

For discussion on 11 June 2012

## **Legislative Council Panel on Education**

### **Progress on the Implementation of Applied Learning in the New Senior Secondary Curriculum**

#### **Purpose**

This paper reports on the progress on the development and implementation of Applied Learning (ApL) in the new senior secondary (NSS) curriculum, focusing on the following areas: course development, implementation in schools, recognition and impact on students.

#### **Background**

2. The NSS curriculum aims to help students meet the needs of the changing global environment. Through promoting whole-person development and life-long learning, it helps enhance the human capital and competitiveness for Hong Kong. ApL courses, as an integral part of the NSS curriculum, provide students with application and practice opportunities to help develop their generic skills in authentic contexts and explore their career aspirations and orientation for career development and life-long learning in specific areas.

3. As an initiative to diversify the learning opportunities available to senior secondary students, the concept of ApL (formerly known as Career-oriented Studies) was introduced in late 2002. It was first launched as a pilot since the 2003/04 school year. The last cohort of piloting (2008-10) registered about 6,000 student enrolments from about 200 schools. Commencing in the 2010/11 school year, ApL courses are offered to Secondary 5 and 6 students as elective subjects in the NSS curriculum, offering studies with stronger elements of practical learning linked to the application of knowledge and concepts in broad professional and vocational fields.

## **Progress**

### ***Course Development***

4. To cater for students' diverse interests, aptitudes and abilities, different ApL courses are developed under six areas of studies, namely (1) Creative Studies; (2) Media and Communication; (3) Business, Management and Law; (4) Services; (5) Applied Science; and (6) Engineering and Production. Students are prepared for further studies and/or work as well as lifelong learning through the development of foundation skills (communication, numeracy and information technology skills), thinking skills, people skills, values and attitudes, and career-related competencies. The quality of ApL courses is maintained under a rigorous quality assurance mechanism encompassing curriculum design, delivery and assessment. Students need to take 8-10 assessment tasks of different modes which reflect the nature of ApL (e.g. practical tasks, projects, portfolios, performances, written tests / examinations). While the assessments are designed and administered by course providers, the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority is responsible for monitoring the process and the moderation of the final assessment results.

5. In the first cohort (2010-12 cohort), 30 ApL courses (see [Appendix](#)) are offered by 11 course providers. With the addition of five new courses, a total of 35 ApL courses are offered by 12 course providers in the second cohort (2011-13 cohort) and the third cohort (2012-14 cohort).

### ***Implementation in Schools***

6. The first cohort of NSS ApL courses was smoothly launched in September 2010. Schools are encouraged to adopt different modes of implementation according to the learning needs of their students. To support schools to offer ApL courses, a Diversity Learning Grant is provided upon application. There are 6,690 student enrolments from 303 secondary schools and 6,193 student enrolments from 298 secondary schools taking ApL courses in the first cohort (2010-12 cohort) and second cohort (2011-13 cohort) respectively. In the third cohort (2012-14 cohort), around 320 schools have submitted more than 10,000 student applications as at end of May 2012. The actual student enrolments will be available in the last quarter of the year.

7. We are encouraged to note the growing receptiveness of schools generally to ApL. This trend is evident even among schools which traditionally take in students of better academic achievement. The percentage of these schools, for example, has been steadily increasing from about 14% during the last cohort of piloting (2008-10 cohort) to about 20% in the first NSS cohort (2010-12 cohort) and 21% in the second NSS cohort (2011-13 cohort).

8. A sound combination of ApL and elective subjects broadens students' learning experience and enhances the lateral coherence within the senior secondary curriculum. For example, a student taking the ApL course "Jewellery Arts and Design" can now apply her knowledge in chemical elements acquired in Chemistry to understand the colour variation and composition of different gemstones; students taking subjects such as geography, history choose the ApL course "Aviation Studies" to meet their learning interests and enhance their all-round development.

### ***Recognition***

9. We have adopted various means to enhance the understanding of the competencies that students would acquire upon completion of ApL courses in order to facilitate students' pursuit of further studies and work. Locally, in the benchmarking study of the ApL curriculum, the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications concluded that the competency requirements of the "Attained" level of the sample ApL courses in the study and that of the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) examination Level 2 are comparable in totality in terms of skills, values and attitudes of students. Internationally, exchanges of ideas and experiences with related institutions and professionals are being made. Edexcel of the UK has recognized through a letter to EDB that ApL courses as part of the HKDSE are appropriate qualifications for progression to Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) Level 5 Higher National Diploma (HND) programmes at approved BTEC centres, internationally or in the UK, on condition that the applicant has met other entry requirements of the programmes. Further opportunities of curriculum mapping with related curricula in other systems are being explored. We shall continue with our promotion efforts.

10. Students attaining the results of "Attained with Distinction" in ApL courses would be regarded as reaching Level 3 or above at the HKDSE

examination. The “Attained” level is deemed by the Civil Service Bureau as Level 2 for the purpose of civil service appointment.

11. For further studies in sub-degree programmes, students are eligible to apply for admission to Associate Degree or Higher Diploma Programmes if they meet the minimum entrance requirements of Level 2 in five HKDSE subjects (including Chinese Language and English Language). Each student is allowed to use up to two ApL subjects in the application.

12. For further studies in undergraduate programmes, tertiary institutions have indicated that they value the learning experiences that students acquire in ApL courses. They are used as elective subjects, or considered for award of extra bonus or additional information, to suit the needs of different programmes and faculties of different institutions.

13. For work, the Civil Service Bureau has announced that results in the HKDSE (including the results of “Attained” and “Attained with Distinction” in ApL, subject to a maximum of two ApL subjects) will be accepted for civil service appointment purposes.

### ***Impact on Students***

14. To collect feedback on the ApL curriculum for its continuous development, a study was conducted on various stakeholders who participated in the 2010-12 cohort. Responses from 1,758 students (response rate of 84% out of 2,081 students sampled), 1,076 parents (response rate of 52% out of 2,081 parents sampled), 181 schools (response rate of 77% out of 234 schools sampled) and 11 course providers (response rate of 100% from a population of 11 course providers) were received. A summary of key findings is shown below:

### **Overall Satisfaction**

15. ApL received great satisfaction from respondents of relevant stakeholder groups in various aspects. The overall satisfaction with the ApL curriculum was very high at 87%. Around three-quarters of relevant respondents stated that they would recommend ApL to other students / schools (74%).

## Impact on Student Learning

16. Over eight in ten relevant respondents agreed that ApL had positive impact on students in broadening students' personal growth and learning, and developing their values and future orientation.

17. Respondents across all stakeholder groups held the view that students who took ApL in the current school year performed well in areas concerning their personal growth including acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes for further studies in course-related programmes (89%), acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes for employment in course-related industries (90%) and exploration of career aspirations and orientation for life-long learning in specific areas (79%).

18. Most stakeholder respondents also noted that ApL had positive impact on students' learning, especially on widening of their horizons (93%, total stakeholder respondents). Other positive outcomes included arousing students' learning interest (82%), helping them learn how to learn independently (81%), and enhancing their self-confidence (81%).

## **Way Forward**

19. ApL will continue to contribute to enriching the senior secondary curriculum through diversifying the context of learning to suit the different interests, aptitudes and abilities of students. The course provision will be regularly reviewed and refined to provide a balanced portfolio of courses in the six areas of studies matching stakeholders' expectations and the social, economic and technological needs of the local society and the global trend. To improve the support to schools, the funding arrangements for Diversity Learning Grant have been reviewed. The level of the grant for the 2012-14 cohort will be enhanced to further encourage schools to embrace more ApL choices for their students.

20. On-going communication with stakeholders will be maintained to obtain feedback, to promote better understanding of ApL and to sustain its development.

## **Advice Sought**

21. Members are requested to note the progress of ApL as reported in this paper.

Education Bureau  
June 2012

新高中應用學習課程 (2010-12 學年)  
New Senior Secondary Applied Learning Courses (2010-12 Cohort)

課程一覽表  
Course List

學習範疇 Area of Studies	課程組別 Course Cluster	課程 <sup>註一</sup> Course <sup>NOTE 1</sup>	課程提供機構- 授課機構 <sup>註二</sup> Course Provider - Course Deliverer <sup>NOTE 2</sup>	教學語言 Medium of Instruction
創意學習 Creative Studies	1. 設計學 Design Studies	形象設計 Image Design	VTC	中文或英文 Chinese or English
		創新產品設計 Innovative Product Design	VTC	中文或英文 Chinese or English
		珠寶藝術與設計 Jewellery Arts and Design	HKBU(SCE)	中文 Chinese
	2. 媒體藝術 Media Arts	商業漫畫設計 Commercial Comic Art	OUHK(LiPACE)	中文 Chinese
		多媒體科藝 Multimedia Entertainment Studies	VTC	中文或英文 Chinese or English
	3. 表演藝術 Performing Arts	戲劇藝術入門 Introduction to Theatre Arts	HKAPA	中文 Chinese
		舞出新機—舞蹈藝術 Taking a Chance on Dance	HKAPA	中文 Chinese
媒體及傳意 Media and Communication	4. 電影、電視與廣播學 Films, TV and Broadcasting Studies	電影及錄像 Film and Video Studies	VTC	中文或英文 Chinese or English
		資訊娛樂節目製作 Infotainment Production	HKCT	中文 Chinese
	5. 媒體寫作及製作 Media Writing and Production	電台主持與節目製作 Radio Host and Programme Production	OUHK(LiPACE)	中文 Chinese
商業、管理及 法律 Business, Management and Law	6. 商業學 Business Studies	國際商貿市場拓展 Marketing in Global Trade	CityU(SCOPE)	中文 Chinese
		中小企實用電腦會計 Practical Accounting for SMEs	HKIAAT-CCHES	中文 Chinese
			HKIAAT-CUTW	中文或英文 Chinese or English
			HKIAAT-HKCT	中文或英文 Chinese or English
			HKIAAT-VTC	中文或英文 Chinese or English
	認識金融服務 Understanding Financial Services	OUHK(LiPACE)	中文或英文 Chinese or English	
	7. 顧客服務管理 Clientele Management	採購及營銷 Purchasing and Merchandising	VTC	中文或英文 Chinese or English
		零售管理 Retail Management	HKBU(SCE)	中文或英文 Chinese or English
	8. 法律學 Legal Studies	認識香港法律 Understanding Hong Kong Law	HKCT	中文或英文 Chinese or English

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服務 Services	9. 款待服務 Hospitality Services	酒店服務營運 <sup>#</sup> Hospitality Services in Practice <sup>#</sup>	CityU(SCOPE)	中文或英文 Chinese or English
		酒店營運 <sup>#</sup> Hotel Operations <sup>#</sup>	VTC	中文或英文 Chinese or English
		西式食品製作 Western Cuisine	VTC	中文或英文 Chinese or English
	10. 項目管理 Event Management	項目策劃及運作 Events Planning and Operation	HKCT	中文 Chinese
	11. 個人及社區服務 Personal and Community Services	幼兒成長教育 Child Development and Care	HKIEd(SCPE)	中文 Chinese
		美容學基礎 Fundamental Cosmetology	CCHES	中文 Chinese
應用科學 Applied Science	12. 醫療科學及健 康護理 Medical Science and Health Care	基礎健康護理 <sup>#</sup> Fundamental Health Care <sup>#</sup>	OUHK(LiPACE)	中文或英文 Chinese or English
		中醫保健與美容 Health and Beauty Keeping in TCM	CUTW	中文 Chinese
		健康護理實務 <sup>#</sup> Health Care Practice <sup>#</sup>	CCHES	中文或英文 Chinese or English
	13. 運動 Sports	運動科學及體適能 <sup>#</sup> Exercise Science and Health Fitness <sup>#</sup>	HKBU(SCE)	中文 Chinese
		運動管理與教練法 <sup>#</sup> Sports Coaching and Management <sup>#</sup>	HKIEd(SCPE)	中文 Chinese
		汽車科技 Automotive Technology	CCHES	中文或英文 Chinese or English
工程及生產 Engineering and Production	14. 土木及機械工程 Civil and Mechanical Engineering	航空學 Aviation Studies	HKU(SPACE)	中文或英文 Chinese or English
		屋宇設施工程 Building Facilities Engineering	VTC	中文或英文 Chinese or English

**註一 NOTE 1**

學生在同一個課程組別內只可修讀一科有「#」的課程。

For courses marked with “#”, only ONE course in the course cluster could be taken by students.

**註二 NOTE 2**

課程提供機構—授課機構 Course Provider - Course Deliverer	
CCHES	明愛社區及高等教育服務 Caritas Community & Higher Education Service
CityU(SCOPE)	香港城市大學專業進修學院 School of Continuing and Professional Education, City University of Hong Kong
CUTW	香港中文大學 - 東華三院社區書院 The Chinese University of Hong Kong – Tung Wah Group of Hospitals Community College
HKAPA	香港演藝學院 The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts
HKBU(SCE)	香港浸會大學持續教育學院 School of Continuing Education, Hong Kong Baptist University
HKCT	香港專業進修學校 Hong Kong College of Technology
HKIAAT	香港財務會計協會有限公司 Hong Kong Institute of Accredited Accounting Technicians Limited
HKIEd(SCPE)	香港教育學院持續專業教育學院 School of Continuing and Professional Education, The Hong Kong Institute of Education
HKU(SPACE)	香港大學專業進修學院 HKU School of Professional and Continuing Education, The University of Hong Kong
OUHK(LiPACE)	香港公開大學李嘉誠專業進修學院 Li Ka Shing Institute of Professional and Continuing Education, The Open University of Hong Kong
VTC	職業訓練局 Vocational Training Council