Correct Views of Other Learning Experiences (OLE) and Student Learning Profile (SLP)

Myths and misunderstandings are common in any educational change. 'Clarifying myths' is part of the change process that promotes deeper learning among stakeholders on the core meaning of the change. Through our experiences in the Seed Projects, "OLE and SLP Clinic" and communications with school leaders, we have identified some common myths/ misunderstandings on a range of OLE-related matters. . In order to enhance a better understanding about OLE and SLP under the New Senior Secondary (NSS) Curriculum, as well as how community partnerships and databank may be used to develop quality learning experiences, this document is prepared for all stakeholders' reference. .

(i) OLE

Myth (1) *OLE programmes could only be implemented during time-tabled lessons and should be the same provisions for all students.*

Correct message (1)

It is worth noting that OLE can be implemented in different modes in **time-tabled and/ or non-time-tabled learning time**. Apart from time-tabled lessons, OLE can also be provided during special calendar days and extra-curricular/ co-curricular activities. For example:

- **Aesthetic Development and Physical Development** can be largely implemented in the form of structured lessons, building on existing practice.
- **Moral and Civic Education** is commonly provided in class teacher periods or the assemblies, specifically assigned lessons and learning activities outside time-tabled lessons to develop positive values. Initiatives such as life-skills education, character education, ethics and religious education could be part of MCE. They could be flexibly built into the time-table and other time-slots to ensure that students could have full opportunities to gain these experiences.
- **Career-related Experiences and Community Service** could be arranged after school, during post-examination time, weekends or school holidays if required.

Besides, it is **not** necessary for schools to provide all of their OLE with the same programmes for all of their senior secondary (SS) students. While some programmes may be arranged for the same level, schools are also expected to offer a range of OLE programmes promoting whole-person development to cater for **student diversity**.

Myth (2)	*When allocating OLE time in the senior secondary, schools could arrange all the suggested curriculum time in S4 and 5 and provide no OLE for S6 students.*
Correct message (2)	Schools have to ensure that in their *school-based* OLE implementation, **sufficient learning opportunities in OLE are provided in line with the time allocation framework in SSCG**. Based on specific school context, schools may spread OLE lesson time (or learning time equivalent) over the three years flexibly. However, the five OLE components have to be provided **across the three years** in the senior secondary, rather than available in some forms only.
Myth (3)	*OLE only means a collection of out-of-classroom activities / ECAs that have no connection with one another.*
Correct message (3)	OLE are not only a series of out-of-classroom activities/ ECAs or programmes, but an integral part of the New Senior Secondary (NSS) Curriculum. It is the **quality of OLE** that matters, rather than the quantity. **Student engagement and fitness to specific OLE expected outcomes** should be examined as priority in planning and it would be crucial for teachers to turn students' experience from these programmes into focused learning. In addition, OLE should **not** be regarded as learning experiences that are '*once and for all*'. To facilitate progressive development of OLE in the school curriculum under NSS, schools should pay more attention on how the different OLE components will be organised vertically across the SS years and on building connections between components (and other relevant NSS subjects) for quality OLE.
Myth (4)	*The duty of schools / teachers is to offer the opportunities under OLE. Other than that, there is no more that schools/ teachers should do.*
Correct message (4)	Apart from offering sufficient OLE opportunities, schools/ teachers can provide **appropriate and timely mediation** to help students to turn these experiences into learning. **At the programme level**, teachers may have to take an important role to prepare their students before the activities and conduct debriefing to sharpen student learning out of the experience. **At the curriculum level**, schools/ teachers can devise **curriculum mapping** among the five OLE components and with other subjects according to their school contexts. While external organisations or experts are invited to design and deliver an OLE curriculum or programme, schools have to consider the essential role of relevant teachers (such as setting appropriate

learning goals with the partner organizations) such that schools/ teachers can manage the implementation of the school-based OLE curriculum as well as student learning.

Myth (5)	*Community service means service opportunities outside school only.*
Correct message (5)	Community service does **not** narrowly mean service opportunities outside school. The purpose of community service is to enable students **to acquire some experiences of serving others and to develop their sense of responsibility**. The school itself is a community. Students can have many opportunities to achieve the same objectives if there are in-school service opportunities, or even serving local primary schools and kindergartens. However, ideal community service in senior secondary levels should not be confined to school environment and can be expanded to outside school, if appropriate, for building up sustainable life-long capacities to serve in their community after schooling.
Myth (6)	*Community providers of OLE should offer programmes for whole level so that students could fulfill their 15% OLE time. The key role of outside agencies in OLE implementation is primarily to help schools to fulfill OLE time allocation.*
Correct message (6)	To ensure the quality of OLE, external organisations should, in strict sense, be regarded as **'OLE partners' rather than 'OLE providers'**. Community players should be valued for their expertise and experience, which may provide some opportunities for teachers to broaden their professional strengths when partnering with them. The primary purpose of engaging community partners is to provide unique and quality experiences for their students, but **not** to help schools to fulfill OLE time allocation. Such experiences could bring along learning that schools could not provide on their own.
Myth (7)	*Physical Development means a collection of sport activities and does not involve structured lessons. Aesthetic Development means a bunch of art activities and does not need to have structured lessons or structured learning opportunities.*
Correct message (7)	Aesthetic Development and Physical Development can be largely implemented in the form of **structured lessons**, building on existing practice. Regular teacher input in these two OLE components are essential, which **cannot** be taken over by merely

extra-curricular/co-curricular activities or programmes on special calendar days.

Myth (8)	*Reflection must be in written form.*
Correct message (8)	Reflection can be simply interpreted as enabling a person to '*step back and think*' upon an experience. In this sense, reflection in OLE does **not** necessarily mean asking students to reflect in written form. Actually, the quality of reflection as presented is determined by the reflection process. **Timely debriefing** that assists students to reflect on their learning is thus essential for quality reflection.

(ii) SLP

Myth (9)	*SLP is a detailed record/ depository of all students' involvement and achievements. Selecting profile items for concise presentation in profile reports is not essential.*
Correct message (9)	SLP should **not** be seen merely as details records of all participation and achievement of individuals. SLP itself is **a summary report** of what students achieve, in terms of whole-person development. Strictly speaking, it is **not a depository** of *all* students' involvement and achievements. SLP itself needs to be concise and is easy-to-read presentation. Students should be given opportunities and guidance to **select** appropriate items to be included in the final profiles. Profiles should be **simple, concise and easy to read**.
Myth (10)	*SLP could be prepared at S6 only or just for university admission purpose.*
Correct message (10)	Schools should assist their students to prepare their SLPs throughout the three years in the senior secondary. They should understand that the SLP is built for **formative purpose** to assist the on-going development of their students. Therefore, instead of using the SLP for university admission or other instrumental purposes, schools should enable students to well use their SLPs and make them **readily available at S6**.
Myth (11)	*Schools could implement SLP in whatever school-based formats or tools. Under the NSS Curriculum, there is no broad content framework of SLP.*

Correct message (11)	Under the NSS Curriculum framework, schools could implement SLP in school-based formats or tools in line with the **broad content framework** stated in SSCG Booklet 5B. This framework includes:

- academic performance in school (Other than results in the HKDSE Examination);
- Other Learning Experiences (OLE);
- performance/ awards gained outside school;
- student's self-accounts (highlighting any impressive learning experiences or career goal setting)

Myth (12)	*Schools have to use WebSAMS to help students build their SLPs.*
Correct message (12)	Schools should assist their students to build their SLPs during the senior secondary. They have **flexibility** in designing and implementing their school-based SLP that is in line with the **broad content framework of SLP** as stated in SSCG Booklet 5B. Besides, schools can use any school-based SLP systems that can generate concise reports for individuals which are in line with the requirements of tertiary institutions and some employers. In so doing, it does **not** necessarily imply adopting WebSAMS to help students to build their SLPs.

(iii) OLE Community Partnerships & Databank

Myth (13)	*Schools must partner with NGOs only when implementing school-based OLE.*
Correct message (13)	There is a wide range of OLE opportunities both inside and outside school when implementing school-based OLE. Apart from NGOs, there are many different community players that can act as partners with schools. They may include **government departments, District Boards, social organizations, business partners, other schools and etc**.
Myth (14)	*EDB's Databank is a "recommended/ 'definitive' list of OLE activities". It is 'vetted' by EDB.*
Correct message (14)	The "Other Learning Experiences" (OLE) Activity Databank is designed to serve as **a platform to harness the community resources** from non-profit organisations (NGO), and business enterprises which are

willing to offer valuable learning opportunities for students. In accordance with students' own strengths and needs, schools would hold responsibility to organise quality school-based OLE programmes/ activities that **meet the expected learning outcomes of OLE**. According to the present situation, most schools have already built partnering relationship with different community partners and arranged a variety of quality activities for students. The databank holds no responsibility to list all of them, and **neither is it a "recommended/ 'definitive' list of OLE activities" vetted by EDB**.

Myth (15)	*NGOs/ any OLE providers need to publicise their programmes via the Databank and have to stress the 'legitimacy' in recording into the SLP in order to attract students to join.*
Correct message (15)	The OLE Activity Databank aims to assist schools to obtain updated information about related learning activities offered in the community. Community partners are encouraged to publicise their programmes via the Databank, as one of the promotion strategies, for teachers' reference. Schools should know that the activities listed in the Databank are **neither exhaustive nor approved by EDB**. Schools should carefully select suitable programmes according to their students' needs, interests and abilities. There is **no "legitimate" activity for the SLP**.
Myth (16)	*In terms of the categorisation of each OLE activity, schools should passively follow the EDB's information mentioned in the OLE Databank. Schools have no say on categorisation and EDB has no guidelines or criteria to assist schools to identify components in each activity.*
Correct message (16)	Schools have full discretion on the design of school-based OLE programmes for their students according to students' interests and capabilities. According to the **expected outcomes** of each OLE component, schools can categorise the programmes accordingly.
Myth (17)	*In terms of learning and teaching, EDB-organised activities would be 'superior' to programmes offered by outside agencies.*
Correct message (17)	Considering the OLE expected outcomes of specific components, schools should select and design OLE activities according to their school-based **needs, as well as interests and capabilities** of their students. EDB-organised activities should **not** be indiscriminately regarded as 'superior' to programmes offered by outside agencies.

(iv) Others

Myth (18)   *Examples in SSCG or EDB website are 'exemplars', which suggest a strong sense of approval and recommendation.*

Correct message (18)

With the NSS Curriculum implemented in September 2009, the SSCG and EDB websites are prepared to help schools in preparing and implementing the new SS curriculum. We encourage teachers to read these examples so as to acquire practical knowledge on how to implement OLE effectively in their own school contexts. Supportive information, such as examples (including the school-based SLP templates available), in SSCG and EDB websites is provided **for reference** only.