

香港輔導教師協會

就教育局落實「優化課程迎接未來 培育全人啓迪多元」六個方向的建議

教育局已於12月初接納「學校課程檢討專責小組」專責小組的方向性建議。本會以事業/生涯輔導及學生輔導的專業角度，提出關注及建議。

意見書全文可參考英文版本，以下為建議的概要：

1. 局方於調節「課時」與「學時」的整體部署時，須謹慎考慮學術課程、其他學習經歷 (OLE)、以及學生支援/個人生涯規劃/身心靈健康之間的平衡，予以恰當的重視。
2. 局方須為前線教育同工提供充分的支援，透過可持續的專業發展、並關懷教師群體的身心靈健康，使教育同工能在新的範式下實踐規劃、實施及教學。
3. 局方必須釐清對生涯規劃教育、就業輔導、生涯教育等概念的混淆和誤解，並闡明在青少年的不同學習及發展階段，對生涯教育應有的理解和期望，避免中、小學在實施過程中偏離政策原意。
4. 本會認同維持33222作為本地學位課程的「一般入學要求」，惟局方應同步提升第二個選修科的多樣性，包括應用學習課程、數學科延伸單元 (M1/M2)及較著重職業導向的科目，以配合不同學生的需要及能力。
5. 專責小組建議的「學校推薦直接錄取計劃 (SNDAS)」在落實時必須切實可行，並基於公平原則，闡明清晰的機制，以識別擁有特殊才華的學生。
6. 於STEM / STEAM教育中融入生涯發展的元素，促進學生將所學到的知識和技能，與將來的生活、學習和發展結連起來。

本會已於上星期將意見書交教育局局長。歡迎各位會員學校的校長、升學輔導及學生輔導人員提出見解，我們將持續透過不同的渠道向局方及相關機構、組織反映。如有提議或查詢，請與本人 (estheryamho@gmail.com) 或幹事徐恩祖副校長 (joetsui@gmail.com) 聯絡。

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二零二零年十二月二十八日

Recommendations to the Education Bureau on actualizing the six directions in

“Optimise the curriculum for the future; Foster whole-person development and diverse talents”

Introduction

The Education Bureau (EDB) has recently announced the acceptance of directional recommendations of the Task Force on School Curriculum Review. From the perspective of the career and school counselling profession, HKACMGM derives our concerns and recommendations for consideration by EDB in formulating concrete implementations in the next section, with the following as a summary:

1. Due emphasis towards academic curriculum, other learning experiences (OLE), and student support/individual student planning/well-being in setting expectations on outcomes and deployment of curriculum time and learning time;
2. Adequate support to educators in planning, implementation, and teaching in the new paradigm, in particular, through sustainable professional capacity building and care for well-being of the teaching community;
3. Clarifications of confusions, misconceptions, understanding and expectations of life planning education and career guidance/education at different key stages of learning and youth development to prevent alienation of policy implementation in school level;
4. Keeping 33222 as the general admission requirement of local degree programmes, while addressing the diverse needs and ability of students by promoting more alternatives for the second elective, including ApL, M1/2, and subjects with higher career-orientation;
5. Making the SNDAS practically sound, fair with clear delineation of mechanism to recognize students with different talents;
6. Including career orientation in STEM/STEAM education to make sense of learning in connection to knowledge and skills for the future.

Direction 1: Promotion of whole person development

While the final report emphasizes the importance of whole-person development and suggests creating more space, the recommended measures need to be down-to-earth to effect changes. With the suggested trimming of the content and learning time of the Liberal Studies subject at the senior secondary level, all those suggested reallocations of learning time gear towards allowing senior secondary students to take a third elective subject or an ApL course. While for the majority of schools there is a need to revamp the structure of senior secondary curriculum options and curriculum time, due emphasis to cater for the notion of creating space for balanced whole-person development is necessary.

It is recommended that a thorough review be done on the overall deployment of the lesson time / learning time of:

- (1) **essential learning experiences** (different core and elective subjects, ApL courses, other languages);
- (2) **other learning experiences (OLE)**, and;
- (3) **individual guidance/counselling/advising to support students exploring various pathways and career-decision making** (this is part of career guidance and education for career development, NOT equivalent to work-oriented career-related experiences)

so that ALL whole-person development domains, including physical health, psychological and emotional well-being, can receive fair and due attention while social emotional learning be given comparable attention with intellectual development, especially after the past two years of social unrest and pandemic which affect schools and youth seriously. EDB needs to ***spell out the lesson time and learning time expectations at different learning stages, with clear and relevant guidelines to prevent alienation and exploitation of teachers' capacity and students' balanced development.***

In the light of this, EDB needs to address issues on teachers' professional capacity and their well-being. With heightened demands for educators' knowledge and skills in planning and implementing the revamped curriculum, and various expectations towards their involvement in values education and whole-person development of students, setting a benchmark on in-service training is both a blessing and a curse -- draining teachers' time and emotional well-being further. Review and restructuring of pre-service (e.g., PGDE), and in-service training should be done to support educators in various roles to transform the culture and paradigm of learning and teaching in response to the changing context and needs.

Direction 2: Promotion of values education and life planning education

On one hand, it is encouraging to witness re-ignited effort to strengthen life planning education at upper primary and junior secondary levels, it is *equally worrying to see that there is a lack of a sound and solid understanding, with a common language over the definition, scope and positioning of the so-called 'life planning education'* recommended in the final report.

As pointed out in our previous response paper, the term ‘life planning education’ lacks a common understanding among education professionals locally and globally. Upon a walk-through of different seminal literature or documents of international significance, one may easily find that the term life planning education does not bear much ground among practitioners and experts. This has further misled the public and stakeholders, students, parents or even educators, to confuse them with a term seemingly equating ‘life education’ with ‘values education’. That may cause alienated or problematic implementation of ‘life planning education’ with biased objectives and outcomes expectations.

Our Association needs to restate that from a professional perspective, **‘career guidance and education’** (ref. OECD’s Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap¹) has a long-established, recognized, and well-researched foundation which cannot be simply replaced/renamed without a solid ground, sufficient consultation and consensus-building among various stakeholders. It is alarming to find a confusion over equating the term ‘career guidance’ with ‘就業輔導’ (in English version and Chinese version respectively in Section 3.5.3 of the Task Force report). Among trained and experienced practitioners and academics in the field, everyone knows ‘就業輔導’ is synonymous with the term ‘vocational guidance’ or ‘employment guidance’ which involves mainly job matching and finding rather than a holistic life and career perspective of a personal development. ***Career guidance and education has consistently been considered as educational experiences that promote self-understanding, exploration of study and career options, and decision-making/management. Interventions of career guidance ranges from career-related experiential programmes, to linking academic subjects to career options, career-development curriculum and individual advisory.***

EDB needs to spell out clearly what ‘life planning education’ is and its expected outcomes at different year levels or learning stages (across various key learning and developmental stages), but instead hastily come to the conclusion that early interventions at the upper primary and junior secondary levels are desirable. While we need to realize that career guidance and education needs of students at various key stages are developmentally sequenced based on well-researched and recognized models like Donald Super’s career development theory², empty advocacy of strengthening life planning education at earlier key stages, coupled with a lack of common understanding of the scope of life planning education, will end up in chaos and implementation pitfalls (such as “contracting-out” life planning education activities).

Our Association agrees that career guidance and education can be provided earlier to upper primary and junior secondary levels, but the support measures including ***professional development for educators (from school leaders to career teachers/practitioners, and class teachers who play different roles in career guidance and education) for a mindset change, renewed understanding and enhanced roles*** are a number one priority action item before advocating for anything. Expert advice from professional bodies and academia must be sought. It is contended that ***prudent and substantial reference should be***

¹ <http://www.oecd.org/education/innovation-education/careerguidancepolicyreviewhomepage.htm>

² <https://www.careers.govt.nz/assets/pages/docs/career-theory-model-super.pdf>

made to well-established and practicable frameworks (like the Missouri Comprehensive School Guidance Program: Grade Level Expectations – Career Development (from K to 12)³ and Australia’s Blueprint for Career Development⁴) **with developmentally-sequenced and clearly stated objectives and expected learning outcomes.** Adaptations and indigenization of such models into our own Hong Kong context is definitely crucial.

When it comes to the positioning of ‘life planning education’, it is perplexing to see that the overarching term ‘values education’ seems to have taken the limelight these years to encompass all other areas like moral and civic education, life education and life planning education and the like. It has caused heightened concerns from professional frontline career teachers and practitioners since such misconceptions and misunderstanding will surely lead to malpractice and undesirable outcomes but in the name of career guidance and education.

Direction 3: Creating space and catering for learner diversity

With Liberal Studies (LS) expected to be revamped from September 2021, there is a burning need to review and reveal the updates on general entrance requirements of local degree programmes. We recommend the following:

1. Using **33222 (Chi, Eng, Math, 2 electives) + p (LS)** as the local degree programme admission benchmark (note that currently, the majority of UGC-funded universities require 2X as the minimum entrance requirement)
2. For the second elective, in view of diverse needs and academic aptitude of senior secondary students, we propose:
 - a. ***Having ApL (attained or above) as an accepted subject elective in local degree programme application*** (currently, majority of tertiary institutions do not consider ApL as electives, or only accept Distinction I or II) ;
 - b. ***Having extended (or enhanced/advanced) Mathematics, currently named M1/M2, considered as an elective subject officially***
 - c. ***Keeping and promoting current DSE elective subjects with a small amount of candidature*** (e.g., Design and Technology, Technology and Living, Health Management and Social Care) which are able to serve the diverse needs and aptitudes of senior secondary students

It is noteworthy that they do have their values, especially when LS has been given a new position, and how to have long-term planning over initial and refresher training of subjects named above in order to preserve them is of paramount importance if we are not to see a ‘narrower and unbalanced curriculum’ at the senior secondary level which fails to address the learner diversity issue.

³ <https://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/cnsl-curr-gle-cd-full.pdf>

⁴ <https://cica.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Australian-Blueprint-for-Career-Development.pdf>

Direction 4: Further promoting ApL at the senior secondary level

Our Association is also pleased to see the move of offering ApL courses as early as in S4 in the model of on-site courses (Mode 2). However, the restrictions set by offering only Mode 2 on-site courses may outweigh the potential benefits. In fact, Mode 2 delivery of ApL courses just limits students' choices and fails to broaden students' options and cater for their diverse needs, interests and aspirations. Therefore, to truly expand students' choices, it is more desirable if schools are given the option of offering Mode 1 ApL courses as early as in S4 also.

Another area which draws public concern is how to ***remove the labelling effect on those taking ApL courses as underachievers, and to gain wider recognition of their values and significance in the admission practice of the tertiary education sector***. It is believed the necessary publicity effort should be considered together with the new positioning of vocational and professional education and training (VPET) and its related endeavours such as applied degrees and their specific admission requirements as a bundle (see our recommendations under "Direction 3"). Piecemeal and unco-ordinated information dissemination and initiatives are not conducive to the overall planning and reform.

Direction 5: Enhancing the flexibility in university admissions

This initiative is a welcomed move among various stake-holders as a successful step towards recognizing and valuing students' diverse abilities and talents. The field is expectant of ***more concrete nomination requirements / criteria and programme quota deployment***, which can truly benefit students of diverse aptitudes and strengths. Also of much concern is the quota for each specific programme. It is stated that those additional places of the scheme will be operated not via JUPAS and applicants will need to re-apply for university admissions through JUPAS if they are not selected through SNDAS, but how places will be allocated to the scheme, the spelt-out expectations of the candidates and the actual nomination and selection mechanisms (e.g., how to assess 'passion') need to be clearly delineated, with due consultation to career teachers and practitioners who work with and for students in pathway exploration directly..

To the benefit of ***potential applicants***, it is advised that students ***should be allowed, from "Day 1", to apply for university admissions through both the JUPAS and SNDAS (non-JUPAS)*** means. Applicants nominated but declined an offer through SNDAS, if they need to conduct a JUPAS late application in April, would cause them much pressure psychologically and practically because they should be preparing for HKDSE exams. In this regard, being nominated may put them into an unexpected and unfair risk. University choices and applications cannot take place overnight. Students are best informed of the application results before February when school teachers can still contact our students and offer appropriate consultation and guidance at the right time.

In the long run, it is more desirable if the scheme is put also under JUPAS when individual student planning can be carried out holistically at one go.

Going beyond SNDAS, the global trend of undergraduate programme admission is to recognize students' learning through OLE and attainment of various achievements. The spirit of New Academic Structure to promote and ***recognize holistic development should be actualized through a more flexible admission mechanism***, not only for a small number of nominees by school principals but a much more extensive consideration ***of ALL students' capabilities, talents and aspirations. SLP is expected to serve the purpose, not only by providing information for admission, but also the construction of SLP is a crucial process of reflective review and building one's narrative of development per sec.*** We understand that there are various hurdles to achieve the ideal -- partly due to alienation and lack of professional capacity in schools, and partly due to inadequate recognition of SLP by various university programmes. Yet it should be a direction that is worth fighting for.

Direction 6: Strengthening STEM education

Our Association has witnessed with great delight the good development of STEM education in Hong Kong over the last few years. For maximizing its benefits, it is recommended that the STEM education in the future should have components that ***facilitate career development and to promote linkage with STEM-related career opportunities and exposure.*** Various schools have demonstrated good practices about WHAT and HOW that could be done effectively.