

Education Bureau Circular Memorandum No. 41/2010

From: Permanent Secretary for Education To: Supervisors / Heads of all aided, government and caput secondary schools, secondary schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme and special schools with senior secondary classes

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The Study Pathways for the Last Cohorts of Secondary 5 Students in 2010 and Secondary 7 Students in 2012

SUMMARY

This circular memorandum (CM) aims to provide information on the study pathways for the last cohorts of Secondary 5 (S5) students in 2010 and S7 students in 2012; and summarise the supporting measures available for these students. Schools are requested to disseminate relevant information to these cohorts of students and their parents to help them make informed choice on further study.

DETAILS

Background

2. With the introduction of the first Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) examination in 2012, the last Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE) and Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination (HKALE) for school candidates would be offered in 2010 and 2012 respectively. Students of these cohorts will have the opportunities to make up results, if needed, by taking the HKCEE and HKALE as private candidates in 2011 and 2013 respectively. However, as public sector schools will no longer provide education programmes leading to HKCEE after 2010 and HKALE after 2012, the Education Bureau (EDB) has adopted and will continue to initiate measures to help these cohorts of students to plan for their study pathways before and after the release of the HKCEE results in 2010 and HKALE results in 2012.

Arrangement for S5 graduates in 2010

3. Available study pathways for the 2010 cohort of S5 graduates are described below.

Progression to S6

4. For students with satisfactory results in HKCEE, they can further their S6 study in their own schools or in other secondary schools and sit for the HKALE in 2012.

5. Under the current Secondary Six Admission Procedure, schools have been given the flexibility to admit S5 students who meet the minimum HKALE entry requirements to fill the discretionary places in their S6 classes. Schools are encouraged to exercise their discretion

to cater for students' need as far as possible.

Multiple pathways for HKCEE students

6. There are many alternative pathways for students who do not choose to or are unable to further their study in S6 / 7. For students who have attained at least five passes (including Chinese Language and English Language) in HKCEE, they may articulate to three-year sub-degree programmes. For others, they may enrol on Project Yi Jin and vocational education / training programmes provided by Vocational Training Council (VTC), Clothing Industry & Training Authority and Construction Industry & Training Authority, and Youth Pre-employment Programmes provided by the Labour Department. Appendix A illustrates the multiple pathways for S5 graduates.

Switching to S5 under the New Senior Secondary Academic Structure

7. As HKEAA will offer the last HKCEE in 2011, students wishing to make up results of HKCEE subjects can sit the last HKCEE as private candidates in 2011. Nonetheless, students may consider switching to the New Senior Secondary (NSS) curriculum at S5 and sit for the first HKDSE in 2012. Given that there is sufficient curriculum continuity between HKCEE and NSS subjects¹, students should have no great difficulty picking up the study in S5 and S6 under the New Academic Structure (NAS). As regards School-based Assessment (SBA), since only SBA done in S5 and S6 are counted, switching to the new system in S5 basically does not affect the SBA marks of the subjects concerned.

8. Based on the past statistics, only a small percentage of S5 graduates repeated in S5. So, we anticipate that the quota for repeaters in schools will be sufficient to meet with the demand for the 2010 cohort of HKCEE candidates as schools will be allowed to make use of the approved 5% repeater quota computed on a whole school basis for this cohort of students (please refer to Education Bureau Circular Memorandum No. 99/2009 for details).

9. Students could pursue an alternative curriculum to suit their aptitudes and interests. Some senior secondary schools, which are more ready to admit this cohort of students, are providing special courses for S4-6 students to supplement the NSS curriculum. These special courses include Work-based Learning Programme, Tourism and Hospitality, Media Writing and Production, etc. Students can visit the homepages of these schools for details through their hyperlinks available in this website <http://cd.edb.gov.hk/334map/>.

Suggested measures for schools to help students and parents to plan ahead

10. While we appeal to schools to consider admitting students of their own schools and students from other schools to study S5 under the NSS in the 2010/11 school year, we also wish to remind schools of the need to timely and fully inform this cohort of students the various study pathways and provide them with the appropriate career guidance services (such as careers talks, career counseling for individual students / groups of students who may have diverse learning abilities or special educational needs) to help students and parents in make informed choice on further study². As schools are advised to admit students of the last S5

¹ For example, having completed secondary education, the S5 students are already equipped with the necessary learning skills and the knowledge foundation for studying the NSS Liberal Studies. Since Liberal Studies does not take on a rigid progression of study and learning and teaching is based on a number of perennial contemporary issues, these students should be able to take up the study at S5 under the NAS with the assistance of teachers if they take an active attitude towards study.

² Resources in this connection are available from the EDB's webpage on Careers Guidance at <http://www.edb.gov.hk/cgs>.

graduates in 2010 to study S5 under the NAS if places are available, to address students' and parents' concerns, schools are also requested to upload relevant information, such as admission requirements, NSS subjects offered and the number of vacancy, if deemed necessary, on their websites for students' information.

Supporting measures from EDB

11. EDB has adopted and will continue to adopt measures to help the last cohort of S5 students to plan for their study pathways. Publications and materials used in various seminars for this cohort of students can be located on the New Academic Structure “334” Web Bulletin. A one-stop web link (<http://334.edb.hkedcity.net/EN/multiplepathway.php?code=0>) has already been set up to facilitate a quick search for relevant information. The following are upcoming measures:

Seminars / Publications, etc.	Date of release
- “All for Students • For All Students” Career Guidance Service Experience Sharing Sessions (for teachers), with talks on different study pathways for the last cohort of HKCEE Students, including those with diverse learning abilities and special educational needs	March and May 2010
- Search Engine for last three years of S6 Admission Information and school location	Mid-June 2010
- E-version of the Careers Guidance Handbook for S5 Graduates on the EDB website (www.edb.gov.hk/cgs) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage One • Stage Two 	*Mid-June 2010 *Early July 2010
- Careers Guidance Handbook for S5 Graduates	Early July 2010
- Information Expo for Secondary School Leavers 2010	18 and 19 July 2010

* Release of information on Joint Admission Centres and Applied Learning upon issue of 2nd S6 Admission Procedure CM in early July 2010)

Arrangement for secondary school leavers in 2012

12. In 2012, there will be two cohorts of secondary school leavers: around 80,000 NSS S6 graduates and around 30,000 S7 graduates. They may further their studies at degree or sub-degree levels in local institutions, join the workforce or study overseas. Students may also attend the last HKALE as private candidates in 2013.

Degree programmes

13. The Heads of Universities Committee has announced that under NAS, the University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded institutions would consider applications from students who have attained Level 3 in Chinese Language and English Language, and Level 2 in Mathematics and Liberal Studies in the HKDSE for admission to 4-year undergraduate programmes. The number of UGC-funded first-year-first-degree places will be doubled in 2012 to accommodate the two cohorts of HKALE and HKDSE students. These two cohorts of students will be considered separately for admission to UGC-funded institutions and there will be no competition for quota between these two cohorts of students. As 3-year degree programmes will not be offered from 2013 onwards, private candidates of HKALE in 2013

can only apply for the 4-year degree programmes. Individual institutions may provide advance standing to these students on a case-by-case basis.

Sub-degree programmes

14. Sub-degree programmes will continue to provide an alternative pathway to secondary school leavers. The Federation of Continuing Education in Tertiary Institutions (FCE) has suggested that under NAS, the minimum entrance requirements for sub-degree programmes should be five Level 2 in the HKDSE (including Chinese Language and English Language) or equivalent qualifications. The sub-degree programmes under NAS will be two years in length and graduates with satisfactory results may articulate to Year 3 of 4-year degree programmes. The current sub-degree programmes for the HKALE graduates, which are also of two years, may articulate to Year 2 of 3-year degree programmes after the completion of the programmes. Students should choose different pathways in accordance with their ability, interests and aspirations. Based on our latest projection, there would be adequate post secondary places to satisfy the articulation needs of graduates who meet the minimum entrance requirements of sub-degree programmes. Appendix B illustrates the multiple pathways for secondary school leavers in 2012.

Communication

15. EDB will continue to maintain close communication with schools and parents of the last cohort students to ensure a better understanding of the study pathways and the Bureau's arrangement for the last cohorts of students in 2010 and 2012. Channels include seminars for schools, parents and Careers and Guidance teachers, publications, and EDB's homepage. Relevant publications with update arrangement would be released to the relevant target groups through various effective channels. Latest information for schools, students and parents will be provided on the New Academic Structure "334" Web Bulletin at www.edb.gov.hk/334.

16. In this connection, schools are strongly advised to disseminate the relevant information of this CM regarding the multiple study pathways (details can be found in the New Academic Structure "334" Web Bulletin) and their schools' information mentioned in paragraph 10 to their students and parents before the end of the term to facilitate their early planning.

Enquiries

17. For further enquiries, please contact the following officers:

General enquiry	(Tel. no. 2892 6433)
Repeater quota & S6 Admission	(Tel. no. 2863 4713)
Careers Guidance	(Tel. no. 3698 4222)

Dr CHEUNG Kwok-wah
for Permanent Secretary for Education

c.c. Heads of Sections

Multiple Pathways for S5 Graduates under Existing Academic Structure

Pathways	No. of Places
• S6 studies	35,000
• Three-year sub-degree programmes	10,000
• Project Yi Jin	12,000
• Vocational education / training programmes provided by VTC, Clothing Industry & Training Authority, Construction Industry & Training Authority and Youth Pre-employment Programmes provided by Labour Department	14,000
• Overseas studies	-
• Employment	-

Notes:

1. The above figures are projections based on the enrolment figures in 2009. The projections are subject to change due to various factors, e.g. graduates' preference for different pathways.
2. The projected total number of 3-year sub-degree places is around 14,000. Based on the situation in 2009, we estimate that around 10,000 of these places may be taken up by S5 graduates, while the rest may be taken up by students holding equivalent qualifications such as Project Yi Jin.
3. The number of places available for Project Yi Jin and vocational education / training programmes is flexible depending on the demand. In 2009, Project Yi Jin attracted around 12,000 intakes and vocational education / training programmes attracted around 14,000 intakes.

Multiple Pathways for Secondary School Leavers in 2012

Pathway	No. of Places
• UGC-funded degree programmes	29,000
• Self-financing degree programmes	5,000
• Two-year sub-degree programmes	33,000
• Project Yi Jin-type programme	12,000
• Vocational education / training programmes provided by VTC, Clothing Industry & Training Authority, Construction Industry & Training Authority and Youth Pre-employment Programmes by Labour Department	14,000
• Overseas studies	-
• Employment	-

Notes:

1. The number of available places is projected based on the latest available information. The projections are subject to change due to various factors, e.g. graduates' preference for different pathways.
2. The Education Bureau is currently working with FCE to consider the merits and feasibility of providing a new programme based on the Project Yi Jin model under the NAS. The first stage of the study is expected to be completed in the first half of 2010. If the new programme is considered meritorious and feasible, a second stage of the study will be carried out to design the details of the programme which will be put in place from the 2012/13 academic year onwards.
3. The number of places available for the Project Yi Jin-type programme and vocational education/training programmes is flexible depending on the demand. Figures presented here are based on the situation in 2009.