3. CONDUCT OF THE TSA

Administration

The Territory-wide System Assessment (TSA) consists of Oral, Written and Chinese audio-visual (CAV) assessments at Primary (P3, P6) and Secondary schools (S3) throughout the territory.

ORAL ASSESSMENT

The oral assessments for Primary Chinese and English language were conducted over two days, with one morning and one afternoon session held each day. Primary 3 and Primary 6 students took part in the oral and CAV assessments on 4 or 5 May 2010 and 11 or 12 May 2010 respectively. For Secondary schools, the oral assessment was conducted over two days but in one session, held on either 21 or 22 April 2010. In total, 525 schools at Primary 3 level, 534 schools at Primary 6 level and 455 schools at Secondary 3 level participated in the oral assessments.

Depending on the size of the Secondary or Primary school, 12 or 24 students were randomly selected to take part in the oral assessments for each language. The list of students selected for the assessment was not revealed until the day of the assessment. Secondary students were assessed by two external examiners while primary students were assessed by one internal examiner (a teacher at that school) and one external oral examiner. An Assessment Administration Assistant (AAA) was sent to each school on the day of the oral assessments to provide administrative support.

Continuing with the practice followed in previous years, training was provided to Oral Examiners (OE) by the HKEAA. Teachers with prior experience as Oral Examiners were invited to take part in the Online Oral Training Workshop held in March 2010. Teachers without prior experience, or not having completed the online training workshop, were required to attend the OE Training Workshop conducted in April 2010. In order to ensure the quality of OEs, the Authority appointed more than ten Assistant Examiners to assist in the training.

The format of the OE Training Workshop was a briefing followed by a small group discussion and activity. Through participation in a mock assessment, participants were able to familiarize themselves with the marking schemes, administrative procedures and skills required to conduct the oral assessments. Once participants passed the mock assessment, they were appointed as OEs.

WRITTEN ASSESSMENT

Written assessments for Primary 3 and 6 students took place on 17 and 18 June 2010 followed by the Secondary 3 level on 23 and 24 June 2010. A total of approximately 195, 000 students took part in TSA 2010. This included 525 schools participating at the Primary 3 level, 534 at the Primary 6 level and 456 at the Secondary 3 level. Invigilation was carried out by teachers at their own schools, supported by Assessment Administration Assistants (AAA) appointed to help in the conduct of the written assessments. A summary of the assessments is highlighted in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1   Allocation of Sub-Papers to Students

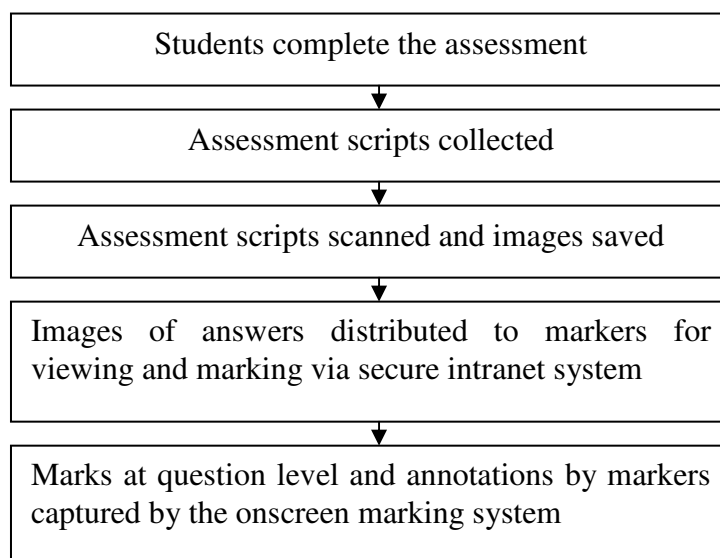| **Chinese Language**	
Reading	• Students randomly allocated to one of four sub-papers at primary levels and one of three sub-papers at S.3
Writing	• Students randomly allocated to one of two sub-papers at P.3, one of four sub-papers at P.6 and one of three sub-papers at S.3
Listening	• Each class randomly allocated to one of two sub-papers
Speaking	• Randomly selected students allocated to one of 12 sub-papers at primary levels and one of 16 sub-papers at S.3
Chinese Audio-visual (CAV)	• Randomly selected students allocated to one of two sub-papers at primary levels while each class at S.3 allocated to one paper
English Language	
Reading and Writing	• Students randomly allocated to one of four sub-papers at primary levels and one of three sub-papers at S.3
Listening	• Each class randomly allocated to one of four sub-papers at primary levels and one of three sub-papers at S.3
Speaking	• Randomly selected students allocated to one of 18 sub-papers at primary levels and one of 16 sub-papers at S.3
Mathematics	• Students randomly allocated to one of four sub-papers

Marking and Check-marking – Onscreen Marking System

The HKEAA is committed to enhancing the quality of marking in written examinations and advanced information technologies were used to enhance the marking quality and efficiency. Starting from 2008, Onscreen Marking was adopted for the marking of TSA papers.

OSM is a computerized marking system. Barcodes are used to track a candidate's identity and his/her assessment script. Each script is scanned into a computer and the images

captured and retained for marking and recordkeeping. The system delivers electronic images of students' scripts to markers at three assessment centres (Tsuen Wan, Lai King and Wan Chai). The workflow of Onscreen Marking is shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2   The workflow of Onscreen Marking

Students complete the assessment
↓
Assessment scripts collected
↓
Assessment scripts scanned and images saved
↓
Images of answers distributed to markers for viewing and marking via secure intranet system
↓
Marks at question level and annotations by markers captured by the onscreen marking system

After the completion of TSA 2010 in June, the HKEAA recruited about 950 Markers and 110 Assistant Examiners to assist marking and check-marking at the three assessment centres from 19 July 2010 to 30 July 2010. All the Markers and Assistant Examiners were qualified serving teachers. For example, attainment of the Language Proficiency Assessment for Teachers (LPAT) in English was one of the requirements for English Language Markers and Assistant Examiners. Markers' Meetings for P.3, P.6 and S.3 were conducted in July to familiarize Markers with the marking schemes. Additional training workshops were provided for training in the functionality of Onscreen Marking in order to ensure the smooth implementation of OSM.

Onscreen Marking not only enhanced the marking quality but also improved the efficiency of the marking process. Distribution of scripts for double marking was rapidly achieved through Onscreen Marking. Consistency in marking was ensured as scripts with discrepancies over the allowed range between two markers' scores were automatically distributed to the Assistant Examiners for third marking. During the marking period, the Assistant Examiners monitored the performance of Markers by check-marking the scripts randomly. Managers and officers of the HKEAA also closely monitored the marking process. If there was any inconsistency in marking, prompt action was taken to rectify the discrepancies.