

Education Bureau Circular Memorandum No. 228/2024

From: Secretary for Education

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Date: 16 October 2024

To: Supervisors and Heads of all
Primary and Secondary Schools
(except ESF schools and
international schools) - for
necessary action

Fostering Whole-person Development Balanced Learning Healthy Growth — Optimised Arrangement of the Weighting of Subjects in the “Internal Assessments” for the Secondary School Places Allocation

Summary

In line with the ongoing renewal of the curriculum, all primary schools in Hong Kong will start implementing Primary Science and Primary Humanities in the 2025/26 school year, in lieu of General Studies, from P1 and P4, and progressively extend to P6. The Education Bureau (EDB) concurrently reviewed the weighting of subjects in the “Internal Assessments” (IA) for the Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA). The purpose of this circular memorandum is to announce the optimised arrangement regarding the weighting of relevant subjects in the IA for the SSPA.

Details

About “Internal Assessments”

2. Under the existing policy, all primary schools participating in the SSPA are required to submit to the EDB their students’ IA data of relevant subjects in the second term of Primary 5 and the first and second terms of Primary 6. The EDB will collect the sampled results of “Pre-Secondary One Hong Kong Attainment Test” of the schools to scale the IA results of the coming cohorts of students proceeding to Secondary 1, which will serve as the basis for the allocation of bands of students. Currently, six subjects including Chinese Language, English Language, Mathematics, General Studies, Visual Arts and Music must be included in the IA, while Putonghua and Religious Studies are optional subjects chosen by the school. IA are school-based professional arrangements. Schools should timely inform parents and students of their school policy regarding IA and the related arrangements.

Learning Goals-Oriented Learning, Teaching and Assessment

3. IA have all along been closely linked with the learning and teaching at the primary level, generating a positive impact. In line with the theme of the *Primary Education Curriculum Guide (2024)* “Cultivate Values for Leaders of Tomorrow Create Space to Foster Whole-person Development”, the EDB recommends that schools could create more space for students, facilitating their balanced physical and psychological development. At the primary level, the seven learning goals encompass cultivating national identity, proper values and attitudes, mastery of knowledge across different Key Learning Areas (KLAs), language skills, generic skills, reading and information literacy, and leading a healthy lifestyle. In addition to continuing to optimise the curriculum, the EDB has been encouraging schools to promote holistic learning, balanced development, healthy growth and future readiness of students by adopting diversified teaching and assessment strategies. In terms of assessment, schools implementing activities that comprehensively reflect students’ learning progress and performances across various KLAs would provide feedback on teaching and enhance effectiveness, thereby keeping students’ learning in pace with the times.

Holistic Review of the Weighting of Subjects in “Internal Assessments”

4. For many years, General Studies has been one of the subjects included in the IA in primary schools. As announced in The Chief Executive’s 2023 Policy Address, Primary Science and Primary Humanities curricula will be implemented in all primary schools in Hong Kong in the 2025/26 school year, starting from Primary 1 and Primary 4. These two subjects will be incorporated into the IA for Primary 5 students from the second term of the 2026/27 school year. In view of societal development and the learning needs of students, the EDB has conducted a holistic review of the weighting of subjects in IA in order to promote whole-person development, balanced learning and healthy growth of students. Through optimising the weighting of each subject, it is hoped that students could be better equipped for the opportunities and challenges in future. The principles underpinning the holistic review and optimisation of the weighting of subjects in IA by the EDB include:

- the promotion of whole-person development, balanced learning and healthy growth of students in accordance with the learning goal of leading a healthy lifestyle;
- the benefits brought to students, families, communities and the whole of Hong Kong;
- building on the assessment modes familiar to schools; and
- the views of various stakeholders and professionals.

5. Since early 2024, the EDB has been collecting views from stakeholders, including principals, teachers, physical education and medical professionals through channels such as Primary Principals Liaison Meetings with school councils, Committee on Home-School Co-operation meetings, school visits and focus group interviews (including parent representatives). Stakeholders generally agreed that Primary Science and Primary Humanities should be given equal weighting. The education sector also supported the inclusion of Physical Education (PE) in the IA, which would bring the attention of schools and parents to students’ physical and psychological health, and further promote students’ healthy lifestyle and help them develop a habit of joining sports activities from young age for strengthening their physique. Physical education and medical related professionals also presented statistics to illustrate the numerous benefits of exercising regularly to students’ physical and mental health. They believed that including PE in the IA would bring a positive impact on students’ learning. At the same time, a significant number of stakeholders suggested fine-tuning the weighting of the other subjects simultaneously to promote a more balanced development of physical and psychological well-being among students.

Optimising the Weighting of Subjects in “Internal Assessments”

6. After in-depth discussion among various stakeholders (including experts and frontline teachers, etc.) and consolidation of different views, the optimised arrangement of the weighting of subjects of IA (see the table below) includes:

- adjusting the weighting across subjects appropriately to better cater for learner diversity and to reflect students’ performance more comprehensively;
- slightly adjusting the weighting of Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics Education to release space for learning and teaching of teachers and students;
- having equal weighting for Primary Science and Primary Humanities to nurture students’ balanced development of scientific literacy and humanistic qualities; and
- adding PE in the IA with a weighting equal to that of Visual Arts and Music to promote

students' whole-person development.

Key Learning Area / Subject		Current Weighting	Weighting after Optimisation*
Chinese Language Education		9	8
English Language Education		9	8
Mathematics Education		9	8
General Studies	Primary Science	6	4
	Primary Humanities		4
Visual Arts		3	2
Music		2	2
Physical Education		0	2
Total Weighting		38	38

*Schools may follow the current arrangement to include Putonghua and Religious Studies as the schools' optional subjects. The weightings for the aforementioned subjects are 1 and 2 respectively.

7. The optimised weighting of subjects will be implemented in the second term of Primary 5 starting from the 2026/27 school year. Regarding the scaling mechanism of "Internal Assessments" of the Secondary School Places Allocation System 2026/2028 Cycle and thereafter, and the administrative matters requiring attention, please refer to the correspondences to be issued by School Places Allocation Section, the EDB in the respective cycle.

Support measures

8. The EDB is committed to supporting schools in implementing the optimised arrangement. The Curriculum Frameworks of Science (Primary 1 – 6) and Primary Humanities have been released. In parallel, a number of support measures, including teacher training and learning and teaching resources, have been put in place. Concerning the assessment of Physical Education, please refer to the **Annex**. Regarding the above optimised arrangement of the weighting of subjects in the IA and the operation of including Physical Education in the IA, the EDB will progressively provide a series of support measures, including:

- organising briefing sessions for schools and parents respectively;
- offering regular professional training for teachers;
- producing learning and teaching resources;
- continuously refining the Physical Education Learning Outcomes Framework;
- organising Primary School Physical Education Assessment Learning Circle;
- organising school experience sharing activities; and
- establishing a designated webpage (www.edb.gov.hk/ia2024) for uploading promotional videos and leaflets, etc.

9. Relevant information and registration details of the parent briefing sessions are available

on the EDB webpage

(<https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/student-parents/events-services/parents-talks/index.html>), and parents are welcome to enrol. For the school briefing sessions, please refer to the EDB Training Calendar System for details and enrolment information. Principals and teachers are welcome to join.

Enquiry

10. For any enquiries, please contact the following relevant Sections of the EDB:

Briefing Sessions for Schools and Parents	Kindergarten and Primary Section Telephone : 2892 5831 Email : kppts@edb.gov.hk
Primary Science	Science Education Section Telephone : 3698 3522 Email : cdosc53@edb.gov.hk
Primary Humanities	Kindergarten and Primary Section Telephone : 2892 5823 Email : kpgs_cdi@edb.gov.hk
Physical Education	Physical Education Section Telephone : 2624 4256 Email : pe@edb.gov.hk
SSPA	Liaison Officer of School Places Allocation Section

Dr Gloria CHAN
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c.c. Heads of Sections – for information