and for adapting to the rapid changes and demands of society.

✧    English opens up the world of leisure and entertainment for learners.

4.    The mastery of English, therefore, is vital to learners in Hong Kong as it opens up new possibilities in intellectual and social development, educational attainment, career advancement, personal fulfillment, and cultural understanding.

## Curriculum Aims

5.    The aims of the English Language curriculum at senior secondary level are to enable learners to:

✧    broaden and deepen the language competencies they have developed through Basic Education (Primary 1 – Secondary 3), so that they are able to use English with increasing proficiency for personal and intellectual development, effective social interaction, further study, vocational training, work and pleasure;

✧    further develop their interest and confidence in using English as their understanding and mastery of the English language grows;

✧    further broaden their knowledge, understanding and experience of various cultures in which English is used;

✧    develop and prepare themselves for further study, vocational training or work; and

✧    further develop learning how to learn skills, and positive values and attitudes

conducive to meeting the needs of our rapidly changing knowledge-based society. These include the interpretation, use and production of texts for pleasure, study and work in the English medium.

## Curriculum Framework

*(This part should be read in conjunction with the section "Curriculum Framework" of the Main Document. It should be noted that the curriculum framework suggested below is for initial consultation only. Feedback from the public will be taken into account and further details will be provided in the next stage of consultation.)*

6.	As a core subject, English Language constitutes 12.5% (approximately 319 hours) of the total lesson time of the senior secondary curriculum. The English Language curriculum, as presented in the diagram on p.17, consists of a Compulsory Part and an Elective Part throughout the 3 years of senior secondary education. The following is a suggested time allocation for the Compulsory and Elective Parts of the English Language curriculum:

|  | **Percentage of lesson time** (Approx. number of hours) |
| --- | --- |
| Compulsory Part | 70% (223 hours) |
| Elective Part | 30% (96 hours) |

7.	Both the Compulsory and Elective Parts include the learning of English Language in 3 Strands, which define the major targets or purposes of learning English, i.e.

✧	the Interpersonal Strand (for interpersonal communication);

✧	the Knowledge Strand (for developing and applying knowledge); and

✧	the Experience Strand (for responding and giving expression to real and imaginative experience).

8.	The Compulsory Part comprises learning objectives or focuses which embody the essential content of learning for English Language. They include:

✧	forms and functions (vocabulary, text types, grammar items and structures, and communicative functions);

✧	the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing;

✧	language development strategies;

✧	generic skills; and

✧	positive values and attitudes.

9. The Elective Part provides a range of modules which reinforce different aspects of English language learning at senior secondary level. Each module will take up about 20-24 hours of lesson time, and it is proposed that students take four to five modules throughout the three years of senior secondary education. Examples of modules to be offered are:

✧ *Learning English through Drama*
In this module, drama is used as a medium through which students engage in purposeful communication. Appropriate drama activities offering an extensive range of contexts and roles are designed to boost students' self-confidence in using English and to develop their language skills (notably pronunciation and oral skills), creativity and critical thinking skills. Such activities include:

- Voice control practice;
- Role-play;
- Improvising short scenes or sketches;
- Interpreting dialogues;
- Script writing; and
- Producing a play.

✧ *English Language Arts for Young Adults*
Students will be exposed to a wide range of print and non-print literary or imaginative texts (e.g. poems, novels, short stories, dramas, films, songs, advertisements), with themes that are of interest to young adults, to develop their language skills (notably vocabulary, oral and writing skills, and inferencing and interpretative skills), cultural awareness, critical thinking skills and creativity. They will be encouraged to interact closely and respond freely and imaginatively to these materials through oral, written and performative means such as:

- Creating poems and lyrics;
- Writing stories (or re-writing a part of a story) or prose passages;
- Performing a dramatic episode or a mini-play;
- Expressing personal reflections and critical views through writing diary/journal entries, or participating in oral discussion/presentations; and
- Demonstrating appreciation of literary/imaginative materials through giving oral or written responses.

✧ *Learning English through Pop Culture*
Popular culture (e.g. TV, movies, music, magazines, comics, fashion, computer games and the Internet) as a source of authentic materials will be used to develop students' language abilities, and to motivate them to become active language learners and users. Students will also have ample opportunities to increase their critical thinking,

creativity and cultural awareness through appreciating, critiquing and producing some of the following:

- TV or radio commercials;

- Newspaper or magazine articles and advertisements;

- Photo-essays; and

- Pop or documentary videos.

✧ *Learning English through Debating*
In this module, students will not only be familiarized with the format and principles of debating but also gain insights into its value as a powerful language learning tool, through participating in a broad range of activities aimed at increasing their world knowledge, developing their self-confidence and honing their oral presentation and argumentation, critical thinking, collaboration and information skills. These activities include:

- Researching a topic;

- Analyzing a topic;

- Preparing for a debate (e.g. organizing one's speech);

- Debating (e.g. impromptu speaking, making rebuttals); and

- Peer and self-evaluation.

✧ *Exploring English Grammar Forms and Communicative Functions*
Students will be provided with further opportunities to learn, consolidate and use grammar forms and communicative functions in context. They will revisit some of the grammar and functions which they have previously learnt and found particularly challenging or interesting. Such topics might include:

- Using the past perfect to talk about a past event that took place before a particular time in the past (e.g. "After they had done some research, they started to write the report.");

- Using the past continuous to talk about repeated actions or continued states which occurred in the past (e.g. "We were hoping that the meeting would end early.");

- Using the subjunctive to make suggestions about what someone should do (e.g. "The chairman suggested that the working group start work immediately.");

- Using the second conditional to talk about unlikely situations (e.g. "If I were the President, I would stop the war."); and

- Using the third conditional to talk about something that might have happened in the past but did not happen (e.g. "If he had known that Mary was invited, he would not have gone to the party.").

Learning Targets

10.    The learning targets of a Key Learning Area set out broadly the knowledge/concepts, skills, values and attitudes that students need to develop.    Students are expected to achieve the following targets for English Language at senior secondary level under the various Strands, which are built on those for Key Stage 3 (i.e. S1 – S3):

*Interpersonal Strand*

(a)    to establish and maintain relationships and routines in school and community and work situations

(b)    to converse, discuss, compare, argue, evaluate and justify points of view about feelings, interests, preferences, ideas, experiences and plans

(c)    to communicate a range of more complex messages, both oral and written, for different audiences and purposes

(d)    to participate with others in planning, developing, organizing, carrying out and evaluating more complex and extended events

(e)    to obtain and provide objects, services and information in a wider and more complex range of real and simulated situations

*Knowledge Strand*

(a)    to provide or find out, select, analyze, organize and present information on familiar and unfamiliar topics

(b)    to interpret and use more extensive and complex information through processes or activities such as ordering, describing, defining, classifying, comparing, explaining, justifying, predicting, inferring, summarizing, synthesizing, evaluating and drawing conclusions

(c)    to identify and discuss ideas, issues, themes, arguments, views and attitudes in spoken and written texts critically, make connections, refine or generate ideas, and express or apply them

(d)    to identify and define more complex problems from given information, consider related factors, explore and discuss options, solve the problems, evaluate and justify the solutions, or offer alternatives

(e)    to develop, refine and re-organize ideas and to improve expressions by making appropriate revisions to one's own written texts independently and collaboratively

(f)    to understand how the English language works in a wide range of contexts and how more complex texts are organized and expressed; and apply this understanding to one's learning and use of the language

*Experience Strand*

(a)   to develop a response to a wider range of imaginative or literary texts[1] through activities such as:

- participating in the presentation of texts

- identifying, interpreting and discussing themes

- appreciating the use of language including rhythm and rhyme, other sound patterns and rhetorical devices

(b)   to respond to characters, events, issues and themes in imaginative and other narrative texts through oral, written and performative means such as:

- making predictions and inferences

- analyzing the actions and motivations of characters and the significance of events

- relating the characters and events to one's own experiences

- articulating and presenting one's views and feelings

- putting oneself in the imaginary roles and situations in the story

- participating in dramatic presentations, reflecting on the way in which authors use language to create effects

(c)   to give expression to imaginative ideas through oral, written and performative means such as:

- reading aloud, solo or choral speaking

- role plays, dramatic presentations or improvisation

- providing oral and written descriptions (or perhaps drawings) to illustrate one's personal response to, or one's analysis or interpretation of a situation, object or character

- writing journals or diaries

- writing stories with a sound awareness of purpose and appropriate development of plot and character

- creating poems and lyrics

- creating short dramatic episodes

(d)   to give expression to one's experience through activities such as providing oral and written descriptions of feelings and events, dramatic presentations or monologues, incorporating where appropriate reflections on their significance

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[1]  Throughout this document, the term "literary or imaginative texts" refers to a broad range of language arts materials including poems, novels, short stories, dramas, films, film scripts, jokes, advertisements, song lyrics, radio and television programmes, etc.

Learning Objectives

11.    Learning objectives define more specifically what students are expected to learn in accordance with the broad learning targets specified in the Key Learning Areas at each Key Stage of schooling.    They serve as a resource list for curriculum, lesson and activity planning.    The learning objectives for English Language at senior secondary level are built on those for Key Stage 3 and are organized under the following general areas:

✧    Forms and Functions

✧    Skills and Strategies

✧    Attitudes

## *Forms and Functions*

## Grammar Items and Communicative Functions

Grammar items suggest the range of forms that learners need to develop and acquire as they perform the communicative functions.    Learners at senior secondary level should already have encountered most of the essential structures of English and applied them in various situations.    Items learnt at KS3 should be consolidated and extended to a greater degree of complexity at this level.    Some of the language items and communicative functions suggested for Senior Secondary learners are presented in Appendix 1.

## Vocabulary

The vocabulary items that learners encounter, acquire and use at each Key Stage vary with the tasks and the amount of language support that learners experience in the learning environment.    It is therefore not useful to prescribe or suggest a vocabulary list out of context for each Key Stage.    Students at senior secondary level, however, need to be exposed to a wide range of vocabulary items, including phrasal verbs, idioms and fixed expressions to help them communicate and carry out various learning tasks effectively.    In selecting these vocabulary items, teachers should pay attention to such factors as learners' needs, including those related to the understanding of topics in other content subjects, the distinction between active/passive vocabulary, frequency of use, and occurrences across different text-types.    In addition, it is essential to introduce them to a range of vocabulary-building strategies.    The strategies they need to strengthen or acquire at this stage are as follows:

✧    Developing knowledge of word formation through understanding the various ways in which words are built:

- Affixation

- Compounding

- Collocation

✧ Developing knowledge of lexical relations through understanding the various ways in which words are related:

- Word families
- Synonyms, antonyms, hyponymy and homonyms

✧ Guessing and inferencing

✧ Using the dictionary and thesaurus

✧ Recording words

✧ Retaining words

For details of the above strategies, please refer to Appendix 2.

**Text-types**

Text-types refer to forms of speech and writing. The intended purpose and audience of each text-type determine its structure and special linguistic and stylistic features.

To assist learners in their development as proficient users of English, it is important that they are introduced systematically to a wide variety of text-types. Different text-types provide meaningful contexts for the learning and purposeful use of specific language items and vocabulary. A report is one such example. It has a clearly defined function and language features. In addition, the awareness of the demands of different text-types is essential for effective communication.

The range of text-types should widen at higher levels of learning. The text-types that learners are exposed to and are expected to produce at senior secondary level will build on those they have learnt at KS3 and will be more complex. The selection of text-types will depend on learners' needs, experiences and interests[2].

*Skills and Strategies*

**Listening**

*Listen for Information, Ideas, Intended Meanings, Views, Attitudes and Feelings in a Variety of Spoken Texts*

✧ understand and interpret spoken texts in a range of situations and for different purposes

✧ identify details that support a main idea

✧ predict the likely development of ideas

✧ understand the use of discourse markers

✧ establish and infer meanings from clues

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[2] A suggested list of text-types for senior secondary level will be provided at a later stage.

✧ distinguish between facts and opinions in spoken texts

✧ understand speakers' intentions, views, attitudes or feelings

✧ understand both connotative and denotative meanings of words

✧ understand speakers with a variety of accents[*]

## Speaking

*Present Information, Ideas, Intended Meanings, Views, Attitudes and Feelings Clearly, Coherently and Appropriately in a Variety of Contexts*

✧ present feelings, views and arguments coherently and convincingly with suitable reasoning, suggestions and strategies for various contexts and purposes

✧ describe details that support a main idea

✧ use a variety of vocabulary appropriately

✧ use language appropriate to the role or situations of different levels of formality

✧ use persuasive devices effectively[*]

*Participate Effectively in an Oral Interaction*

✧ open and close an interaction appropriately

✧ verbalize inability to understand, ask for slower repetition and spelling

✧ maintain an interaction by being a good audience and taking turns at the right moment

✧ make judgments and suggestions, support and develop the views of others, disagree and offer alternatives, reply, ask relevant questions, explain, give examples and use formulaic expressions where appropriate

✧ lead or guide discussion and negotiations, using effective strategies

✧ solicit sharing of experiences, views, attitudes and values

✧ use appropriate interaction skills and conversational strategies

✧ use appropriate register (formal or informal) in conversations

## Reading

*Understand, Interpret and Analyze a Variety of Written Texts*

✧ use linguistic and contextual clues, knowledge of features of different text-types and knowledge of the world to determine the meaning of the written text

✧ identify main and supporting ideas

✧ relate cause to effect

✧ relate evidence to conclusions

✧ recognize the rhetorical functions performed by sentences in the development of a text

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[*] Note: These items are more demanding and require considerable teacher support or guidance.

✧   follow and evaluate the development of a point of view or argument

✧   distinguish different points of view and arguments

✧   discriminate between the different degrees of formality

✧   appreciate the stylistic variations between text-types

✧   interpret how linguistic and structural devices achieve certain effects

✧   understand and appreciate the tone, mood and intention of the writer and his/her attitude to the theme or topic*

✧   understand the different types of meaning of words, and the semantic associations that exist among words*

✧   detect faulty or misleading arguments*

✧   evaluate critically views and attitudes*

**Writing**

*Present Information, Ideas, Views, Attitudes and Feelings Clearly, Coherently and Appropriately in a Variety of Written Texts*

✧   plan and produce coherent and structured texts

✧   organize and integrate information and ideas, and write texts appropriate to the context, purpose and audience

✧   present different views and arguments clearly and logically

✧   present and elaborate main ideas and supporting details through exemplifications, paraphrases, explanations, etc.

✧   relate events and their causes and effects

✧   adjust the balance of ideas and length of the writing to meet the requirements of a variety of text-types

✧   draft, revise and edit a piece of writing

✧   use appropriate discourse markers to signal the development of ideas

✧   use appropriate linguistic and structural devices, a variety of structures and range of vocabulary to achieve desired purposes

✧   use the salient features of a range of text-types appropriately

✧   use persuasive devices effectively*

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* Note: These items are more demanding and require considerable teacher support or guidance.

**Language Development Strategies**

✧ Developing thinking skills

- use reasoning skills (e.g. analyze for a particular purpose, make inferences, use induction, deduction, conclusion, etc.)

- explore and speculate about possibilities

- analyze data and situations systematically for better understanding or solving problems

- generate criteria and principles for action and judicial thinking

✧ Developing reference skills

- use the library and the Internet regularly to collect information and develop research skills

- identify relationships (grouping/differentiating, cause/effect, priority/sequence/ order, similarities and differences, etc.) between the content of materials, the background and interpretation of ideas and concepts, attitudes, motives, etc.

✧ Developing information skills

- collect, evaluate and store information systematically

- adapt materials, text-types, systems, etc., for supporting and illustrating various topics

- employ graphic forms (pie/column charts, cartoons, maps, etc.) to organize information and aid the presentation of ideas

- make notes from spoken and written sources, using abbreviations as far as possible (e.g., i.e., &, etc.)

- take down the main points and important supporting details

- make precise and concise notes

✧ Developing enquiry skills

- ask for advice and suggestions on how to complete an assignment, and take note of such advice and suggestions

- use appropriate tone and approach when asking for information and explanation

- repeat questions and seek clarification politely and pleasantly

- use appropriate opening remarks and formulaic expressions

- request explanation when there is misunderstanding, or query in a polite and pleasant way

- understand the use of different tones and degrees of formality

- ask follow-up questions appropriate to the occasion

- ask for information and materials, both formally and informally, by writing simple notes or letters

✧ Plan, Manage and Evaluate Own Learning

- set meaningful realistic goals and determine what resources are available for improving one's language proficiency

- seek or create opportunities to learn and use English in natural, realistic settings such as making use of community resources and support

- make arrangements for broadening and deepening one's learning (researching job prospects, finding out one's opportunities for further education locally and overseas, etc.)

- evaluate one's own progress and note one's strengths and weaknesses

- identify ideas and data that support opposite views, weighing pros and cons, advantages and disadvantages

- look for ideas and information by using printed texts, on-line bibliographic databases, CD-ROMs, the Internet and the media

✧ Self-motivation

- identify tangible goals for self-development

- take every opportunity to practise as much as possible and try to look out for or create these opportunities

- develop endurance and tolerance in the face of hardships

- overcome shyness and inertia by deliberately urging oneself to face challenges

✧ Work with others

- communicate to the point (e.g. explain precisely and clearly, give clear and precise description, justification or illustration)

- ask others for help and offer help to others

- employ negotiation skills to solicit support, bargain, reach consensus, compromise or solve problems

- listen to different opinions and respond appropriately

- express views and suggestions, draw conclusions and make decisions

*Attitudes*

The development of positive attitudes, along with knowledge and skills, is an integral part of the curriculum.   The development of some attitudes, such as confidence in using English, is likely to be important to all learning activities.   Others, such as awareness of English as an international language of communication, will only be consciously developed in specific tasks.   Opportunities for exploring, developing and encouraging positive attitudes should be provided in learning tasks.

At senior secondary level, the development of the following attitudes are encouraged, in addition to those developed in KS1, KS2 and KS3:

✧ an open-minded attitude towards different cultures, ideologies and points of view and a willingness to share ideas with different people

✧ a serious attitude towards language learning with an attempt to improve one's capability

✧ a critical attitude towards the ideas and values encountered in spoken and written English texts

✧ an awareness of the value and power of language

✧ a cautious and critical attitude towards the use of language to achieve the desired effect

## Learning and Teaching

12.    The teacher plays an important role in facilitating effective language learning, teaching and assessment.   To carry out this role, he or she can make use of the open and flexible framework for the senior secondary English Language curriculum, which is built on the general direction for development set out in the *English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (P1 – S3) (2002)*.

13.    The senior secondary English Language curriculum will continue to encourage schools to adopt the following learning and teaching approaches:

✧ Task-based Learning and Teaching
- Learner-centered Instruction
- Target-oriented English Language Learning
- Five Fundamental Intertwining Ways of Learning and Using Knowledge
- Integrative and Creative Language Use
- Learning Grammar in Context
- Learner Independence
✧ Life-wide Learning
✧ Meaningful Homework

14.    To help learners progress towards whole-person development and learning how to learn, schools are encouraged to incorporate one or more of the Four Key Tasks in their learning and teaching programmes:

✧    Moral and Civic Education

✧    Project Learning

✧    Reading to Learn

✧    Information Technology for Interactive Learning

## Assessment

*(This part should be read in conjunction with the section "Assessment" of the Main Document.)*

Aims of Assessment

15.    Assessment is the practice of collecting evidence of student learning. The aims are to improve learning and teaching as well as to recognize the achievement of students.   In the subject of English Language, assessment will closely align with the curriculum design, the curriculum aims, the learning targets and objectives and the learning processes.

Internal Assessment

16.    Internal assessment refers to the assessment practices that schools develop and administer to inform and improve learning and teaching.   To achieve this goal, schools are encouraged to employ both formative and summative assessment.   Formative assessment helps to provide information about learners' strengths and weaknesses, so that future directions in learning and teaching can be planned.   Schools are encouraged to draw on a comprehensive range of formal and informal approaches to formative assessment to take into account of learners' varying learning needs and styles and school culture.   These should include teacher assessment, self-assessment and peer assessment and involve the use of such instruments as learning tasks and activities, process writing, projects and portfolios.

17.    Summative assessment seeks to evaluate learner abilities and performance at the end of a period of time (e.g. end of a cycle, a school term or a school year).   It gives a comprehensive picture of students' learning progress during the period and helps teachers check whether the major aspects of the learning targets and objectives have been achieved. Summative assessment should be carefully planned and developed, and a variety of assessment instruments (e.g. assessment tasks, pen and paper tests, projects) should be used to enable learners to demonstrate their achievements.

<u>Public Assessment</u>

*Standards-referenced Assessment (SRA)*

18.    Public Assessment of English Language leads to a qualification in the subject to be offered by the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority.    In the public assessment of English Language, a standards-referenced approach will be adopted for grading and reporting student performance.    The purpose of this approach is to recognize what each student can do in each subject at the end of the 3-year senior secondary education.    The approach attempts to make implicit standards explicit.    The performance of each student will be matched against a set of performance standards, set out in the form of descriptors indicating what a student must be able to do to merit a particular grade, instead of against the performance of other students.    The English Language (Senior Secondary) public examination will be developed with reference to the 2007 Standards-referenced CE English Language examination.    The descriptors will be provided at a later stage.

*Modes of Public Assessment*

(a)    Public examination
The English Language (Senior Secondary) public examination will be designed to provide a comprehensive measure of learners' language learning achievements in a range of curriculum areas that can be reliably assessed in an examination setting.    It will consist of examination papers covering a combination of the four skills (i.e. listening, reading, speaking and writing).    A variety of assessment tasks will be used to give learners the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities.

(b)    School-based Assessment (SBA)
The public assessment will include an SBA component which constitutes 20%-30% of the total weighting.    The merits of adopting SBA are as follows:

(i)    SBA provides a more valid assessment than an external examination, since it covers a more extensive range of learning outcomes through employing a wider range of assessment modes that are not all possible in external examinations.

(ii)    SBA enables the sustained work of students to be assessed.    It provides a more comprehensive picture of student performance throughout the period of study rather than their performance in a one-off examination alone.

It should be noted that SBA is not an "add-on" element in the curriculum.    Assessing learners' performance is in fact an integral part of learning and teaching.    The modes of SBA selected should be appropriate to the learning objectives and processes that are to be assessed.    The design and implementation of SBA should avoid unduly increasing the burden of both teachers and students.

## Supporting Measures

19.    To support the implementation of the senior secondary English Language curriculum, the following professional development programmes and learning and teaching resource materials will be provided:

Professional Development Programmes

✧    **Development and implementation of a School-based English Language Curriculum**
Programmes in this area will help teachers to develop leadership capacity with respect to the development and implementation of a School-based English Language curriculum based on the recommendations set out in the new Senior Secondary English Language Curriculum and Assessment Guide.

✧    **School-based Assessment**
Programmes in this area will introduce teachers to the practice of School-based Assessment in English Language and help them to develop assessment plans and procedures for School-based Assessment.

✧    **Portfolio assessment**
Programmes in this area will introduce to teachers the practice of portfolio assessment in English Language, demonstrate to them how portfolio assessment supports learning and provide hands-on experience that will enable them to help learners prepare effective portfolios.

✧    **Professional development for teaching the Elective Part**
Programmes in this area will introduce to teachers the modules in the Elective Part of the curriculum, and equip them with the skills to adapt or re-develop these modules to cater for diverse learner abilities and needs, and to develop learning and teaching resources that will facilitate the delivery of these modules.

Learning and Teaching Resource Materials

✧    Teaching Debating at Senior Secondary Level – this resource package aims to support the implementation of "Learning English through Debating", one of the proposed modules in the Elective Part of the curriculum.   It introduces teachers to the features of debating and the skills needed.   Supported by detailed guidelines and annotated examples, it also clearly explains and illustrates how to promote English language learning through teaching debating skills, and offering insights into how to assess debates and offer feedback.

✧    Resource materials in support of the implementation of the other modules in the Elective Part of the curriculum will also be developed.

Language Items and Communicative Functions

The following table serves to illustrate the relationships between some of the language items and communicative functions for Senior Secondary learners.   The suggestions here are by no means exhaustive and teachers should try to adapt them according to the learners' needs and abilities.

| Language items and Communicative Functions | Examples |
|---|---|
| Use adjectives, adverbs, formulaic phrases / expressions, etc., to make comparisons and give descriptions of processes and situations | Exercises will make you <u>healthier and stronger.</u><br>You cannot expect <u>more</u> pay for <u>less</u> work.<br>John walks and talks <u>like</u> his father.<br>Although the twins look <u>alike</u>, they are very <u>different</u> in character. |
| Use the simple present tense, gerunds, conditionals, etc., to make general statements about the world and "universal truths" | Greed is not the only force that <u>moves</u> the world.<br>Hong Kong <u>is</u> a financial centre.<br>The plane <u>leaves</u> for London at eleven o' clock tonight.<br><u>If</u> there <u>is</u> a thunderstorm, you should not swim in the sea.<br><u>Surfing the internet</u> is a very popular pastime among Hong Kong teenagers. |
| Use a variety of tenses, passive voice, reported speech, adverbs, etc., to refer to events in the past, present and future and to the frequency with which things occur | The volcano last <u>erupted</u> in 1960.<br>She <u>has been</u> the Chief Executive Officer of that company for seven years.<br>He <u>used to swim for</u> half an hour every morning.<br>I <u>may have thrown</u> away the book by mistake.<br>My brother <u>is working</u> as a nurse in a local hospital for the time being.<br>I was watching the stars <u>when I saw a strange flying object.</u><br>Manchester United <u>will be playing</u> against Millwall in the FA Cup Final.<br>He <u>has been talking</u> on the cell-phone for two hours already.<br>I <u>will get</u> in touch with you sometime next week.<br>Security in the region <u>is threatened</u> by the recent bomb attacks. |

| Language items and Communicative Functions | Examples |
|---|---|
| Use conditionals, inversions, formulaic expressions, etc., to express gratitude and regret | <u>Had it not been</u> for my teacher, I <u>would never have had</u> the confidence to finish this project.<br><u>May I take this opportunity to express our deepest gratitude to</u> all our teachers for their guidance, patience and support?<br><u>I wish I had been</u> more careful with my spending.<br><u>If you had come</u> earlier, <u>you would have met</u> Michael Jordan.<br><u>I'm sorry</u> I won't be coming to your graduation ceremony.<br><u>It's a pity</u> that the concert has to be cancelled because of the typhoon. |
| Use adjectives, inversions and formulaic expressions to pay a compliment or make a criticism | <u>Never have I seen</u> such a badly put together documentary.<br><u>Well done</u>.<br><u>How clever of you</u> to think of all that.<br>Our students were deeply <u>impressed</u> by the love and respect with which the elderly were treated in your centre. |
| Use formulaic expressions, adverb clauses, etc., to make a complaint | <u>I've had enough of</u> this nonsense.<br><u>I'm afraid that</u> the noise your dog makes has kept us awake all night.<br><u>What a nuisance</u> it is to fill in so many forms! |
| Use adverb phrases and adverb clauses of reason, concession, result, etc., to justify one's behaviour, decision and point of view in a variety of situations | We have put more chairs in the school hall <u>in order to</u> take more people.<br>Mr Lee has decided to stop selling deep-fried snacks in the tuck shop <u>because of</u> parental pressure.<br><u>As a result of</u> the new law, many foreign workers are allowed to work in Hong Kong.<br><u>Owing to</u> the heavy rain, the concert was cancelled.<br>The two friends have fallen out <u>due to</u> a misunderstanding. |

| Language items and Communicative Functions | Examples |
|---|---|
| Use adjectives, adjective phrases, formulaic expressions, etc., to describe one's feelings and responses to happenings and states of affairs in some detail | It's difficult to describe my feelings at the airport. I was <u>thrilled</u> about studying abroad, <u>sad</u> to leave my family and friends, a little <u>anxious</u> about adapting to a new place and intensely <u>aware</u> that I had to make something of myself.<br>The runners were <u>too tired to move</u> after the marathon.<br><u>Embarrassed by his careless blunder</u>, John went all red in the face.<br><u>You must be joking</u>!<br><u>What a shame</u>! |
| Use modals and formulaic expressions to ask for and give advice on a variety of matters | <u>We would be grateful if you could</u> supply us with information on university education in the United Kingdom.<br><u>Could you</u> give us some hints on how to solve the problem?<br><u>Why don't you</u> add more illustrations to your project?<br><u>Perhaps you should</u> discuss this with your parents.<br>Yes, <u>it is a good idea</u> for our students to take part in voluntary services. |
| Use modals and formulaic expressions to ask for favors and assistance | <u>Can</u> you pass me the salt please?<br><u>Could</u> you tell me where the supermarket is?<br>Do you <u>mind swapping</u> your table with ours please?<br>I <u>should be</u> grateful if you <u>would</u> let me have the results as soon as possible. |
| Use modals and formulaic expressions to express obligation and prohibition | You <u>ought to</u> report the incident to the police.<br><u>Under no circumstances</u> should you touch this button. |
| Use modals and formulaic expressions to request, offer, accept and decline help | <u>Can you</u> give me a hand?<br><u>What can I do for you</u>?<br><u>Is there anything I can do for you</u>?<br><u>Thank you, that's very kind of you</u>.<br><u>No, thank you. I can finish this project on my own</u>. |

| Language items and Communicative Functions | Examples |
|---|---|
| Use modals, appropriate verbs and formulaic expressions to invite, make and refuse suggestions and proposals | <u>Please feel free to</u> make suggestions.<br><u>Let's</u> make a card for mum and dad's wedding anniversary.<br>I <u>suggest that you</u> help create a school garden to grow vegetables.<br>A: <u>Why don't we</u> bring our own tents to the campsite?<br>B: <u>That may not be a good idea.</u><br>A typhoon is approaching. <u>I'd rather</u> sleep indoors.<br><u>I'm afraid</u> that your proposal has been rejected by the committee. |
| Use modals, formulaic expressions, adjectives, etc, to seek information | <u>Excuse me</u>, we're students from Man Yiu College.   We're collecting the views of visitors on Hong Kong.   <u>Can you spare us a few moments?</u> |
| Use imperatives, sequence words and formulaic expressions to give instructions in a variety of contexts | The Teaware Museum is in Hong Kong Park. <u>Get off</u> the MTR at Admiralty. <u>Then take</u> the Pacific Place exit. From there, it's only a 5-minute walk.<br><u>First</u>, <u>search</u> in the library catalogue for all the books on this topic. <u>Scan</u> the contents page and index to locate useful information. <u>Next</u>, <u>collect</u> illustrations, photos or make your own models. <u>After that</u>, you should consider carefully your own views on the matter. <u>Then</u>, <u>organize and present</u> your materials in an interesting manner. <u>Finally</u>, <u>make</u> sure you hand in your work on time. |
| Use formulaic expressions to make and answer telephone calls | <u>I'm afraid</u> Mr Chan is at a meeting. <u>Can I take a message</u>?<br><u>Would you like to leave a message</u>? |
| Use modals, formulaic expressions, adjectives, passive voice etc, to make observations | I <u>can see</u> that you have put <u>a great deal of</u> effort into this project.<br>Never have I seen such <u>marvellous</u> work before!<br>We <u>observe</u> that most students in this class prefer to have a packed lunch.<br>He <u>was overheard</u> criticizing the project. |

| Language items and Communicative Functions | Examples |
|---|---|
| Use modals, formulaic expressions, adjectives, etc, to make enquiries | <u>I am writing to enquire about</u> the possibility of being exempted from the oral examination. <br> <u>I should be grateful if you could inform me</u> of the procedures I have to take, in order to apply for this job. |
| Use adverb clauses, modals and formulaic expressions, etc, to deal with enquiries and respond to requests or complaints | <u>With reference to</u> your request for a replacement of the new CD you bought <u>recently</u>, I <u>regret to inform</u> you that they are all sold out already. <br> <u>I write to clarify</u> the possible misunderstanding which <u>might</u> have arisen during the meeting between the two parties. <br> <u>I represent</u> the Students' Union of our school and wish to apologize for the late payment for our purchases from your company. <br> <u>Let me apologize</u> on behalf of the company. <br> <u>We deem it necessary</u> to ban smoking in our shopping centre. <br> <u>Should you have any queries</u>, please contact me directly. |
| Use a variety of tenses, prepositions, formulaic expressions, adjectives, adverb phrases, adverbial clauses, passive voice, etc, to express factual information | <u>According to</u> the statistics, there <u>has been</u> a sharp rise in the number of visitors from Mainland China <u>during the last eight months</u>. <br> <u>As a matter of fact</u>, more and more university students take up part-time jobs nowadays for a variety of reasons.    Some do it <u>because</u> they have a real need to pay their <u>increasingly</u> high tuition fees. <br> UNICEF's work <u>is guided</u> by the Conventions on the Rights of the Child. <br> Family problems have become more and more <u>acute</u> these days. |
| Use a variety of tenses, prepositions, formulaic expressions, adjectives, adverb phrases, adverbial clauses, passive voice, etc, to present plans | The school authority <u>has planned</u> to build a new wing next to the hall <u>during the summer holiday</u>. <br> A 4% increase in spending on education <u>has been planned</u>. |

| Language items and Communicative Functions | Examples |
|---|---|
| Use a variety of tenses, passive voice, adverb phrases, adverb clauses, etc., to find and provide evidence for a particular conclusion | <u>Considering</u> the figures provided by the government, <u>it is evident that</u> the economy has been enjoying a rebound.<br>According to recent research, passive smoking <u>has been proved</u> to be <u>extremely</u> dangerous to health.<br><u>As a result of</u> the strengthened police protection scheme for witnesses, more crimes were reported last month.<br><u>There is no information</u> as to which political parties have more support from the public, and so a survey is being conducted by a local authority at the moment. |
| Use imperatives, modals, adjectives, adverb clauses, formulaic expressions, rhetorical questions, etc., to give and justify recommendations and make proposals | <u>Stop</u> buying electrical appliances or products that are not <u>energy-efficient</u>.<br><u>In order to</u> stop bullying, victims of bullying <u>must be convinced</u> that they can do something about it.<br><u>I feel strongly</u> that the government should double its efforts in stopping discrimination against the disabled.<br><u>It is of the utmost importance</u> for the government to review the language policy.<br><u>Would it not make more sense</u> to promote the use of canvas bags instead of plastic bags?<br><u>Another alternative</u> is to encourage manufacturers to use recycled paper as far as possible. |
| Use the simple present tense, adverb phrases, adjectives, gerunds, conditionals, formulaic expressions, etc, to express personal feelings, opinions and judgments, and present arguments | I <u>really</u> <u>appreciate</u> your firm stance on environmental issues.<br>I am much <u>frustrated</u> by the lack of public swimming pool facilities in my neighborhood.<br><u>Creating more job opportunities</u> should be the most important issue on the agenda.<br><u>If the government had better publicized</u> its new policy, the reactions from parents <u>would have been</u> more supportive.<br><u>In my opinion</u>, child abuse has already become a major social problem in Hong Kong.<br><u>I'm afraid</u> family problems have become more and more acute these days. |

| Language items and Communicative Functions | Examples |
|---|---|
| Use a variety of tenses, passive voice, adverb phrases and adverb clauses, formulaic expressions, etc, to give presentations on a variety of topics | <u>I've just read about a topic</u> which worries me a lot: drug abuse.<br><u>There is no doubt that</u> parents are very concerned about recent cases of bullying.<br>I remember <u>last year</u> when I was <u>in Britain,</u> <u>it was reported</u> that Hong Kong was plagued by SARS.<br><u>First of all</u>, I would like to talk about the arrangements for the proposed trip.<br><u>I would like to conclude</u> with the following suggestions: … |
| Use a variety of tenses, modals, adverb phrases, adverb clauses, formulaic expressions, etc, to participate in and follow group discussion | <u>Should we begin our discussion</u> with the first item on the agenda?<br><u>In that case, do you think it's a good idea</u> to bring in more native speakers?<br><u>May I finish</u> my point first before you voice your opinion?<br><u>Do you mean</u> you don't agree with the idea at all?<br>Well, yes, <u>to a certain extent</u>.<br>It seems we all think differently and it is quite impossible for us to come to a consensus. <u>Shall we take a vote</u>? |

Vocabulary building strategies

This appendix serves to provide a detailed explanation of the vocabulary-building strategies highlighted in the vocabulary section of the draft consultation document.

✧ Developing knowledge of word formation
Learners can increase their word power, if they understand the various ways in which words are built:

● *Affixation*
Affixation is the process of adding prefixes (e.g. un-, dis-, etc.) and suffixes (e.g. -ly, -ble, etc.) to the base word (e.g. like). This often results in the meaning and/or part of speech being modified. Developing knowledge of common prefixes and suffixes will help learners handle and learn new vocabulary items even if the context is not familiar.

● *Compounding*
Compounding is the formation of a word from two or more separate words. The awareness of compounding may enable learners to guess the meaning of new words such as "childcare", "bookworm" and "fire engine".

● *Collocation*
Collocation is an important aspect of vocabulary development as learners should know the combinatory possibilities of a word. Examples of collocation range from two-word combinations such as "happy about" and "strongly suggest" to more extended combinations such as "making steady progress" and "recovering from a major operation". Words can collocate with different degrees of frequency and acceptability – some words are more likely to co-occur (i.e. occur together) than others, and many words occur in several different collocations. Knowledge of collocation range and appropriacy generally facilitates learners' ability to encode and decode language, thus enriching their vocabulary and enabling them to use words more effectively. Teachers can either present the collocation information directly, by telling them the common collocates when learners learn a word, or use a more discovery-based approach by asking learners to analyze sentences with target lexical items. Either way, learners will be able to acquire a richer vocabulary and use the words more effectively when they know the collocation range of a word and its high-frequency collocates.

✧ Developing knowledge of lexical relations

By developing learners' knowledge about the various ways in which words are related, teachers can help learners understand the richness of connections that binds the English lexicon together.

● *Word families*

It is useful for learners to learn a word and the parts of speech of other words from the same family at the same time (e.g. taste, tasteful, distaste, tasteless, tasty etc.).   It is also helpful for them to know that certain suffixes are linked with certain parts of speech.   Many nouns, for example, end in -ment, -tion, or -ship. When learners are able to generalize from this knowledge, they may be able to work out other members of the word family even though initially only one word is learnt.

● *Synonyms, antonyms, hyponymy and homonyms*

Meaningful practice intended to develop knowledge of synonyms (i.e. relations of sameness), antonyms (i.e. relations of oppositeness), hyponymy (i.e. relations of inclusion) and homonyms (i.e. words with the same spelling but with different meanings) will help learners extend their vocabulary and sensitivity in the choice of words.   The study of homonyms will, for example, draw learners' attention to the wealth of meanings that English words possess.   One can, for example, "catch" a train, a cold, the tune of a song, or someone stealing money. Homonyms also take learners into the metaphorical meanings of words. "Hands", for instance, are more than a body part.   We can also refer to the hands of a clock, a hand in a game of poker and to "giving someone a helping hand".

✧ Guessing and inferencing

One of the most common vocabulary-building strategies that learners should employ is making guesses and inferences about new words.   They are the processes a good learner will follow when faced with difficulty in reading, or during a test or any situation where a dictionary is not available, or where asking someone is not possible or appropriate.   Learners should be trained to make use of linguistic cues (e.g. the grammatical structure of a sentence and connectives) to guess the meaning of a new word.   They should also be encouraged to make guesses through searching for contextual clues within a text and make intelligent guesses from a meaningful context. Their knowledge of word formation (i.e. prefixes, suffixes, compound words and collocation) and knowledge of lexical relations (i.e. collocation and sense relations, such as synonymy, antonymy and hyponymy) can be tapped and developed, in order to help them to decipher new words.   Through some well-designed practice, learners should be convinced that they do not need to resort to the dictionary for every unknown word they encounter.

✧ Using the dictionary and thesaurus

Using references such as the dictionary and thesaurus is an essential skill that all learners should develop, in order to become independent in their learning.  With effective and judicious use of these references, learners can not only solve their problems in comprehension and confirm their guesses about a word, but also increase their vocabulary by way of learning to discern the subtle differences among the synonyms and among related words.

Learners at this level should learn to use the dictionary to find out the less frequent, unusual or rare meaning and special usage of a word in a text.  They should also develop more extended dictionary strategies to learn to use the words appropriately, e.g. reading the examples provided in the dictionary, making use of the information in the dictionary to help them learn vocabulary actively by making sentences on their own.

The purpose of a thesaurus is to enable learners to refine their choice of words in writing, with synonyms and near-synonyms, or to make a more precise choice of vocabulary.  It can help learners to find the best term or expression to portray their thoughts and sentiments.

✧ Recording words

Language learning activities and extensive reading, which can increase learners' knowledge of new words and familiar words, may be ineffective if learners make no effort to retain the words.  Learners should be encouraged to record words and acquire the habit and strategies for reviewing new words and familiar words in order to retain them.  Useful techniques include keeping vocabulary notebooks with words and related information organized thematically or alphabetically, and storing vocabulary information by using diagrams (e.g. spider maps) to help to highlight the relationships between items.  Learners will find it useful if they also enter information on the usage of the words, collocations of them or note down examples showing the usage of the words.  Records of words according to both meanings and usage are encouraged.

✧ Retaining words

It is important to help learners develop a range of effective means of retaining the words they have come across, so that their repertoire of vocabulary can be enlarged. This can be done by asking learners to make word lists, go through their word lists systematically, and develop strategies in remembering vocabulary by association and by creating a mental image of the new words.  Other memory skills can be developed through learning words related in their spelling or shapes, sounds, meanings and the contexts in which they are used.

Helping learners to acquire and consolidate various vocabulary-building skills is a particularly productive area for the encouragement of learner autonomy. Learners can reflect on ways of learning vocabulary and develop individual approaches to solving problems. They can ask themselves what is important for them to know about individual words, assess their own vocabulary needs and shortcomings regularly, and keep a record of their performance in actual situations. Learners can be encouraged to develop their own personal learning styles for vocabulary, in such areas as memorizing and retaining new words.