



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部教育局

Education Bureau

Government Secretariat, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
The People's Republic of China

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26 April 2021

To: Heads of all primary and secondary schools, excluding Heads of ESF and International Schools

Dear Principal,

**Arrangement for the
“Gainful Use of Territory-wide System Assessment 2021 Materials”**

This circular letter aims to invite all local schools to participate in the “Gainful Use of Territory-wide System Assessment 2021 Materials” arrangement (“Gainful Use of TSA 2021 Materials”), which is commissioned by the Education Bureau (EDB) and organised by the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) and the Hong Kong Education City (HKEdCity).

Background and Purpose

2. In view of the volatility of the COVID-19 epidemic, the EDB announced on 22 February 2021 to suspend the Territory-wide System Assessment (TSA) 2021 (including all speaking assessments and pen-and-paper assessments) so that schools can make the most out of the remaining school year to conduct face-to-face lessons. The EDB made reference to the experience from the “Gainful Use of Territory-wide System Assessment 2020 Materials” last year to enhance the arrangement enabling schools to gainfully use the TSA 2021 assessment materials¹ which are readily prepared and consolidated by the HKEAA, with a view to timely obtaining the relatively objective and quality data, understanding the impact on the learning

¹ Similar to the arrangement of last year, the HKEAA has compiled the readily prepared TSA assessment items of the three subjects of Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics into several sets of assessment resources and will upload them onto the STAR Platform for schools' deployment. Schools can also use the printed version of the assessment resources based on their school-based situations.

situations of students under the epidemic, as well as following up on their learning support needs. At the same time, the EDB will, without identifying individual schools, teachers, parents or/and students through any information or data, obtain the overall data at the system-level of students at Primary 3 (P3), Primary 6 (P6) and Secondary 3 (S3) to understand how the epidemic and the continuous class suspensions have affected the overall learning situations and the mastering of the basic competency of these students.

Enhancing Assessment Literacy

3. The EDB acknowledges, upon the gradual resumption of face-to-face lessons, schools have different priorities in handling teaching and school affairs, but encourages schools to participate in the arrangement of this year via the Student Assessment Repository (STAR) Platform to understand students' learning progress. Despite the consolidated assessment tool may have its limitation to comprehensively reflect students' mastery of the basic competency, teachers may, through the various performance analyses provided on the STAR Platform, identify students' strengths and weaknesses timely, and provide corresponding support and guidance, or adjust the curriculum plans for the next school year based on the assessment feedback. Meanwhile, the STAR Platform is able to provide students with the **instant individual assessment report**, which would enable parents to understand their children's learning situations more objectively, and thus enhance home-school cooperation and strengthen the understanding of basic competency and assessment literacy by various stakeholders. Besides, the analyses from the questionnaire survey would also enable schools to review the teaching arrangements and effectiveness during the epidemic from multiple perspectives.

4. As in the arrangement last year, schools may decide whether to participate in the arrangement this year according to the school-based situations. This year is an odd-numbered year and in line with the established practice, the full cohort of P6 students ought to participate in the TSA. We hope that schools would proactively participate in the arrangement to understand students' learning progress, as well as assisting the HKEAA to collect sufficient data to provide the school sector with analyses of higher reference value on students' performance at the system level. Besides, under the epidemic, examination and assessment authorities worldwide have introduced online assessments for various kinds of international and professional examinations. Therefore, we hope that schools would seize the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the online mode of assessment under this low-stake situation, so as to catch up with this global development trend for examination and assessment.

Enhancements of the “Gainful Use of TSA 2021 Materials” Arrangement

5. Upon consolidating the experiences of the “Gainful Use of Territory-wide System Assessment Materials” arrangement of last year, we are going to introduce the following enhancements:

(a) Comprehensive assessment data

- Schools participating in the assessment of the language subjects need to complete the sub-papers of reading, writing and listening, with a view to assisting schools to understand students’ learning progress comprehensively; and
- Arranging schools to use the assessment materials within the designated four days based on class levels, with a view to fulfilling the requirement of statistical data collection and maintaining the quality of the data.

(b) Marking services for all sub-papers

- The HKEAA will mark the completed reading, writing and listening papers of language subjects and all sub-papers of Mathematics² for schools which opt for the “Pen-and-Paper” mode.

(c) Continuous technical support

- Trial assessment will be provided on the STAR Platform at different time slots in May to familiarise teachers with the platform operation when conducting the assessments;
- Strengthening the technical support of the STAR Platform (e.g. HKEdCity account setting, operational guidelines of STAR); and
- Providing “Online Review” of the related workshops / seminars of the STAR Platform.

Participation Details

6. The “Gainful Use of TSA 2021 Materials” is comprised of **two parts**. Participating schools have to choose the date(s), mode and subject(s) of using the assessment materials and arranging the completion of the related questionnaire survey on the **online form (the link or QR code at Annex 4)** provided by the HKEAA, and submit it to the HKEAA **on or before 14 May**. The basic information of the two parts is as follows:

² Schools were provided with the marking services for writing papers of language subjects only last year.

Part 1: Using the Assessment Materials

Applicable Period	<p>Primary 3 7 June (Monday) to 10 June (Thursday) <i>(11 June (Friday) is a fallback date)</i></p> <p>Primary 6 15 June (Tuesday) to 18 June (Friday) <i>(21 June (Monday) is a fallback date)</i></p> <p>Secondary 3 21 June (Monday) to 24 June (Thursday) <i>(25 June (Friday) is a fallback date)</i></p>	Suggestions / Points to Note
Subject	<p>Chinese Language (Reading, Writing and Listening) <u>Time for using the assessment resources³</u> Primary 3: <i>Reading (25 mins) / Writing (40 mins) / Listening (around 20 mins)</i></p> <p>Primary 6: <i>Reading (30 mins) / Writing (55 mins) / Listening (around 20 mins)</i></p> <p>Secondary 3: <i>Reading (30 mins) / Writing (75 mins) / Listening (around 20 mins)</i></p> <p>English Language (Reading, Writing and Listening) <u>Time for using the assessment resources⁴</u> Primary 3: <i>Reading (20 mins) / Writing (10 mins) / Listening (around 20 mins)</i></p> <p>Primary 6: <i>Reading (30 mins) / Writing (20 mins) / Listening (around 30 mins)</i></p> <p>Secondary 3: <i>Reading (35 mins) / Writing (40 mins) / Listening (around 35 mins)</i></p> <p>Mathematics <u>Time for using the assessment resources⁵</u> Primary 3: 40 mins (pen-and-paper); 35 mins (STAR)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When filling in the online form, schools can choose to use the assessment materials on <u>any date(s) within the applicable period</u> according to the school-based schedule. Wherever possible, schools should arrange students to use the assessment resources <u>at school</u>. Schools can opt for using the assessment materials of Chinese Language, English Language and / or Mathematics according to the school-based needs. With a view to understanding students' learning situations in language subjects more comprehensively, students need to complete all the sub-papers (i.e. Reading, Writing and Listening) of the language subjects.

³ Counting only the time for students to use the assessment resources but excluding the time needed for steps such as logging into the STAR Platform, etc.

⁴ Counting only the time for students to use the assessment resources but excluding the time needed for steps such as logging into the STAR Platform, etc.

⁵ Counting only the time for students to use the assessment resources but excluding the time needed for steps such as logging in to the STAR Platform, etc. As the assessment materials of the pen-and-paper mode and STAR online mode are comprised of different items, the assessment time is slightly different. However, both cover more or less the same Basic Competency Descriptors.

	<p>Primary 6: 50 mins (pen-and-paper); 45 mins (STAR) Secondary 3: 65 mins (pen-and-paper); 50 mins (STAR)</p>	
<p>Mode</p>	<p>STAR Online Mode <i>All subjects and sub-papers (except for the Writing sub-paper of language subjects)</i></p> <p>Pen-and-Paper Mode <i>All subjects and sub-papers</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students’ submitted answers will be marked by the system of the STAR Platform automatically (except for the Writing sub-paper of language subjects). • If schools would like to obtain feedback within a short period of time, they <u>should seriously consider</u> opting for using the assessment materials via the “STAR Online Mode”. • With regard to the listening assessment of the language subjects, schools may use the newly added feature of centralised broadcasting to allow the whole class (or other special groups set up on the STAR Platform) to conduct the listening assessment(s) together, as well as choosing to arrange students to complete the listening assessment(s) at home during the corresponding applicable period. • If schools opt for participating via the “Pen-and-Paper Mode”, the HKEAA will provide the schools with the printed version of the assessment materials on the preceding Thursday or Friday of the applicable period. • The HKEAA will mark the completed assessment materials (including the Writing sub-paper of the language subjects) of the “Pen-and-Paper Mode”, and arrange to collect the completed assessment materials according to schools’ date(s) of using the assessment materials.

Part 2: Completing the related questionnaire survey

- As mentioned above, the HKEAA will collaborate with the research team of a tertiary institution to analyse the assessment data and the questionnaire survey information obtained from the “Gainful Use of TSA 2021 Materials” arrangement and to holistically understand the overall learning situations and effectiveness of **students under the epidemic**. The target of the questionnaires includes schools, teachers, students and parents. Schools can arrange students to complete the questionnaires at home. There are Chinese and English versions of the questionnaires, and it is expected to take approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete. School Questionnaire and Teacher Questionnaire are online questionnaires while Student questionnaire and Parent questionnaire are printed questionnaires. The HKEAA will provide schools with the link of the online questionnaires and the printed version of the questionnaires **on or before 4 June**, and expect schools to complete the questionnaires **on or before 30 June (Wednesday)**. The HKEAA will arrange couriers to collect the completed questionnaires from schools.
- The information obtained from the questionnaire survey will not affect students’ academic results at school or result reports. The HKEAA will not announce or publicise the responses from individual schools, teachers, parents or students. The EDB will not receive information that can identify individual schools, teachers, parents or students. Parent consent should be obtained for student participation.

Assessment Feedback

7. The performance analysis at “School Level” will be provided to participating schools by phases starting from late June the earliest. The provision of the performance analysis at “All Participating School Level” this year will also be advanced to late September. Besides, the EDB, HKEAA and HKEdCity will organise related seminars / sharing sessions and workshops. Please refer to details at **Annex 1**.

Providing Schools with Support for the “Gainful Use of TSA 2021 Materials” Arrangement

8. During May, the EDB, HKEAA and HKEdCity will provide schools with the trial arrangement (applicable to the STAR Online Mode), technical support, workshops and talks of the “Gainful Use of TSA 2021 Materials” with a view to familiarising schools with the arrangement of this year, learning more about the operation of the STAR Platform, as well as enhancing the understanding of assessment literacy. In June, the EDB, HKEAA and HKEdCity will also assist schools in handling problems and enquiries encountered when using the assessment materials or / and completing

the questionnaires during the assessment periods of individual class levels. Information of the related support and activities is follows:

- (May) Assisting schools in handling the HKEdCity accounts to use the STAR Platform (HKEdCity)
- (May) The trial arrangement (applicable to the STAR Online Mode⁶) of the “Gainful Use of TSA 2021 Materials” (EDB, HKEAA, HKEdCity)
- (Every week in May) “Workshops on STAR Operation” (HKEdCity)
- (Late May) Briefing Sessions and Workshops on the “Online Item Analysis (OIA) Report System” (HKEAA)
- (Late May) Briefing Sessions for “STAR 2.0 Network School Programme 2021/22” (EDB)

9. Furthermore, since October last year, the assessment resources of the STAR Platform has been developing to cover the basic competency and full curriculum. The related “Web-based Learning and Teaching Support (WLTS) has also updated 70 online interactive games (Please refer to details at [Annex 2](#)). We encourage schools to experience the latest development of the two platforms and gainfully use the newly added resources.

Arrangement of Briefing Sessions and Calendar

10. With a view to facilitating schools’ understanding on the details of the “Gainful Use of TSA 2021 Materials”, the EDB, HKEAA and HKEdCity will organise briefing sessions (including the on-site mode⁷ and online mode). The HKEAA will arrange school representatives to attend the briefing sessions according to the sequence of schools returning the Reply Slip (Please refer to details at [Annex 3](#)).

Briefing Sessions

	First Event	Second Event	Third Event
Date	30 April (Friday)	4 May (Tuesday)	5 May (Wednesday)
Time	2:15 pm – 4:15 pm	2:15 pm – 4:15 pm	2:15 pm – 4:15 pm
Venue	Wong Tai Sin Catholic Primary School 102 Ching Tak Street, Wong Tai Sin, Kowloon (Exit D2 of Wong Tai Sin MTR Station)	Lecture Theatre, 4/F, The Education Bureau Kowloon Tong Education Services Centre 19 Suffolk Road, Kowloon Tong, Kowloon (Exit E / F of Kowloon Tong MTR Station)	Lecture Theatre, 4/F, The Education Bureau Kowloon Tong Education Services Centre 19 Suffolk Road, Kowloon Tong, Kowloon (Exit E / F of Kowloon Tong MTR Station)
Maximum	(On-site mode)100 people (Online mode)450 people	(On-site mode)300 people (Online mode) 450 people	(On-site mode)300 people (Online mode) 450 people

⁶ Under the trial arrangement, teachers can log in to the STAR Platform using individual teacher accounts to experience the procedures and arrangements of the “Gainful Use of TSA 2021 Materials” this year, including the trial of distributing the assessment materials to students on the platform, allowing students to complete the trial assessment materials and submit answers.

⁷ Depending on the epidemic development.

Capacity ⁸			
Target	Principals, Vice-principals, Panel Heads of Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics and IT Coordinators of primary and secondary schools		
Quota	(On-site mode) 2 representatives from each school (Online mode) 4 representatives from each school The three events of the briefing sessions are identical. Each school can arrange teaching staff to attend different events of the briefing sessions in batches. The HKEAA will send confirmation emails to those who successfully enrolled one working day prior to the related events of the briefing sessions.		

11. The calendar of the “Gainful Use of TSA 2021 Materials” are at **Annex 4** for schools’ reference.

Enquiries

12. We eagerly look forward to your school’s attendance of the above-mentioned briefing sessions and active participation in the “Gainful Use of TSA 2021 Materials” arrangement (especially the STAR Online Mode). For enquiries, please contact the following colleagues of the EDB, HKEdCity and HKEAA:

General Enquiry on the “Gainful Use of TSA 2021 Materials”:
Service Hotline of the HKEAA
(Tel.: 3628 8181(primary schools) / 3628 8191 (secondary schools))

Enquiry on the operation of STAR Platform and technical support:
Service Hotline of the HKEdCity (Tel.: 2624 1000)

Enquiry on general policy on assessment:
Mr Michael YEUNG, Assistant Secretary of the EDB (Tel.: 2921 8943)



(Ms Wendy AU)
for Secretary for Education

⁸ The number of participants of all on-site briefing sessions may be adjusted depending on the development of epidemic.