

New Academic Structure Review
(Medium-term) –
Moving Forward to Excel

Curriculum Development Council (CDC)

Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA)

Education Bureau (EDB)

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1. Background of the NAS Review (Medium-term)

1.1 The New Senior Secondary (NSS) curriculum and assessment of the New Academic Structure (NAS) is a major policy initiative recommended by the Education Commission (EC) in 2000, and implemented since 2009 at Secondary 4. Upon the smooth completion of the first cycle of NSS with positive impacts on schools and students, the NAS review was conducted in 2012/13 jointly by the Curriculum Development Council (CDC), the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) and the Education Bureau (EDB) to respond to the concerns and to fine-tune the delivery of the NAS. As part of the consultation process, the document: *Introduction to New Academic Structure Review* was issued and uploaded to the EDB website on 5 October 2012 to collect feedback from the school sector, stakeholders and the public.

1.2 A progress report (the Report) on the NAS Review: *The New Senior Secondary Learning Journey – Moving Forward to Excel* with details of the fundamental changes, achievements and challenges of the NAS as well as an overview of the short-term recommendations for fine-tuning the NSS curriculum and assessment, was released on 19 April 2013 and uploaded onto the designated webpage (<http://www.edb.gov.hk/nas/review>), followed by a circular memorandum (EDBCM No. 48/2013) to schools summarizing the short and medium-term recommendations and the critical milestones for implementing the short-term recommendations on 30 April 2013.

1.3 Meanwhile, the medium-term review is recommended to address the unresolved issues that may require a longer time and a more holistic/macro-approach to the NAS/NSS policy. **This document provides further guidelines and information on the medium-term review taking into consideration feedback received after the Report was made public.** A summary of the short- and medium-/long-term recommendations is attached in Appendix 1 and the critical milestones for key actions on NAS Review are listed in Appendix 2.

1.4 Following the announcement of medium-term recommendations, review of all senior secondary subjects should be conducted on a regular basis taking into consideration the subjects' needs and the regular curriculum and assessment development cycle. The regular review of

the curriculum and assessment for all subjects should adhere to the review mechanism and respond to needs appropriate to the development of the subject. Other issues related to curriculum and assessment but outside the curriculum and assessment development cycle would be suitably discussed and communicated to relevant partner organisations and stakeholders.

2. Major Feedback on the Report

2.1 A series of briefing sessions for the Report and all NSS subjects, ApL and OLE were held from 29 April to end-May 2013 to collect feedback from the school sector. Different views were also gathered from the continuous communication with different stakeholders and details of the feedback under different categories are presented in Appendix 3. The major ones have focused on curriculum and assessment and they include:

- (1) The streamlining of the curriculum and assessment including SBA for the short-term is generally welcome by schools, though there are requests for further fine-tuning of curriculum and public examination in certain subjects.
- (2) Schools need to further understand the issues of the breadth and depth of each NSS curriculum especially after the streamlining, and there is a request for more support such as provision of supplementary notes.
- (3) Catering for learner diversity remains a big concern and there is a need to help schools address this with more support and flexibility in learning and teaching as well as arranging lesson time.
- (4) Comprehensive review of SBA should be conducted to address the issue of cross-subject coordination and workload.
- (5) Stakeholders have also expressed concerns on some interface issues like the implementation of admission policy by post-secondary institutions, the impact of NSS on post-secondary studies, and supportive conditions for schools.

3. Objectives of the Review

3.1 The NAS Review is an ongoing process to facilitate the continual implementation of the NAS/NSS policy for bettering student learning. Subsequent to the announcement of the short-term recommendations, the medium-term review was recommended to: (1) follow up on the major feedback on the Report; (2) address the unresolved issues in various subjects and curriculum areas which require a longer time and a more holistic/macro-approach to the policy; (3) sustain regular review of the curriculum and assessment of all subjects while adhering to the review mechanism and respond to the needs appropriate to the development of the subjects; and (4) further fine-tune the recommendations in the medium-term review with reference to qualitative and quantitative data and feedback collected throughout the process.

4. Overarching Principles for the Review

4.1 The short-term review recommendations have been made based on a set of principles and considerations for the NSS curriculum and assessment. The principles would continue to be observed with emphasis on the following for consistency and sustainability of the reform:

4.2 Student interest comes first

Consistency of justifications and professional rationales would be observed when making the medium-term recommendations at systemic, whole-school and subject levels, e.g. keeping or deferring School-based Assessment (SBA) in some subjects according to its suitability. Notwithstanding the uniqueness and different review cycles of individual subjects, all curricula would be considered holistically to review the balance of content in both the curriculum and the assessment, and the balance between examination and SBA used in some subjects. Recommendations would be implemented as early and practicable as possible for students and schools respectively with a shared vision.

4.3 Continuous collection of feedback & information/evidence-driven

The medium-term review would build on the recommendations made and published in the Report and make further recommendations for improvement. Feedback on the short-term recommendations is an important source of data to be considered to fill the gaps and respond to

concerns. The review is evidence-driven and will continue to take all relevant quantitative data and qualitative information collected from different sources into consideration in the decision-making process.

4.4 *Consistent and aligned fundamental paradigm changes*

The NSS learning goals would be revisited and the fundamental changes in learning, teaching and assessment would be continuously embraced and fine-tuned in order to support student learning and whole-person development with corresponding changes in the public assessment, as well as wider curriculum changes in the primary and junior secondary years.

4.5 *Contemporary curriculum design to align with continuous collection of feedback*

The design principles of the NSS curricula and assessment would be revised, as appropriate, and formulated to gear towards achieving (4.4) above with an aim to keep abreast with the latest change in the field. The NSS curricula and assessment are never static and their strengths will be derived from regular and ongoing review, while taking into consideration the original design principles of the following:

- striking a balance between breadth and depth;
- striking a balance between theoretical and applied learning at whole school level/subject level;
- striking a balance between essential learning and a flexible and diversified curriculum;
- ensuring progression of studies; and
- ensuring greater coherence both vertically and horizontally.

4.6 *Maintaining international standards*

International benchmarking and high standards would continue to be maintained while considering further streamlining of the curriculum and assessment to give schools more flexibility, space and support in addressing the workload issue as well as catering for learner diversity without compromising the curriculum objectives.

4.7 *Flexibility for different school contexts*

The review is premised on a system which remains flexible enough to allow further adaptation and improvement, and is responsive to feedback from schools and the need for change, while overall standards and curriculum aims for each subject will be maintained. For instance, a flexible range of total lesson time at 2,400±200 hours is adopted to cater for school diversity and individual needs and contexts.

4.8 *Maintaining existing and transparent mechanism as well as close communication with stakeholders for further engagement*

The existing transparent mechanism would continue to be adopted in the review and consultation process, which includes a healthy divergence and balance of professional views in reaching the best possible recommendations for the medium-term review. A comprehensive engagement and rigorous consultation process would also be adopted at all levels to engage all relevant stakeholders and collect views to inform the decisions.

5. Major Issues for Deliberation

5.1 While the major feedback on the Report will be followed up, all subjects will continue to conduct ongoing and regular review of their curriculum and assessment. Some specific issues have been identified for further deliberations, which include holistic review on the total impact of SBA as well as the curriculum and assessment in the nine NSS subjects (Chinese Language, Liberal Studies, Mathematics, Business, Accounting and Financial Studies, Chinese Literature, Economics, Ethics and Religious Studies, Geography, Health Management and Social Care) and Applied Learning. Further exploration on the HKDSE Examination and further studies on other emerging issues (e.g. the “unintended impact” of the student programme) will also be conducted. Details of the major issues for deliberation are summarised in Appendix 4.

6. The Policy Review Structure and Mechanism

Principle-based membership of CDC and its committees

6.1 As advisory bodies to curriculum and assessment, CDC and its

committees will continue to play a key role in the medium-term review. Principle-based membership of CDC and its committees will continue to be upheld. To ensure a healthy turnover of membership in the committees, 6-year rule is observed as far as possible in the appointment mechanism to bring in new blood and fresh perspectives for the medium-term review while maintaining their long-term continuity. For the nomination of CDC-HKEAA Committees, there has been joint dialogic discussion and nominations between CDI and HKEAA based on agreed criteria including a well-balanced representation.

Professional discussions and extensive consultations at all levels

6.2 CDC and its committees are widely represented by tertiary institutions, school heads and practicing teachers, bringing in both frontline and professional perspectives for decision making and implementation. Both subject experts and experts in teacher education from tertiary institutions are represented in most committees. The diverse and balanced membership at all levels enables engagement of different views and multiple perspectives with healthy tension. Feedback will also be collected through extended professional channels including Principals' Liaison Meetings, Liaison Group on "334" Interface Issues, forums, networks, focus group interviews and surveys.

Joint roles of CDC and HKEAA

6.3 CDC and HKEAA are tasked to develop the whole school curricula and public examination system as well as promote assessment literacy to support curriculum development for the local education system through CDC and HKEAA committees. CDC Committees (CDCC) serve as a forum for formulating directions of development in the eight Key Learning Areas (KLAs) and Liberal Studies, and mapping out plans and strategies for the development of different curricula including school subjects. They are widely represented by tertiary institutions, professional bodies, school heads and practicing teachers, bringing both frontline and professional perspectives necessary for decision-making and implementing the recommendations. While some members are appointed by the government, some are nominated by school principals or the tertiary institutions. Both CDC and HKEAA will readily engage, communicate and consult all relevant stakeholders at different stages.

CDC and HKEAA will also communicate with CDCC and set directions for the KLA's curriculum and assessment design, and receive feedback and recommendations by various stakeholder groups. The recommendations made by the various committees will be forwarded to the CDC and HKEAA for their comment and endorsement.

Roles of CDC, HKEAA and all committees (and working groups) in the review

6.4 CDC, with its secretariat support provided by EDB, is advising on all matters relating to curriculum development for the school system from kindergarten to the sixth form while HKEAA takes care of all matters relating to assessment and public examinations. Following the steer and the directions from CDC and HKEAA, the relevant CDCC, HKDSE Subject Committees and CDC-HKEAA Committees (One Committees) will make continuous joint efforts to deliberate on the medium- and long-term suggestions with professional and secretariat support from EDB and HKEAA. Separate and joint meetings will be held (please refer to the Table on the Proposed Schedule) as necessary. It is expected that all the committees and working groups will continue to:

(1) make further recommendations on fine-tuning the curriculum and assessment of the subjects, updating and improving the curriculum contents, and assessment design (including SBA) with reference to the guiding principles for the NSS curriculum, the overarching principles for the review as well as feedback and data collected through different channels, e.g. surveys and forums in the past few months on the recommendations for the betterment of student learning.

(2) suggest and provide further information that helps towards understanding the NSS curricula, including their breadth and depth, and prepare supplementary notes or resource materials to support the early implementation of the revised subject curriculum and assessment where necessary.

(3) recommend significant issues that would require more data and deliberation to be further discussed or reviewed at the long-term stage, with a systematic, feasible plan as well as a proposed schedule in order to benefit students and schools as soon as possible (i.e. from 2019 HKDSE Examination onwards).

(4) contribute general feedback and recommendations for the broader review of the NSS curriculum and assessment such as the direction of curriculum development, learning and teaching, assessment practices, support measures for schools and students, etc, while taking a balanced professional view embracing both a holistic and a subject perspective.

7. The Review Mechanism, Engagement and Communication

7.1 The medium-term review would be co-ordinated jointly by EDB, CDC and HKEAA for relevant issues and the 24 NSS subjects, and conducted by the relevant CDC Committees, HKDSE Subject Committees and One Committees. CDCC will first discuss and decide on the key issues to review, and work out the strategic/action plans for their KLA/subject. One Committees set up under CDCC and HKEAA Public Examinations Board (PEB) will take the direction from CDCC and PEB and decide on detailed action plans as well as the setting up of working groups on a need basis. The HKDSE Subject Committees will work with the relevant committees to make proposals concerning assessment changes, taking into consideration the impact of the examination feedback on the review and recommendations. All committees will work collaboratively as necessary (e.g. including joint meetings) to deliberate on and to address critical issues and recommendations.

7.2 It is important to continue to adopt the existing transparent mechanism and conduct comprehensive consultations at all levels (e.g. consultation sessions, forums, questionnaires and focus group interviews) to engage all relevant stakeholders particularly the school sector as appropriate. School surveys would be conducted on the recommendations to collect views to inform the final recommendations as necessary. CDC and HKEAA will also engage different stakeholders and maintain close communication with other partner organisations and stakeholder groups via relevant/regular liaison meetings such as Principals' Liaison Meeting, Liaison Group on "334" Interface Issues and Employer Working Group.

8. Recommendations, Reporting and Dissemination

8.1 Recommendations by the relevant committees are expected to be

available in March/April 2014, and endorsed in the joint CDC-PEB meeting in April/May 2014.

8.2 Based on the overarching principles that govern our review and to address schools' concerns as well as benefit students as soon as possible but yet to accommodate different needs of time among subjects/issues, **announcement of the first batch of medium-term recommendations would be made in July 2014** so that schools could prepare and plan for the coming school year. While the short-term recommendations are for teaching at Secondary 4 in the 2013/14 school year (sy) leading to the 2016 HKDSE Examination, **the medium-term recommendations could be made for teaching at Secondary 4 in the 2014/15 sy or 2015/16 sy leading to the 2017 or 2018 HKDSE Examination** respectively to benefit students and schools at the earliest possible time. **The last batch of medium-term recommendations would be made no later than July 2015.**

8.3 EDB and HKEAA would advise/facilitate the development of necessary support materials or other measures for schools' use in learning and teaching while making it flexible for textbook publishers to produce the textbooks as necessary.

8.4 There will be close communication between CDC and HKEAA with reports made to EC and LegCo as appropriate, while steer will be provided by the senior management of EDB and HKEAA through frequent meetings and discussions as well as seamless collaboration.

9. Schedule, Information and Contacts

9.1 Extensive consultation has been conducted at the short-term stage with all relevant stakeholders (school sector, post secondary institutions, educational/professional bodies, employers, etc.), from which recommendations and suggestions for the short- and medium-term were formulated. Building on the feedback collected on the recommendations, the medium-term review would address the unresolved issues through structured meetings and discussions between CDC and HKEAA as well as continuous stakeholder consultation and engagement, in particular the school sector. The proposed schedule for the medium-term review is

outlined as follows. The NAS review designated webpage (http://334.edb.hkedcity.net/EN/334_review.php) will continue to provide information and events related to the review and further development.

Proposed Schedule for the NAS Review (Medium-term)

Time Line	CDC/HKEAA meetings	Engagement of the school sector	Engagement of other key stakeholders
Sep - 2013	<p>1st round –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDC to discuss and set directions for the review • CDCC hold their first meeting and discuss the medium-term review for the relevant subjects • One Committees formed under CDCC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous collection of views from schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous collection of views from liaison meetings and stakeholder groups e.g. post-secondary institutions, parents, employers, etc.
Oct 2013	<p>2nd round –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One Committees and HKDSE Subject Committees hold their first meetings to review the 2013 exam and feedback on curriculum and assessment matters and discuss the medium-term review for the relevant subjects (joint meeting could be held as necessary) • Working groups formed on subject basis, on need basis and whenever necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public announcement of the review • CM to schools to launch the review, invite comments and collect feedback • Meetings with school representatives and professional bodies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous collection of views from liaison meetings and stakeholder groups • Focus groups/ meetings with stakeholders
Nov 2013 - Jan 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One/Subject Committees /Working groups to deliberate on critical issues • CDCC, One Committees, Subject Committees and working groups to deliberate on the recommendations and propose changes for soliciting feedback from schools and other concerned groups / educational bodies • CDC and PEB to discuss and advise on the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus group interviews with each subject group, principals / middle managers, etc • Report/ Feedback on the interim results of the review • Collect schools' feedback on the initial proposals if any 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection of views from liaison meetings and stakeholder groups on initial proposals if any • Focus groups/ meetings with stakeholders

Time Line	CDC/HKEAA meetings	Engagement of the school sector	Engagement of other key stakeholders
	recommendations		
Feb 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings to be held as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Survey to schools on the recommendations on curriculum and assessment design if any</i> • <i>Focus group interviews with each subject group, principals / middle managers, etc whenever necessary</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect feedback from schools and stakeholders to inform further improvement of the proposals
Mar 2014	3rd round – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint CDCC, One Committees, Subject Committees and working groups to discuss final proposals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect schools’ feedback on the final proposals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize proposals & collect views on the final proposals
Apr/ May 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of finalised proposals for endorsement in Joint CDC–PEB meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disseminate recommendations to schools, teachers, professional associations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disseminate recommendations to liaison meetings, stakeholder groups, overseas strategic partners
July 2014	Announcement of first batch of medium-term recommendations		
Sep 2014		<i>Briefing sessions for schools as necessary</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain and collect feedback on the recommendations • <i>Supplementary notes/resource materials to be provided to schools as necessary</i>
Oct 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDC, CDCC, One Committees, Subject Committees and working groups to continue to deliberate on critical issues as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous collection of views from schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous collection of views from liaison meetings and stakeholder groups

Time Line	CDC/HKEAA meetings	Engagement of the school sector	Engagement of other key stakeholders
Oct/ Nov 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDCC, One Committees, Subject Committees and working groups to deliberate on the recommendations and propose changes for soliciting feedback from schools and other concerned groups / educational bodies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Survey to schools on the recommendations on curriculum and assessment design if any</i> • <i>Focus group interviews with each subject group, principals / middle managers, etc whenever necessary</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect feedback from schools and stakeholders to inform further improvement of the proposals
Nov 2014 –Jan 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDCC, One Committees, Subject Committees and working groups to discuss and improve proposals based on feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous collection of views from schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous collection of views from liaison meetings and stakeholder groups
Feb 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDC and PEB to discuss and advise on the recommendations • Meetings to be held as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous collection of views from schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous collection of views from liaison meetings and stakeholder groups
Mar 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint CDCC, One Committees, Subject Committees and working groups to discuss final proposals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect schools' feedback on the final proposals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize proposals & collect views on the final proposals
Apr/ May 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of finalised proposals for endorsement in Joint CDC–PEB meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disseminate recommendations to schools, teachers, professional associations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disseminate recommendations to liaison meetings, stakeholder groups, overseas strategic partners
July 2015	Announcement of last batch of medium-term recommendations		

- Flexibility (e.g. in time frame, methods) will be given in order to cater for the actual review or developmental needs of each NSS subject or curriculum/assessment aspect
- The schedule and milestones are subject to change wherever necessary

9.2 Schools, teachers and all sectors of society are welcome to give opinions and suggestions so that viable plans can be made to continually enhance the quality of education in Hong Kong.

Please feel free to send your comments and suggestions on the review to:

Education Bureau	Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority
<p>Chief Curriculum Development Officer (Council and Secondary) Curriculum Development Institute Education Bureau Room 1302, Wu Chung House 213 Queen's Road East Wanchai Hong Kong</p> <p>Fax: 2573 5299 Email: councilandsecondary@edb.gov.hk</p>	<p>General Manager Assessment Development Division Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority 13/F Southorn Centre 130 Hennessy Road Wanchai, Hong Kong</p> <p>Fax: 3628 8091 Email: add@hkeaa.edu.hk</p>

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1) Policy Documents

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2) Curriculum and Assessment Documents

- Curriculum Development Council and the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (2007) *Curriculum and Assessment Guides Secondary 4-6) for the 24 NSS Subjects*, Hong Kong: Curriculum Development Council and the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority.
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- Curriculum Development Council, Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority and Education Bureau (2013) *Progress Report on the New Academic Structure Review: The New Senior Secondary Learning Journey - Moving Forward to Excel*, Hong Kong: Curriculum Development Council, Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority and Education Bureau

3) Websites

- The New Academic Structure for Senior Secondary Education and Higher Education – NAS Web Bulletin, Hong Kong: Education Bureau. (<http://www.edb.gov.hk/nas>)
- Website for the HKDSE, Hong Kong: Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority. (<http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/tc/hkdse/>)

Summary of short-term and medium-/long-term recommendations

Details of the recommendations for the short-term and medium-/long-term are given below. EDB and HKEAA will continue to provide schools with support measures in the implementation of the fine-tuned curriculum and assessment, e.g. supplementary notes, resource packages, exemplars, and professional development programmes.

Subject	Short-term (Effective from 2013/14 sy)	Medium-/Long-term (Issues to explore)
Chinese Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Adjust no. of electives to study: from 3-4 to 2-4 (S6; 2014 HKDSE) · Streamline exam paper: Paper 4 -- delete reading aloud and include 1 min. speech in 1st round of group discussion (S6; 2014 HKDSE) · Integrate exam paper: Combine Papers 3 & 5: (S4; 2016 HKDSE) · Streamline SBA: Delete SBA task on “Coursework and Other Language Activity” of the Compulsory Part (S6; 2014 HKDSE) · Clarify SBA requirement: Reading records 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Explore introducing classical set texts and assessment of these texts in Chinese Language
English Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Streamline SBA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reduce no. of SBA tasks from 3 to 2 (S6; 2014 HKDSE); ■ Report one mark from Part A and one mark from Part B (S6; 2014 HKDSE) 	
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Trim curriculum content: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Compulsory Part (S4; 2016 HKDSE) ■ M1 and M2 (S4; 2016 HKDSE) · Not implementing SBA (S4; 2016 HKDSE onwards) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Review the NSS Mathematics curriculum framework
Liberal Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Clarify curriculum breadth and depth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Issue a curriculum and assessment resource package · Streamline and clarify SBA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Implement streamlined IES (S6; 2014 HKDSE, announced in Feb 2012) ■ Schools are not required to submit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Review curriculum and assessment design: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Recommendations on reviewing curriculum and assessment design in the medium term, to be ready by mid-2015

Subject	Short-term (Effective from 2013/14 sy)	Medium-/Long-term (Issues to explore)
	<p>the Process assessment records (benefit S6 in 2013/14 sy, 2014 HKDSE onwards)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Clarify IES assessment requirement <p>· Provide more support for learning and teaching:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Enhance school-based support wherever necessary ■ Enhance resource platform (e.g. resource pack and good practices) ■ Strengthen interface between JS curriculum and NSS LS 	
Business, Accounting and Financial Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Trim curriculum content (about 15%): compulsory & elective parts (S4; 2016 HKDSE) · Adjust exam time (in line with adjustment in curriculum): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Paper 1: reduce exam time from 1 hr 30 mins to 1 hr 15 mins (S6; 2014 HKDSE) ■ Paper 2: reduce exam time from 2 hrs 30 mins to 2 hrs 15 mins (S6; 2014 HKDSE) · Improve assessment design: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Introduce optional questions in Section B of Paper 1 (S6; 2014 HKDSE) ■ Corresponding changes in exam rubrics (S6; 2014 HKDSE) · Provide support for learning and teaching: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Specify clearer cut-off date for accounting standards (S4; 2016 HKDSE) · Explore the possibility of separate reporting Not implementing SBA (S4; 2016 HKDSE onwards) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Explore the feasibility of splitting the subject and/or separate grading and reporting in BAFS
Biology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Update and revise curriculum content: Fine-tune compulsory & elective parts (S4; 2016 HKDSE) · Streamline SBA (S6; 2014 HKDSE, 	

Subject	Short-term (Effective from 2013/14 sy)	Medium-/Long-term (Issues to explore)
	announced in Feb 2012)	
Chemistry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Update and revise curriculum content: Fine-tune compulsory & elective parts (S4; 2016 HKDSE) · Streamline SBA (S6; 2014 HKDSE, announced in Feb 2012) 	
Chinese History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Adjust no. of electives to study: from 2 to 1 (S4; 2016 HKDSE) · Streamline exam paper: Align time & weighting of questions in Paper 1 and Paper 2 (S4; 2016 HKDSE) · Streamline SBA (S6; 2014 HKDSE, announced in Feb 2012) 	
Chinese Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Adjust no. of electives to study: from 3-4 to 2-4 (S6; 2014 HKDSE) · Streamline exam paper: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Paper 1 – delete segmental writing; reduce exam time from 3 hrs to 2 hrs (S6; 2014 HKDSE) ■ Paper 2 – reduce 3Q/5Q to 2Q/4Q; reduce exam time from 3 hrs to 2 hrs (S6; 2014 HKDSE) · Defer SBA to 2019 HKDSE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Explore revision of set texts in Chinese Literature · Streamline SBA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Delete SBA task on “Reading” of Compulsory Part (S4 in 2016/17 sy; 2019 HKDSE); ■ Reduce SBA weighting (S4 in 2016/17 sy; 2019 HKDSE) · SBA: optional trial (2018 HKDSE)
Combined Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Update and revise curriculum content: Fine-tune Phy, Chem, Bio parts (S4; 2016 HKDSE) · Streamline exam paper: Paper 1: reduce no. of MCQs in Phy part (S6; 2014 HKDSE) · Streamline SBA (S6; 2014 HKDSE, announced in Feb 2012) 	
Design and Applied Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Provide support for learning and teaching: Provide SBA project title list (S5; 2015 HKDSE) 	
Economics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Update and fine-tune curriculum content: Update 1 sub-topic and fine-tune 4 sub-topics (S4; 2016 HKDSE) · Adjust exam time (to provide candidates with more time to study the questions and organize their answers) Paper 2: lengthen exam time from 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · (i) Consider the feasibility of incorporating a news commentary type question / data response question in public examination to replace SBA and (ii) Explore further development of the topics of the curriculum · Streamline SBA: Reduce no. of

Subject	Short-term (Effective from 2013/14 sy)	Medium-/Long-term (Issues to explore)
	hrs to 2 hrs 15 mins (S6; 2014 HKDSE) · Defer SBA to 2019 HKDSE	SBA tasks from 3 to 2 (S4 in 2016/17 sy; 2019 HKDSE) · SBA: optional trial (2018 HKDSE)
Ethics and Religious Studies	· Clarify curriculum breadth & depth and provide more exemplars (S4; 2016 HKDSE) · Defer SBA to 2019 HKDSE	· Explore reduction of SBA workload in Ethics and Religious Studies · SBA: optional trial (2018 HKDSE)
Geography	· Update and fine-tune curriculum content: Minor amendment in explanatory notes in C&A Guide (S4; 2016 HKDSE) · Adjust exam time (to provide candidates with more time to study the questions and organize their answers) Paper 2: lengthen exam time from 1 hr to 1 hr 15 mins (S6; 2014 HKDSE) · Defer SBA to 2019 HKDSE	· Study the need to revise the NSS Geography curriculum; and to study the issue of insufficient lesson time for the learning and teaching and to propose possible solutions · Streamline SBA (S4 in 2016/17 sy; 2019 HKDSE) · SBA: optional trial (2018 HKDSE)
Health Management and Social Care	· Adjust exam time (to provide candidates with more time to study the questions and organize their answers) Paper 2: lengthen exam time from 1hr 30 mins to 1 hr 45 mins (S6; 2014 HKDSE) · Defer SBA to 2019 HKDSE	· Review the curriculum and assessment designs and SBA, including the format of the report in SBA (written / audio-visual) and weighting of SBA · Streamline SBA : Delete the audio-visual task of the ‘Project for Electives’ (S4 in 2016/17 sy; 2019 HKDSE) · SBA: optional trial (2018 HKDSE)
History	· Adjust exam time (to provide candidates with more time to study the questions and organize their answers) Paper 2: lengthen exam time from 1 hr 15 mins to 1 hr 30 mins (S6; 2014 HKDSE) · Streamline SBA (S6; 2014 HKDSE, announced in Feb 2012)	
Information and Communication Technology	· Update and revise curriculum content: Fine-tune 4 curriculum topics (S4; 2016 HKDSE) · Streamline SBA (S5; 2015 HKDSE) · Revise the list of SQL commands and spreadsheet functions provided on exam papers for candidates’ reference (S4; 2016 HKDSE)	

Subject	Short-term (Effective from 2013/14 sy)	Medium-/Long-term (Issues to explore)
Integrated Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Clarify curriculum breadth & depth: Specify the examples required under certain topics (S4; 2016 HKDSE) · Streamline SBA (S6; 2014 HKDSE, announced in Feb 2012) 	
Literature in English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Update and revise curriculum content: Merge 2 lists of set texts (S4; 2016 HKDSE) · Improve assessment design (S4; 2016 HKDSE) : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Paper 1 (Essay Writing) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Part 1: offer optional questions for Sections A, B and C to allow choice between two novels, two plays and two films; adopt a single short story list with no. of stories reduced from 10 to 8 for Section D - Part 2: set generalized questions ■ Paper 2 (Appreciation) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduce Paper 2 exam time from 2.5 hrs to 2 hrs; - In Section A, provide a choice of 4 questions, one for each novel and one for each play, that involve a single extract; and in Section B adopt a single list of poems (no. reduced from 18 to 15) · Defer SBA to 2019 HKDSE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · SBA: optional trial (2018 HKDSE)
Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Defer SBA to 2019 HKDSE (SBA will be implemented earlier if supported by schools) · Improve assessment design (S5; 2015 HKDSE): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Streamline assessment of performance and composing skills ■ Reduce duration and number of compositions and words · SBA: 1st pilot run in 2013/14 sy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · SBA: 2nd pilot run in 2014/15 sy · Evaluate pilot run and make recommendations on the implementation schedule of SBA (2015/16 sy) · SBA: optional trial (2018 HKDSE) (will implement earlier if supported by schools)

Subject	Short-term (Effective from 2013/14 sy)	Medium-/Long-term (Issues to explore)
Physical Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Improve assessment design Increase the exam weighting of practical component from 30% to 40% (S4; 2016 HKDSE) · Not implementing SBA Replace SBA by public practical examination (S4; 2016 HKDSE) 	
Physics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Update and revise curriculum content: Fine-tune compulsory & elective parts (S4; 2016 HKDSE) · Streamline exam paper: Paper 1: reduce no. of MCQs (S6; 2014 HKDSE) · Streamline SBA (S6; 2014 HKDSE, announced in Feb 2012) 	
Technology and Living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Defer SBA to 2019 HKDSE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Streamline SBA (S4 in 2016/17 sy; 2019 HKDSE) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Delete the practical work of the prescribed tasks; ■ Revise weighting of assessment tasks · SBA: optional trial (2018 HKDSE)
Tourism and Hospitality Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Update and fine-tune curriculum content: Rearrange topics in the compulsory part and specify the breadth & depth of the topics (S4; 2016 HKDSE) · Defer SBA to 2019 HKDSE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Streamline SBA (S4 in 2016/17 sy; 2019 HKDSE) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Delete the Task ■ Increase no. of course assignments from 2 to 3 ■ Reduce SBA weighting from 30% to 15% · SBA: optional trial (2018 HKDSE)
Visual Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Streamline SBA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reduce to ONE portfolio consisting of a research workbook and 4 pieces of artwork/critical studies of a theme (S5 and S6; 2015 and 2014 HKDSE, announced in Feb 2012); ■ Increase the maximum number of sample pages of the Research Workbook to be submitted for moderation from 12 to 24 (S4; 2016 HKDSE) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Review how to assess students' response in connecting art appreciation and art making

Subject	Short-term (Effective from 2013/14 sy)	Medium-/Long-term (Issues to explore)
Applied Learning courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Review and update courses · Enhance recognition and articulation (e.g. explore curriculum mapping, linking to Qualifications Framework (QF)) · Strengthen support (e.g. review funding, taster programmes, encourage courses in English for non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students, pilot early commencement in S4, strengthen professional development (PD) for ApL coordinators) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Continue feedback collection and course review · Review the grading mechanism · Evaluate early commencement of ApL in S4 and linking ApL to the Qualifications Framework

Note: There are *other related and emerging issues* identified through the review process and they may not be listed in this table. Please also refer to Appendix 4 for major issues.

**Critical milestones for key actions on NAS Review (Medium-term)
2013/14 to 2017/18 school year**

Key Actions	By 2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	
Curriculum Design	<i>Supplementary notes</i> for all subjects to					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • further clarify the breadth and depth of curriculum; and/or • support learning, teaching and assessment 					
	<i>Resource packages</i> on specific topics to enhance the effectiveness of learning, teaching and assessment					
	• LS, THS, PE					
	← Chin Lang, ERS, Hist →					
	← Chin Lit →					
	<i>Exemplars</i> for dissemination of good practices					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chin Lang, Eng Lang, Lit in Eng, Math, Chem, Econ, ERS, HMSC, ICT, TL 		← Geog →			
• Chin Hist			• Chin Hist			
← Chin Lit →						
← LS →						
<i>Seed projects/pilot schemes</i> to support delivery of the fine-tuned curriculum and assessment						

Key Actions	By 2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
		←—————Chin Lang, Music —————→			
	• Chin Lit				
		←—————Geog —————→			
	• On-going seed projects in PE to promote collaborative research development for delivery of the fine-tuned curriculum and assessment				
	Working Groups to further explore issues on curriculum and/or assessment				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chin Lang: to explore introducing classical set texts and assessment of these texts • Chin Lit: to explore revision of set texts • Math: to review the NSS Math curriculum framework • Econ: to consider the feasibility of incorporating a news commentary type question/ data response question in public examination to replace SBA, and to explore further development of the curriculum • ERS: to explore reduction of SBA workload • Geog: to study the need to revise the NSS Geog curriculum, the issue of insufficient lesson time for the learning and teaching and to propose possible solutions 				

Key Actions	By 2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HMSC: to review the curriculum and assessment designs and SBA • LS: to review the curriculum and assessment designs and SBA, recommendations ready by mid-2015 • SBA: to review the implementation of SBA in the HKDSE and make recommendations for further improvements 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BAFS: to explore the feasibility of splitting the subject and/or separate grading and reporting 				
<i>Regular review</i> on curriculum for all subjects for updating and improving design					
Assessment and Examination	<p><i>Updating</i> in Regulations and Assessment Frameworks and SBA handbooks for HKDSE to enhance support in assessment</p> <p><i>Exploration</i> on further streamlined SBA to address concerns without compromising international benchmarking/ recognition and curriculum objectives</p>				
					Optional trial of SBA in 2018 HKDSE:

Key Actions	By 2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
					Chin Lit, Lit in Eng, Econ, ERS, Geog, THS, HMSC, TL, Music
	<i>Regular review</i> on assessment for all subjects for updating and improving design				
Learning/Teaching Resources	<i>Continuous development</i> of learning/teaching resources for all subjects				
Professional Development Programmes	<i>Continuous professional development programmes</i> provided in a timely manner to support whole-school curriculum development, pedagogical changes as well as reform of school assessment culture				
School-based Support and Quality Education Fund	<i>Continuous further alignment</i> between work of school-based support services, university partnership projects and the Quality Education Fund to support schools to implement the recommendations to address relevant concerns and improve student learning				
Applied Learning	Regular provision of ApL courses to provide diversified choices Review on funding to support ApL implementation in school Enhancing taster programmes to help students make informed choice of ApL courses Encouraging course providers to offer courses in English to support the diverse needs of students, e.g. NCS students				
			Pilot early commencement of ApL in S4 to study		

Key Actions	By 2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
			the feasibility and effectiveness		
				Exploring curriculum mapping of ApL	
	PD for ApL coordinators to facilitate better support for students				
		Exploring linking ApL to QF			
					Reviewing the grading mechanism

- Flexibility (e.g. in time frame, methods) will be given in order to cater for the actual review or developmental needs of each NSS subject or curriculum/assessment aspect
- The schedule and milestones are subject to change wherever necessary

Summary of Key Feedback on NSS Curriculum and Assessment

	Positive Feedback	Issues of Concern
1. Curriculum Design	<p><u>Streamlining/fine-tuning of curriculum</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The strength of NSS curriculum appreciated • Fine-tuned curriculum well-received in general 	<p><u>Breadth and depth of curriculum</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breadth and depth of curriculum still not clear (e.g. Chem, ICT, LS) • Request for further trimming of curriculum content (e.g. Chin Lang, Chin Lit, Econ, Eng Lang, Geog, LS, Maths (M2), Phy) • The curriculum design and lesson time should be considered together. • Unintended ‘narrowing’ of NSS curriculum due to washback effect of university admission, pragmatic gaming, mobility of teachers, etc.
2. Public Assessment	<p><u>Improvement measures on assessment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term measures on the public examination generally supported 	<p><u>Scope of assessment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope of assessment should be trimmed in parallel with the reduced teaching time
3. School-based Assessment (SBA)	<p><u>Streamlining measures</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term SBA streamlining measures generally supported 	<p><u>Further streamlining</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requests for further streamlining of SBA in implemented subjects (e.g. ICT, HMSC, Eng Lang) and reducing SBA weighting (e.g. HMSC,

	Positive Feedback	Issues of Concern
	<p><u>Holistic consideration</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SBA is not the major factor affecting students' subject choice. Other aspects should be studied in greater depth. 	<p>Phy, Eng Lang)</p> <p><u>Further deferral/cancellation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requests for further deferral of SBA/ cancellation of SBA (e.g. Chin Hist, Chin Lang, Chin Lit, Econ; ERS, ICT, PE, THS, Geog); and simplifying/ cancelling IES (LS)
4. Catering for Learner diversity	<p><u>Curriculum/Assessment design</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Categorisation of the Compulsory Part into foundation and non-foundation topics to cater for learner diversity in Maths supported 	<p><u>Learning, teaching, assessment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns remain on learner diversity (e.g. Chin Lang, Eng Lang, Lit in Eng, VA) Requests for more support measures to address the issue of learner diversity
5. Support Measures	<p><u>Professional development support</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "SLW 2013" garnered great interest and positive feedback from participants <p><u>Supplementary notes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of supplementary notes well-received 	<p><u>Grants/Manpower</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request for grant, extra manpower (particularly for LS, OLE/SLP) and administration support (e.g. ApL). <p><u>Supplementary notes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request for more support such as Supplementary Notes and PDPs

Major issues for deliberation in the New Academic Structure Review (Medium-term)

School-based Assessment (SBA)

- As part and parcel of the whole-school curriculum and public assessment, a holistic review on the total impact of SBA would be conducted to explore the possibility of further streamlining in order to address the workload issues while maintaining international recognition and the underlying principles of SBA.

Core Subjects

- **Chinese Language** - explore introducing classical set texts and assessment of these texts in the examination
- **Liberal Studies** - review curriculum and assessment design
- **Mathematics** - review the NSS Mathematics curriculum framework

Elective Subjects

- **Business, Accounting and Financial Studies** - explore the feasibility of splitting the subject and/or separate grading and reporting
- **Chinese Literature** - explore revision of set texts
- **Economics** - (i) consider the feasibility of incorporating a news commentary type question / data response question in the examination to replace SBA and (ii) explore further development of the topics of the curriculum
- **Ethics and Religious Studies** - explore reduction of SBA workload
- **Geography** - study the need to revise the NSS Geography curriculum; and to study the issue of insufficient lesson time for the learning and teaching and to propose possible solutions
- **Health Management and Social Care** - review the curriculum and assessment designs and SBA, including the format of the report in SBA (written / audio-visual) and weighting of SBA

Applied Learning Courses (ApL)

Apart from the regular review of ApL courses, the medium-term review will include:

- reviewing the grading mechanism; and
- evaluation of early commencement of ApL in S4 and linking ApL to the Qualifications Framework.

HKDSE Examination

Further exploration on the HKDSE Examination to better accommodate learner diversity, if deemed appropriate, which may include:

- introduction of half subjects in some suitable NSS subjects; and
- revisiting the ‘grading’ system.

Other Related and Emerging Issues

Further studies on emerging issues which include:

- “unintended” impact, e.g. whether the student programme has achieved a broad and balanced curriculum with specialization achieved in a broad knowledge base (i.e. 4 core subjects + 2/3 elective subjects: “shrinking knowledge base”? Is there a need to offer more Other Language Courses?);
- some curriculum design/assessment principles, e.g. whether values have been appropriately applied in public assessment; whether the admission requirements and scoring system should be further improved;
- professional capacity and sustainability, nature of support for schools and teachers;
- catering for learner diversity & need to support schools (both lower achievers and more able students);
- Other Learning Experiences (OLE) and Student Learning Profile (SLP) (e.g. how is it affected by 2400±200 lesson hours?);
- some emerging issues related to other NSS subjects such as Visual Arts and Chinese History; and
- other issues related to curriculum and assessment but outside the curriculum and assessment development cycle which would be suitably discussed and communicated to relevant partner organisations and stakeholders.