

CDC Committee on English Language Education 2011 - 2013  
Gist of the Second Meeting

Date: 9 May 2012  
Time: 4:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.  
Venue: Room 1024A, 10/F Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East, Wanchai. Hong Kong  
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**1. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2012**

- The minutes of the last meeting were confirmed without any amendments.

**2. Matters arising from the minutes**

- The HKEAA officer explained that a special circular regarding why English Language had not been included in the streamlining proposal would not be necessary as the issue had been explained at each of the three SBA PD sessions conducted in the closing months of 2011.
- It was confirmed that schools were required to submit video recordings of students for SBA to the HKEAA for sample checking.

**3. Brief report on students' performance in the HKDSE practice papers for English Language by the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority**

- The HKEAA Officer reported on the performance of students in the HKDSE practice papers and pointed out that the practice papers were pitched at the right level of difficulty for students.
- In response to a question regarding how the cut score of each subject level would be arrived at, the HKEAA Officer explained that each paper accounted for different proportions of marks in the subject according to the weighting specified in the syllabus. A post marking exercise would be conducted for each paper. The expert judge panel would then determine the subject cutting score for each Level.
- It was pointed out that some teachers found the questions in Part B2 of the live paper much easier than the Practice Paper. The HKEAA Officer commented that sufficient amount of data on students' performance would be needed to determine the level of difficulty of the examination papers.
- When asked if Parts B1 and B2 could be combined into one single part, the HKEAA Officer explained that there was a need for two extended sections targeting at different levels of difficulty to cater for the wide ability range of students under the NSS.
- It was suggested that an additional 5 minutes should be given to students to allow them time to make decision on which Part B of Papers 1 and 3 to attempt.

**4. Presentation of the findings of the Evaluation Study on the Implementation of the English Language Curriculum at Secondary Level conducted by Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU)**

- The research team from HKBU was invited to present the findings of the Evaluation Study. The major findings were highlighted as follows:
  - It was agreed by the majority of panel heads and teachers that the curriculum aims and subject targets in the Curriculum Guide had generally been achieved.
  - The junior secondary curriculum was found by the majority of teachers and panel heads to be focused and manageable. The senior secondary curriculum was perceived as too broad and challenging.
  - The majority of English panels had adapted the suggestions of the CDC curriculum guidelines to develop their school-based curriculum (SBC).
  - Almost all panel heads rated their self-perceived competence in planning the SBC to facilitate a smooth transition between different key stages of learning as average or above. The majority of teachers also rated the effectiveness of their English panels in this aspect as average or above.
  - Most panel heads and teachers claimed to adopt emerging pedagogy (e.g. task-based

learning, activity-based teaching and language arts) rather than conventional pedagogy in their lessons.

- The majority of teachers, panel heads and students had a consensual view that a lot of opportunities were provided in English lessons for students to practise speaking.
  - The vast majority of teachers claimed that they used different teaching strategies and assessment methods to cater for learner diversity, stretch high achieving students as well as engage low achieving students.
  - The vast majority of teachers and panel heads agreed that assessment for learning was practised in their schools. This was corroborated by students' views.
  - The vast majority of teachers and panel heads agreed that SBA was implemented as an integral part of learning and teaching at senior secondary level in their schools, and they had confidence in implementing it.
  - More than half of the teachers and panel heads held a positive view regarding students' motivation and interest in learning English.
  - Administrative work related to the English subject was identified as the heaviest workload by the panel heads whereas developing teaching materials and marking were identified as the heaviest workload by the teachers.
  - More than half of the teachers and panel heads claimed that the professional development programmes provided by the EDB had a positive impact on the implementation of the curriculum reform in the English language subject.
- The recommendations made by the research team were summarised below:
- Peer observation and collaborative lesson planning within schools should be further promoted to sustain capacity building in curriculum implementation.
  - To sustain students' motivation and interest in learning English, differentiated instruction and assessment should be introduced to match students' abilities.
  - Measures should be taken to reduce teachers' workload.
  - More self-access resources should be provided for students to develop their self-learning abilities.
  - The senior secondary curriculum should be reviewed in terms of the scope and level of difficulty.
- Members were invited to give suggestions and comments based on the findings of the Study and the recommendations made. Their comments are summarised as follows:
- It was agreed that the results of the Study were encouraging as the findings were positive.
  - It was suggested that further data collected from lesson observations might be needed to find out how English Language teachers catered for learner diversity and whether the quality of learning and teaching had improved.
  - The Vice-chairperson pointed out that in addition to the findings from the Evaluation Study, observations by the Quality Assurance Division or through curriculum development visits would be used as reference for the planning of future support programmes for teachers.

## 5. A.O.B.

- There being no other business, the meeting ended at 7 p.m.