

Assessment is closely related to learning and an integral part of the curriculum. “Assessment for learning” is not a new concept. It refers to a learning and teaching process where teachers collect ongoing information about students’ learning, diagnose learning difficulty, and provide timely and quality feedback to improve learning. The information collected also helps teachers plan for follow-up action and continue to improve learning and teaching.

Basic Competency Assessments

In 2000, the Education Commission released its report entitled “*Learning for Life, Learning through Life*” and proposed to implement Basic Competency Assessments (BCA) in the subjects of Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics at various key stages of learning. Apart from the Territory-wide System Assessment (TSA), BCA also comprises Student Assessment (SA) 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 SA and TSA under BCA. SA is an online assessment item bank which is also capable of assessing the performance of participating students and providing instant assessment reports for teachers’ reference through a computer system. All primary and secondary schools can use it any time during the school year on a voluntary basis. The related data helps teachers review individual students’ learning progress with reference to the key learning points, and set the next learning objectives for the students. SA was upgraded as the Student Assessment Repository (STAR) platform in January 2017. Schools can log in to the platform through the HKEdCity website (<http://star.hkedcity.net>) for use.

TSA is a low-stake assessment to gauge mainly Primary 3 (P.3), Primary 6 (P.6) and Secondary 3 (S.3) students’ performance in the three subjects of Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics. TSA data helps schools understand students’ overall academic standards in the main key learning areas for improving learning and teaching. TSA was first implemented at P.3 in 2004, and extended to P.6 and S.3 in 2005 and 2006 respectively.

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

Schools can make use of the data and resources provided by BCA to adjust teaching plans and improve teaching strategies. The Government can also provide appropriate support to schools and students in need to enhance learning and teaching, thus realising “assessment for learning”.

Review of 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 and enhancement of assessment literacy among schools. To address the public's concerns, the Committee was tasked to conduct a comprehensive review of the P.3 TSA in October 2015. Following an evidence-based review that had taken more than two years, with views collected from different stakeholders, including school sponsoring bodies, school heads, teachers and parents via various channels such as questionnaires, focus groups, seminars and meetings, it was reflected that most stakeholders affirmed the function and importance of TSA in providing feedback to learning and teaching at both the territory-wide and school levels. The stakeholders also commented positively on the four major enhancement measures, which include 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.

Arrangements for Primary 3 Territory-wide System Assessment in 2018 and beyond

In March 2018, the EDB accepted the Committee's recommendations on handling the arrangements for P.3 TSA in 2018 and beyond at the territory-wide and school levels separately. The new arrangements can further clarify that the Government will not use the data from TSA to evaluate schools, and re-affirm TSA's original purpose and positioning as "a low-stake assessment with emphasis on feedback". The arrangements for the P.3 TSA in 2018 and beyond are as follows:

- At the territory-wide level: About 10 per cent of P.3 students from each public sector and Direct Subsidy Scheme school are sampled for the P.3 TSA each year. To understand the overall learning performance of non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students and students with special educational needs (SEN) and provide appropriate support, a certain number of students have to be separately sampled for the assessment from these two student groups to meet the statistical requirements. Since only a small number of students in each school will participate in the assessment and students' performance will only be included in the data at the territory-wide level, school reports will not be provided.
- At the school level: Schools which would like all their P.3 students to participate in TSA and obtain school reports may approach the HKEAA directly for making relevant arrangements. If these schools have five or more NCS and/or SEN students participating in

the assessments, the HKEAA will provide separate reports on these students' overall performance in the three subjects of Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics (a report on NCS students' performance in Chinese Language has been provided since 2015). The HKEAA will issue school reports to schools directly. The EDB will not obtain school reports of individual schools.

2018 Territory-wide System Assessment Report

This report introduces the 2018 TSA and describes the overall performance of students participating in the assessments this year. Since 2012, the P.6 TSA has been implemented in odd-numbered years. As schools' participation in P.6 assessments is on a voluntary basis, the HKEAA does not provide information on the performance of P.6 at the territory-wide level. Therefore, the report this year covers only the overall performance of P.3 and S.3 students.

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, introducing the process of TSA on-screen marking, etc.; Chapter 4 elaborating on how to set and maintain standards and reporting on the proportion of students achieving BCs across years; Chapter 5 describing in detail the different types of reports provided to schools by the HKEAA; Chapters 6 to 8 describing in detail the performance of students of different levels in the Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics subjects, and providing examples which elaborate on the performance of students achieving BCs; and Chapter 9 concluding the experience gained this year.