

Assessment is an integral part of curriculum that cannot be separated from learning. The idea of ‘assessment for learning’ is not new. ‘Assessment for learning’ occurs in the learning and teaching process where teachers collect ongoing information about student learning, diagnose difficulties and provide timely and quality feedback for students to improve learning. The information collected also helps teachers improve learning and teaching and plan for follow-up actions.

## ***Basic Competency Assessments***

The Education Commission in 2000 recommended Basic Competency Assessments (BCA) in Chinese, English and Mathematics at various key learning stages in the Education Commission Report (2000) entitled “*Learning for Life, Learning through Life*”. Apart from the Territory-wide System Assessment, the BCA also includes Student Assessment and Web-based Learning and Teaching Support (WLTS).

In 2001, the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) was commissioned by the Education Bureau (EDB) to develop and implement Student Assessment and Territory-wide System Assessment under BCA. Student Assessment is an online assessment item bank, capable of assessing through a computer system the performance of participating students, and generating instant assessment reports for teachers’ reference. Participation of all primary and secondary schools is on a voluntary basis and schools can use the online system throughout the school year, at their own discretion. Related information allows teachers to review individual student progress towards learning objectives and set learning targets for students. The Student Assessment system was upgraded to the Student Assessment Repository (STAR) platform in January 2017. Schools can access the platform through the website of HKEdCity (<http://star.hkedcity.net>) for use.

The Territory-wide System Assessment is a low-stake assessment mainly to gauge Primary 3 (P.3), Primary 6 (P.6) and Secondary 3 (S.3) students’ performance in three subjects, Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics. Territory-wide System Assessment data provides schools with information on students’ overall standards in key learning areas for the purposes of school improvement in learning and teaching. The Territory-wide System Assessment began at the P.3 level in 2004, P.6 level in 2005 and S.3 level in 2006.

WLTS is an online platform which provides ready-made teaching activities and materials to address students’ learning difficulties in relevant Basic Competency (BC) for teachers’ reference and use.

Schools can make use of data and resources provided under BCA to adjust teaching plans and improve teaching strategies. Moreover, BCA data helps the Government provide appropriate assistance to schools and students so as to enhance the effectiveness of learning and teaching, realising ‘assessment for learning’.

## ***Review of the Basic Competency Assessments***

The Coordinating Committee on Basic Competency Assessment and Assessment Literacy (the Committee) was set up by the EDB in October 2014, with the aim of recommending directions for the development of BCA as well as the enhancement of assessment literacy among schools. In order to address public concerns, the Committee conducted a comprehensive review of the P.3 Territory-wide System Assessment in October 2015. In February 2016, the Committee submitted a report on the review<sup>1</sup>, proposing the implementation of the 2016 Tryout Study (P.3) (2016 Tryout Study).

The feedback and views collected from the 2016 Tryout Study and experience of participating schools showed that the four new initiatives<sup>2</sup> under the Study could effectively address the public concerns, including eliminating the incentives for over-drilling induced by the Territory-wide System Assessment, alleviating stakeholders' concerns about the stakes involved, reflecting the 'low-stake, no drilling' design of the Territory-wide System Assessment and the original purpose of providing feedback on learning and teaching. Therefore, the EDB accepted the recommendations of the Committee<sup>3</sup> in January 2017, extending the four new initiatives under the 2016 Tryout Study to all primary schools in the territory under the 2017 Basic Competency Assessment Research Study (2017 Research Study), with a view to gathering more comprehensive feedback and continuously reviewing and enhancing related arrangements.

## ***2017 Territory-wide System Assessment Report***

This report introduces the 2017 Territory-wide System Assessment and 2017 Research Study, and describes the overall performance of P.3, P.6 and S.3 students<sup>4</sup> participated in the assessment this year.

The contents of this report include: Chapter 2 outlining the assessment design and the development of the assessment items; Chapter 3 reporting on the assessment arrangements and introducing on-screen marking of the Territory-wide System Assessment, etc.; Chapter 4 setting out how the standards were set and maintained as well as reporting on the proportion of students achieving Basic Competencies (BCs) across years; Chapter 5 describing the different types of reports made available to schools; Chapters 6 to 8 reporting in detail on the performance of students in the Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics assessments. Examples of the performance of students achieving BCs are also discussed in these chapters; and Chapter 9 concluding the experience gained in this year.

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<sup>1</sup> 'The Coordinating Committee on Basic Competency Assessment and Assessment Literacy, Report on Review of the Territory-wide System Assessment' (February 2016)  
[www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/tsa/fullreport.pdf](http://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/tsa/fullreport.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Four new initiatives: improving assessment papers and question design, enhancing school reports, strengthening diversified professional support measures, and including a questionnaire survey on students' learning attitude and motivation

<sup>3</sup> 'The Coordinating Committee on Basic Competency Assessment and Assessment Literacy, Report on 2016 Tryout Study (Primary 3)' (December 2016)  
[www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/tsa/2016fullreport-e.pdf](http://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/tsa/2016fullreport-e.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Since 2012, the P.6 Territory-wide System Assessment has been implemented in odd-numbered years.