

## **Frequently Asked Questions on Special Schools under the New Senior Secondary (NSS) Academic Structure**

Q.1: Can the NSS curriculum (ID) cater for the learning and future living needs of ID students?

A: ➤ Under the principle of “one curriculum framework for all”, the adapted curriculum (including the core subjects and elective subjects) and Other Learning Experiences (OLE) inside and outside classes, to be complemented by individualised education programmes (IEP), enables senior secondary ID students with different abilities to have a balanced and comprehensive development. With Basic Education as the foundation, students can continue to enhance their language proficiency and numeracy skills, consolidate and intensify their learning as well as broaden their horizon. Besides, through various learning activities, they can also stretch their potential and develop their abilities and interests in life-long learning as well as enhance their independence and living skills so as to become well-adapted and contributing members of the community ultimately.

Q.2: Does the EDB allow special schools greater flexibility to implement the NSS curriculum?

A: ➤ Special schools adopting the ordinary secondary curriculum offer Chinese Language, English Language, Mathematics and Liberal Studies as the core subjects, whereas the core subjects of special schools admitting ID students will include Chinese Language, Mathematics and Liberal Studies / Independent Living. Schools offer elective subject in accordance with their particular situations, students’ abilities and interests so that students can benefit from the NSS curriculum.

➤ In view of the various learning needs of SEN students, we have suggested schools allow greater flexibility in developing the school-based curriculum, in particular the curriculum for ID students, such as the allocation of lesson time for the core subjects, elective subjects and OLE, the number of periods and the time for learning, as well as the lesson time for individual subjects and the weighting of various contents within a subject, etc. Below are some suggestions for developing the NSS (ID) curriculum:

- The time allocated to the core subjects, elective subjects and OLE should be 35-50%, 20-30% and 20-45% respectively;
- The suggested “lesson time” should be no less than 18 hours per week so as to allow schools to provide appropriate support to cater for students’ special needs;

- Schools may consider whether to offer elective parts / elective modules for certain core / elective subjects according to their students' actual abilities; and
- The weighting of contents of certain elective subjects can be adjusted according to students' abilities.

Q.3: Does the EDB offer adequate elective subjects and ApL courses for ID students in special schools under the new academic structure?

- A:
- Up to the 2013/14 school year, the EDB has completed curriculum adaptation for elective subjects of Physical Education, Visual Arts, Information and Communication Technology, Technology and Living, Music, Design and Applied Technology, Ethics and Religious Studies as well as Health Management and Social Care.
  - Students can also choose the adapted Applied Learning courses for students with intellectual disability as their elective.

Q.4: Under NSS, how will schools assess the learning progress and performance of ID students, as well as their learning achievement after the 6-year secondary education?

- A:
- Under NSS, special schools will continue to adopt school-based assessment to assess the learning performance of ID students.
  - Schools may go further to formulate indicators of expected learning outcomes for students in accordance with the Learning Progression Frameworks (LPFs) of the three core subjects (Chinese Language, Mathematics and Liberal Studies/Independent Living) in order to have a better understanding of their learning progress and performance at the senior secondary level.
  - The LPFs of the three core subjects (Chinese Language, Mathematics and Liberal Studies/Independent Living) and the related Teachers' Guide were published and distributed to schools in August 2012. Schools can use them as reference of students' specific learning performance in the three core subjects.
  - EDB encourages schools to record students' learning experiences and achievements in the Student Learning Profiles (SLP) to reflect their whole-person development.

Q.5: Will ID students undergo the same qualification accreditation as the students in ordinary schools?

- A:
- It is the EDB' long-term goal to develop a system to record and recognize the achievements of students with intellectual disabilities.

- IEP and SLP are used currently as important references to record and understand the various achievements of ID students.

Q.6: How does the EDB support special schools admitting students with intellectual disabilities through professional training programmes in implementing the NSS education?

A: ➤ The EDB provide school personnel and other professionals of ID schools with professional training programmes of various levels and categories including those on the planning of NSS curriculum, curriculum interpretation of the core and elective subjects, teaching strategies, Using LPFs for practicing Assessment for Learning, sharing of experience on curriculum tryout, implementation of OLE, etc. Information of training activities has been posted on the Training Calendar System of the EDB Webpage.

Q.7: What measures will the Government and relevant organisations take to help special school leavers to make a smooth transition to meaningful jobs and training?

- Institutes and Integrated Vocational Training centres offering training and vocational education to special school graduates are now exploring new options and/or offering courses to enhance the choices of exit pathways for students with intellectual disabilities.

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