

Education Bureau

New Senior Secondary Curriculum

Liberal Studies

Parents' Handbook



1

Introduction

Liberal Studies is a core subject in the New Senior Secondary (NSS) curriculum. This handbook is designed to brief parents on the objectives and design of Liberal Studies as well as to answer queries of most concern to them, so that they know better how to help their children study the subject.

For more detailed information about the subject, parents can visit the “Web-based Resource Platform for Liberal Studies” (<http://ls.edb.hkedcity.net>), or download the *Liberal Studies Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4 - 6)* from the Platform.

This handbook consists of the following parts:

- Curriculum aims and content of Liberal Studies p. 2
- Modes of learning in Liberal Studies p. 12
- Assessment design and public examination for Liberal Studies p. 24
- How can parents help their children study Liberal Studies? p. 29
- Frequently asked questions p. 32

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Curriculum Aims and Content of Liberal Studies



Why is it necessary to study Liberal Studies?

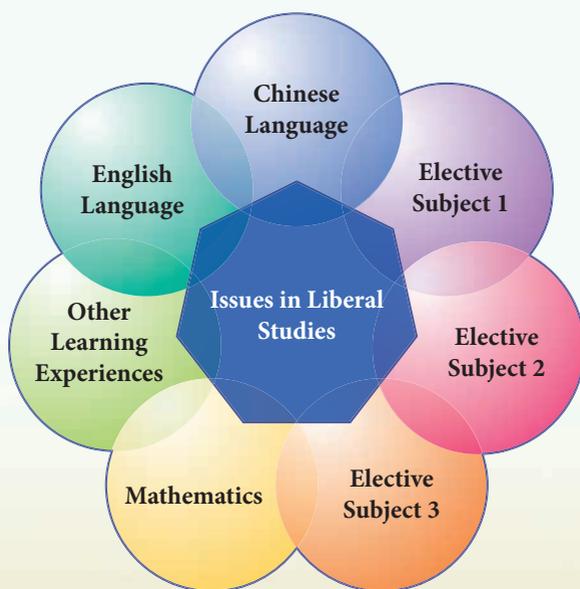
Why is it made a “compulsory subject”?

Different sectors of the community have been interpreting the term “Liberal Studies” differently and thus holding different expectations for the subject. These expectations, of which some are very far-reaching indeed, all revolve around the common goal of enabling students to become citizens with a broad knowledge base, high adaptability to change, independent thinking and life-long learning capabilities, so that they are able to see things from multiple perspectives and to establish their own views and values.



In fact, students need the aforementioned knowledge, skills and attitudes to face an ever-changing society and a knowledge-based economy. Therefore, the Education Bureau (EDB) has introduced Liberal Studies as a core subject under the NSS curriculum so that every student has the opportunities:

- A** to enhance their **Awareness** of their society, their nation, the human world and the physical environment, as well as develop positive values (**A**wareness);
- B** to **Broaden** their knowledge base and expand their perspectives on things (**B**roadening); and
- C** to **Connect** knowledge across different disciplines and enhance their Critical thinking skills (**C**onnection skills & **C**ritical thinking).





Does “Liberal Studies” really cover everything?

Different views on Liberal Studies



If anything can be discussed in Liberal Studies, then does it take a Dr Know-all to study the subject?



I heard that “Liberal Studies” has no clear scope; it only makes students learn to think...

We want our children to read extensively and be well-versed in Chinese and Western classics...



They say “Liberal Studies” is just for students to express their personal views and feelings. That sounds like an “empty talk” subject to me...

Liberal Studies takes up about 10% of the total lesson time in the overall three-year senior secondary curriculum (i.e. about 250 hours for three years). In order to provide all senior secondary students with a Liberal Studies curriculum of broad and balanced coverage, the subject was designed with practical considerations given to making good use of the knowledge and skills students have acquired in junior secondary education. Therefore, Liberal Studies has to have a manageable scope.

Limited by the amount of lesson time, Liberal Studies may not be able to fully meet the various expectations of all people. However, it is designed with clear areas and foci of study, and is of great use to students in understanding and handling different issues in the contemporary world.





Is Liberal Studies a “brand-new” subject?

- The precious and practical experiences gained through Liberal Studies (Advanced Supplementary Level) implemented in 1992 and Integrated Humanities (Secondary 4 - 5) as well as Science and Technology (Secondary 4 - 5) introduced in 2003 have provided a fertile ground for the implementation of the NSS Liberal Studies curriculum.
- The rationale, pedagogy and assessment modes for Liberal Studies share similarities with those of many other subjects.
- The design of Liberal Studies has taken into account overseas experiences in critical thinking training, life education, values education and civic education, with due consideration given to their relevance in the Hong Kong context so as to avoid direct “transplantation” of the foreign modes into local secondary schools.
- The knowledge and skills students have acquired from different Key Learning Areas and learning experiences in basic education provide the necessary foundation for studying the NSS Liberal Studies curriculum.

Below are experiences shared by persons who studied Liberal Studies (Advanced Supplementary Level) when they were in secondary school:

The information processing skills and analytical skills I gained in studying Liberal Studies during my secondary years are very useful to my current job. For instance, we got to acquaint ourselves with the background of the roles we played when we were conducting a role-play activity. Such valuable learning experience has raised my awareness of things around me and enabled me to better consider my clients' perspectives when I am handling their legal matters.



A History undergraduate



A solicitor

The information gathering skills and analytical skills I acquired in carrying out the Liberal Studies project are of great use to my current study at university, especially for writing essays and project reports.

What do students learn in Liberal Studies?



- Liberal Studies provides many opportunities for students to use the knowledge they have acquired from different disciplines to explore things around them and issues which affect their lives. Therefore, it is not a subject for doing “news commentaries” only, nor is it merely for students to express their personal feelings.
- The Liberal Studies curriculum comprises three Areas of Study. It aims to help students develop an understanding of themselves, their society, their nation, and the world.
- There are six modules under the three Areas of Study. For each module, there is a list of suggested “enquiry questions”. Teachers will guide students to explore these questions making use of controversial events and issues that arouses heated discussion and debates among different sectors of the community.





“Independent Enquiry Study” (IES)

Areas of Study

Self & Personal Development

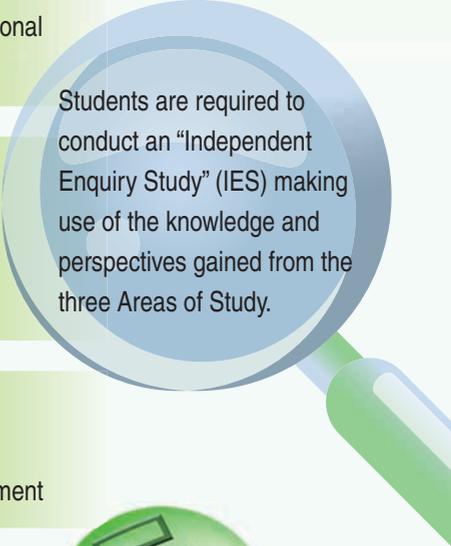
- Module 1: Personal Development & Interpersonal Relationships

Society & Culture

- Module 2: Hong Kong Today
- Module 3: Modern China
- Module 4: Globalization

Science, Technology & the Environment

- Module 5: Public Health
- Module 6: Energy Technology & the Environment

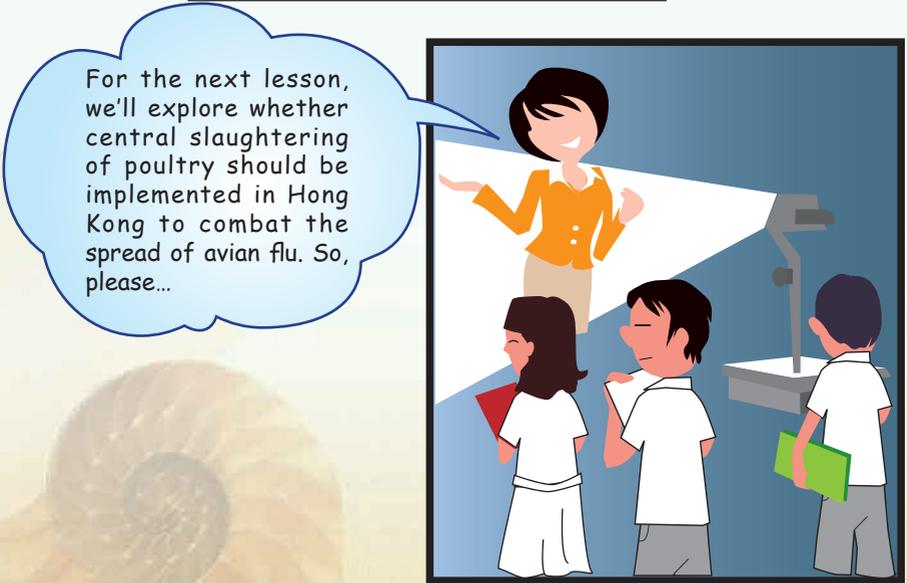


Students are required to conduct an “Independent Enquiry Study” (IES) making use of the knowledge and perspectives gained from the three Areas of Study.



For details of the NSS Liberal Studies curriculum, please refer to Chapter 2 of the *Liberal Studies Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4 - 6)*.

It is worth noting that the three Areas of Study are by no means independent fields of knowledge or self-contained disciplines. In fact, the knowledge, skills and perspectives students developed through the three Areas of Study are inter-connected and can be used to analyse a broad range of issues.



Last month, when we discussed "the impact of the recent Policy Address on the quality of life of Hong Kong people", a topic related to Module 2: Hong Kong Today, we learned how to analyse issues from different perspectives, such as the political and economic perspectives. One of my teammates found an online forum with many discussions about government policies...



Then, we can include those perspectives in our analysis of the issue of "central slaughtering". We can also visit that online forum for more information as well...

We've learned how to apply concepts such as "conflict of interests" and "balance of interests"...



Right, we can use them to see how the government can balance the interests of different stakeholders such as poultry traders and the public...

3

Modes of Learning in Liberal Studies



How do students study Liberal Studies?

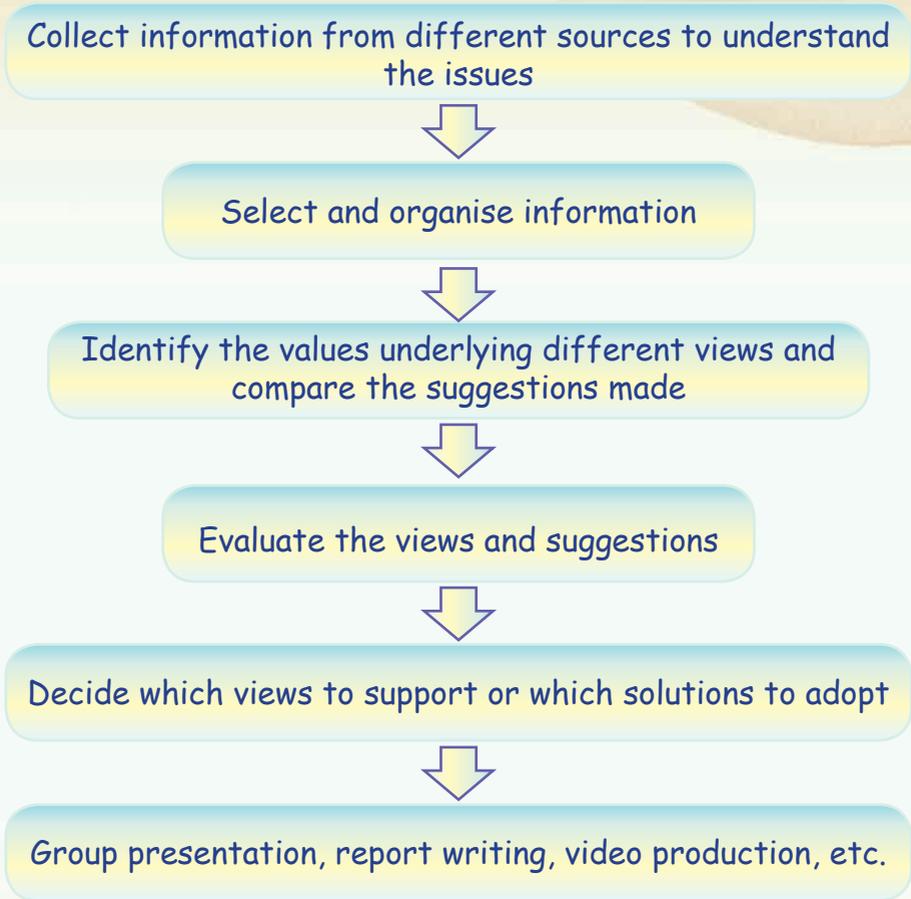


Issue-enquiry

Issues explored in Liberal Studies are often those that are widely discussed in society (e.g. should certain historic buildings be demolished?). These issues involve a number of controversies (e.g. should we pursue “urban development” or “cultural conservation”?), and no consensus on them has yet been reached in the community.

The “issue-enquiry” approach adopted for NSS Liberal Studies is a process in which students take the initiatives in raising questions, consult a range of references and opinions and then reflect on their own views, make suggestions or propose solutions to problems. Throughout the entire issue-enquiry process, students may learn to understand the views of different stakeholders (such as the government, non-governmental organisations, parents, young people, etc.) on the issues explored, and understand the issues from a variety of perspectives (such as economic, cultural, scientific, etc.). They will also learn to respect evidence, stay open-minded to different viewpoints and formulate their own stance on different issues.

During the enquiry process, students have the opportunity to think, discuss, collaborate with their peers, and collect information after class. Generally speaking, the issue-enquiry process involves the following steps:

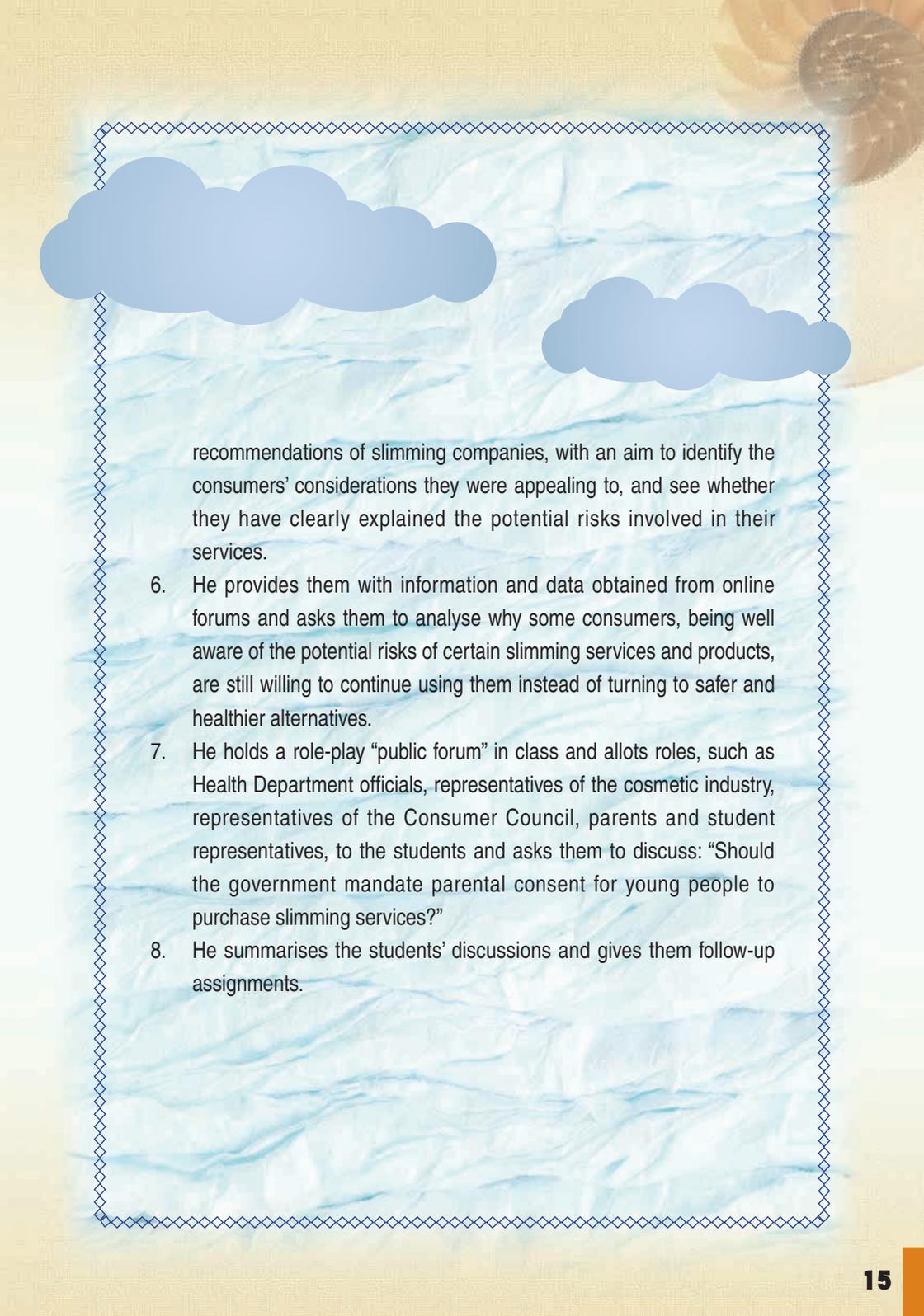




An issue-enquiry using “slimming” as the topic

Mr Cheung goes through an issue-enquiry on the topic of slimming with his students:

1. He works with them to collect slimming cases and advertisements.
2. He shows them videos and articles on authentic slimming cases.
3. He organises group discussions with the help of worksheets, and asks the students to study the cases and analyse the following with evidence to support their arguments:
 - the reasons for undergoing slimming treatment of the individuals in the cases (i.e. personal reasons or influences from external factors such as the media or popular trends); and
 - the deficiencies in different slimming methods and their impact on people’s physical and mental development as well as interpersonal relationships.
4. He provides an opportunity for them to apply concepts such as “self-esteem”, “peer pressure”, “popular trends”, “media ethics” and “understanding of health” in their analysis through the group discussions above.
5. He refers his students to some slimming advertisements and asks them to explore the promotional strategies, services, products and



recommendations of slimming companies, with an aim to identify the consumers' considerations they were appealing to, and see whether they have clearly explained the potential risks involved in their services.

6. He provides them with information and data obtained from online forums and asks them to analyse why some consumers, being well aware of the potential risks of certain slimming services and products, are still willing to continue using them instead of turning to safer and healthier alternatives.
7. He holds a role-play “public forum” in class and allots roles, such as Health Department officials, representatives of the cosmetic industry, representatives of the Consumer Council, parents and student representatives, to the students and asks them to discuss: “Should the government mandate parental consent for young people to purchase slimming services?”
8. He summarises the students' discussions and gives them follow-up assignments.



“Independent Enquiry Study” (IES)

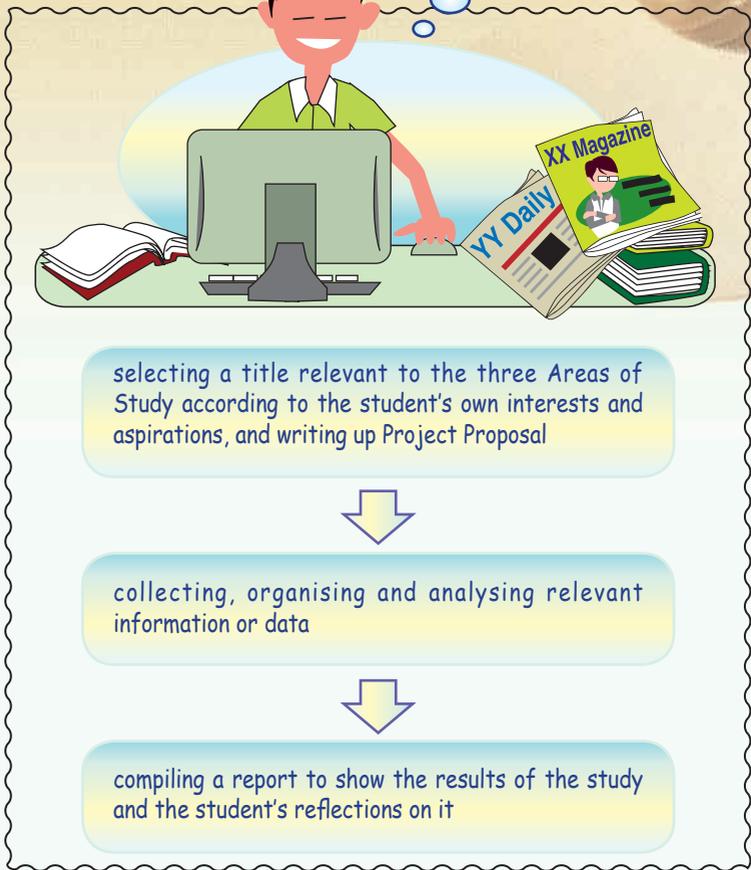
“IES” allows students to choose their own study titles which suit their interests. It provides an opportunity for students to conduct a self-directed study and demonstrate various skills (such as problem-solving skills and self-management skills). These skills provide a useful foundation for students’ further studies and future careers.

As students have already experienced different modes of project learning in different subjects during primary and junior secondary education, they should have acquired some understanding of the basic project skills (such as skills in collecting and organising information, and in presenting the products). However, as an important component of a senior secondary subject, the “IES” requires students to demonstrate more advanced thinking skills.

Nature: It is not only an assignment, but also an integral part of classroom learning and an essential learning experience in the Liberal Studies curriculum. It provides students with a good opportunity for self-directed learning.

Aim: It aims to provide an opportunity for students to learn to become self-directed learners. Throughout the enquiry process, students are required to take the initiatives in raising questions and finding answers, and to be responsible for their plans and decisions.

The enquiry process:



Product: The main body of the report can be in written or non-written forms (e.g. a video programme). The former should be between 1,500 and 4,000 words while the latter should be accompanied by a short written text (of 300 - 1,000 words) explaining the main idea of the project and showing the student's reflections on it.

Teachers' role: In the three-year curriculum, 82 hours of lesson time is reserved for teachers to supervise and guide their students in the study process so that the students can carry out their study independently.



“Sports” as an example of “IES”

Chi-keung is sporty and is a member of the school football team. He noticed that there is great solidarity in the school football team but low morale in the school basketball team. Having explored some issues relating to the relationships of students with their peers and seniors in the Liberal Studies lessons and read some books encouraging young people to engage in different kinds of group activities, Chi-keung decided to carry out his IES using “the impact of participation in the school’s ball teams on interpersonal relationships” as the title. He shared his ideas in class and gathered some feedbacks from his teachers and classmates. He then wrote up a “Project Proposal” which briefly explained the aims and methodology of the study.

With the permission from the respective coaches, Chi-keung observed

certain training sessions of the different ball teams in his school, and paid attention to the modes and content of communication among the players. He interviewed some players from each team on how they get along with team players. Chi-keung recorded the data systematically by using a preset observation table and an interview outline. Later, he organised the information collected and reported them in class.

Having organised the data, Chi-keung discovered that participation in group activities such as school's ball teams may not necessarily enhance young people's interpersonal relationships. He tried to analyse the training processes of the ball teams and identify the factors that promote communication among players, the factors that hinder it, and the kinds of atmosphere and leadership style conducive to good interpersonal relationships among players. Reflecting on the entire enquiry process, Chi-keung realised that there was still plenty of room for improvement. Finally, he compiled a 3,000-word report on his study results and his reflections on the study.

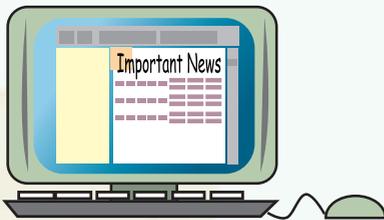


For details about “Independent Enquiry Study”, please refer to Section 2.8, Chapter 2 of the *Liberal Studies Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4 – 6)*.



Are “textbooks” necessary to students’ learning in Liberal Studies?

- During their study of Liberal Studies, students often have to access up-to-date information sources of current affairs. Therefore, the learning and teaching resources selected for this subject must often be kept updated. They should also provide background and basic knowledge related to the issues explored, and bring out the views, suggestions and values of different groups in society.
- For effective learning of the subject, students do not have to rely on a single “textbook” as a major learning resource. On the contrary, they should refer to a wider range of information sources such as books, newspapers, magazines, television programmes, web-based learning materials, and even their own experiences.





What if schools have already adopted certain “textbooks” for NSS Liberal Studies?

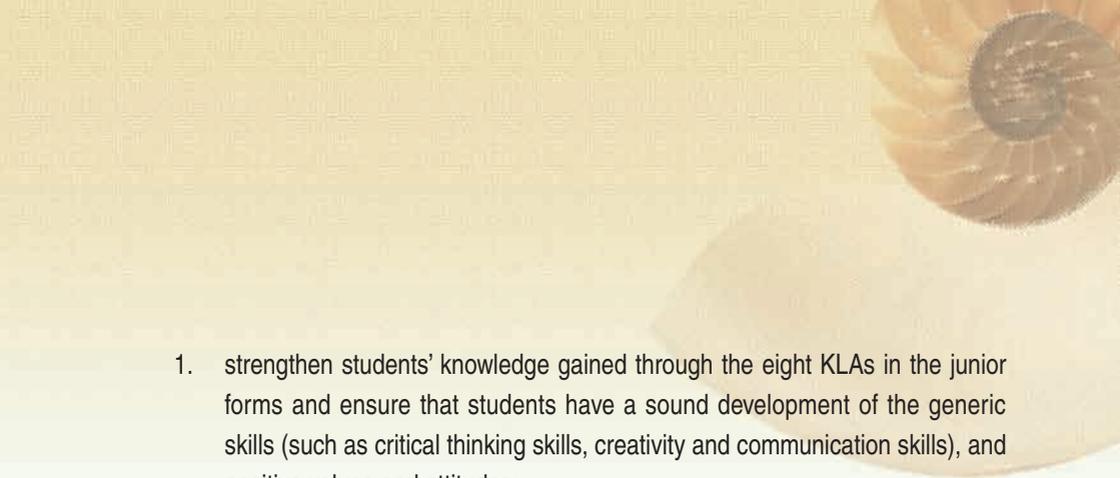
- Some schools may use “textbooks” to provide a starting point for teachers and students to adapt to the learning and teaching of Liberal Studies.
- “Textbooks” selected by schools should only be treated as supplementary resources for the study of certain issues. Teachers should not be expected to cover everything in the textbooks.
- Owing to the ever-changing nature of issues to be explored in Liberal Studies, teachers will provide students with diverse learning materials relevant to these issues and adapt the content of the “textbooks” to cater for the different learning needs of students. Students should also participate in the collection and analysis of information so as to enjoy fruitful learning outcomes.





Do students need to study “Liberal Studies” at the junior secondary level?

- Liberal Studies is a senior secondary subject which is built on the foundation knowledge students have acquired from different Key Learning Areas (KLAs) # ^{Note 1} in their junior secondary education, where they developed systematically foundation knowledge to relevant areas.
- Some secondary schools offer “Liberal Studies” in the junior forms, which comprises mainly of learning activities such as project learning and thinking skills training, and occasionally discussions on cross-disciplinary issues. These school-based curricula are designed to suit the needs of the students of different schools, and are conducive to developing their “learning to learn” capacity.
- However, it is not necessary for schools to offer “Liberal Studies” in the junior forms. Students in their junior forms do not have to prematurely deal with the enquiry questions of the six modules in NSS Liberal Studies. In fact, in conducting an issue-enquiry, it is important that students possess the relevant knowledge base; otherwise the enquiry would become superficial. To prepare students in the junior forms for their learning in NSS Liberal Studies, schools should:

- 
1. strengthen students' knowledge gained through the eight KLAs in the junior forms and ensure that students have a sound development of the generic skills (such as critical thinking skills, creativity and communication skills), and positive values and attitudes;
 2. implement the Four Key Tasks # ^{Note 2} as part of the strategies to develop students' learning to learn capacity and provide them with a cross-curricular or cross-disciplinary learning opportunity.

Note 1 The eight KLAs are Chinese Language Education, English Language Education, Mathematics Education, Science Education, Technology Education, Personal, Social & Humanities Education, Arts Education as well as Physical Education.

Note 2 The implementation of the Four Key Tasks within and across the KLAs in schools helps students to develop independent learning capabilities. The Four Key Tasks are “Reading to Learn”, “Project Learning”, “Moral and Civic Education”, and “Information Technology for Interactive Learning”.

4

Assessment Design and Public Examination for Liberal Studies



Why is public assessment needed for Liberal Studies?

Public assessment is conducted for this subject so that students' efforts and achievements in this important subject are properly assessed, recognised and reported. Public assessment also allows students' learning outcomes in this subject to be recognised by both local and overseas educational institutions. In fact, Liberal Studies has been made an admission criterion by all local universities.

The public assessment of NSS Liberal Studies consists of a public examination component and a School-based Assessment (SBA) component:

Component	Part	Weighting	Duration
Public Examination	Paper 1: Data-response questions (answer all questions)	50%	2 hours
	Paper 2: Extended-response questions (answer one of the questions only)	30%	1 hour & 15 minutes
School-based Assessment (SBA)	"Independent Enquiry Study" (IES)	20%	





Do students need to memorise a lot of information when preparing for the public examination of Liberal Studies?

- Assessment in Liberal Studies requires candidates to study and master a range of issues in different contexts. They should be able to integrate as well as apply what they have learnt to enquire into and reflect upon different issues.
- The question format used in Liberal Studies is not designed to test whether candidates could provide certain “correct answers”; and there will not be any “model answers” to the examination questions. Candidates are required to demonstrate a sound understanding of the issues reflected in the given data, show a proper understanding of the requirements of the questions, and express their own opinions on the issues.
- The two papers aim to assess abilities such as identification, application and analysis of given information. They provide a wide context for students to demonstrate various higher-order skills (e.g. drawing critically on relevant experience and the views of others) and skills in communicating their views systematically.
- To secure good results in Liberal Studies, students do not have to memorise certain theories or information. Rather, they should work at deepening their understanding of the enquiry questions for the six modules and enhance the various abilities stressed in the assessment of this subject through the process of issue-enquiry.
- For Liberal Studies, “model answers” and detailed notes would help neither the learning of the subject nor the taking of examination. Study methods that are overly examination-oriented and emphasise too much on drilling of answering techniques will only dampen students’ motivation and deprive them of the opportunity for self-directed learning.





Without any “model answers”, how will students’ examination answer scripts be marked in Liberal Studies?

The Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) has adopted a rigorous monitoring mechanism to ensure fairness in marking:

- experienced secondary school teachers are appointed as markers;
- for each question, markers are provided with clear marking guidelines comprising level descriptors according to the candidates’ different standards of performance;
- before the marking work starts, a Markers’ Meeting will be held to arrive at professional consensus on the marking criteria and standards for each question;
- markers are required to go through training and pass a qualifying test before they are allowed to mark the live scripts;
- qualified markers are required to follow the marking guidelines instead of their personal and subjective views or preferences;
- the Chief and Assistant Examiners will supervise markers’ work through systematic checkmarking; and
- “double-marking”, i.e. the independent marking of each script by two markers, will be adopted. If there is a significant discrepancy in the marks awarded by the two markers, the HKEAA will take further action to ensure the reliability of the marking.

A teacher's experience in marking internal scripts

Miss Ng is the Secondary Four Liberal Studies Co-ordinator of a secondary school and was responsible for setting the first term examination paper. She also drafted the marking guidelines with reference to the HKEAA's assessment requirements for public examinations and students' learning progress.

After the examination, Miss Ng selected some scripts as samples and asked all the other Secondary Four Liberal Studies teachers to try marking those scripts according to the draft marking guidelines. Later, Miss Ng held a meeting to address the colleagues' difficulties and queries in marking the sample scripts. Then they reached consensus on the marking criteria.

Through the above steps, Miss Ng solved the problem of discrepancies in colleagues' own marking criteria, and came up with a set of agreed marking guidelines for all colleagues.



For details about public assessment for Liberal Studies, please refer to Chapter 5 of the *Liberal Studies Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4 - 6)* and the HKEAA's website at http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/assessment/sample_practice_paper/, where the "Sample Papers for Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Liberal Studies" are provided.



How will the School-based Assessment be administered?

The School-based Assessment (SBA) component of Liberal Studies (i.e. in the form of an IES) is assessed in three stages by the students' own teachers. The HKEAA has published a *School-based Assessment Teachers' Handbook*. Schools will work according to the guidelines in the Handbook so that teachers will decide on a set of professional, fair, practical and feasible criteria for awarding marks through various means.

Mr Wong is the Liberal Studies panel chairperson of a local secondary school. He called a meeting for all his Liberal Studies colleagues and asked



the teachers to discuss the criteria for marking students' IES projects with reference to the *School-based Assessment Teachers' Handbook*. He then asked them to try marking some students' works and agreed on a set of fair marking criteria with them before actual marking work starts.

To ensure fairness in SBA, the *School-based Assessment Teachers' Handbook* sets out the ways of authenticating students' work (Section 3.3) and handling malpractice (e.g. copying others' work) (Chapter 6). The Handbook can be obtained from the HKEAA's website.



For details about SBA, parents may visit the following websites:

- School-based Assessment: <http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/sba>
- School-based Assessment for Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE):
http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/sba/sba_hkdse/
- School-based Assessment for Liberal Studies:
http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/sba/sba_hkdse_core/dse_subject.html?3

5

How Can Parents Help Their Children Study Liberal Studies?

Schools provide students with a suitable environment and methods of learning so that students may master the subject. Since Liberal Studies aims to help students develop “independent” and “self-directed” learning capabilities, there is no need for parents to lend their hand for tasks that their children are able to complete on their own (e.g. assignments and the IES projects). Rather, it is important that parents give their children timely encouragement and care. To enhance their children’s learning in Liberal Studies, parents do not need to “know everything”, but should work with the school to:

1) enhance their children’s social awareness

Parents can make full use of the different media and online resources, including relevant web links to various organisations, government websites, newspaper and / or magazine websites, TV news programmes, and daily-life activities, to cultivate in their children an awareness of their surroundings. For instance, parents can:

- discuss with their children what is happening around them;
- discuss current issues with their children from different angles; and
- set a role model by showing concern for the neighbourhood and the community.



2) enrich their children's life experiences

Parents can encourage and support their children to develop the habit of reading widely and engaging proactively in different kinds of activities. For example, parents can encourage their children to:

- subscribe to newspapers (especially those include a student section) and read a wide range of materials from academic writings, magazines and newspapers to online resources; and
- engage in different kinds of activities such as museum visits and community services to enhance their ability to integrate and synthesise knowledge in a holistic manner.

3) help their children develop critical thinking skills

In helping their children to develop critical thinking skills, parents should leave room for their children to think and discuss. They should also instill in their children qualities of respect for evidence and the views of others. For instance, parents can:

- encourage their children to raise questions and express their own views, ensure enough time for discussion and give compliments constantly;
- listen to their children's views on a range of issues and avoid making premature judgement so that they have confidence in developing critical thinking skills; and
- let their children know when the children's views have successfully changed their parents'.



4) understand how their children's "IES" is progressing

The most important role parents play in facilitating their children's "IES" is to encourage their children to complete tasks that they are able to accomplish, so that their children can enjoy the pleasure and satisfaction of self-directed learning. They can also encourage their children to accomplish assignments within the required time at different stages of the IES. Besides, parents may communicate with their children more frequently so as to understand their children's IES progress and recognise their children's efforts. However, extra support such as having a finger in their children's IES projects or collecting information for them is not necessary.



6

Frequently Asked Questions



Liberal Studies help students to develop critical thinking skills. But will that make them criticise everything and turn defiant?

- Critical thinking is different from “criticising everything” or deliberately raising opposing views to make oneself outstanding.
- Critical thinking is the process through which an individual makes a judgement after an in-depth reflection on the views, suggestions and values of himself / herself and those of other people or organisations, followed by continuous deliberation and reference to a wide range of evidence and data.
- Liberal Studies aims to develop in students critical thinking skills through the study of a wide range of issues. Such skills include the ability to communicate opinions clearly and systematically, demonstrate respect for evidence and open-mindedness and tolerance towards different views, as well as show empathy for other people’s stances.

Issue-enquiry and enhancement of critical thinking skills

When exploring “the relationships between young people and their elders”, Miss Li asked her students to describe whether there were any changes in their relationships with their elders after they entered secondary schools. Through case studies, Miss Li guided her students to enquire into the reasons for the conflicts between parents and children. At the beginning, students only managed to give general views on the issue such as “parents don’t understand the needs of their children” and “children are disobedient”. However, they discovered during the enquiry process that the root of the problem lied at the differences in cultural backgrounds, ways of seeing things and experiences between the two generations. Miss Li then asked her students to analyse the factors (e.g. mode of communication) which help promote or may destroy the relationships between parents and children. Throughout the enquiry process, students gained new insights into how young people can establish good communication with their parents. They also attempted to change from a self-centred mode of thinking to one that can see things from different perspectives.



Are our teachers ready for teaching Liberal Studies?

- In Hong Kong, nearly all teachers have been professionally trained and are familiar with the basic classroom skills (such as discussion, evaluation and enquiry skills) and assessment skills.
- Liberal Studies (Advanced Supplementary Level) was introduced into Hong Kong secondary schools in 1992. Over the past ten-odd years, a throng of teachers have gained experiences in teaching the subject and they can share their experiences to others in the field.
- EDB has been offering professional development programmes for teachers who are going to teach Liberal Studies.
- From 2009 to 2012, EDB will continue to provide training courses for new Liberal Studies teachers and organise advanced courses with practical components for serving Liberal Studies teachers.
- EDB and the Hong Kong Education City have jointly developed the “Web-based Resource Platform for Liberal Studies” (<http://ls.edb.hkedcity.net>) to provide learning and teaching resources relevant to NSS Liberal Studies. From October 2009 onwards, all Liberal Studies teachers may use the videos posted on the Platform for class discussion.



What support measures are available for schools?

Under the new academic structure, EDB will continue to organise different types of professional development programmes for Liberal Studies teachers and update the content of the “Web-based Resource Platform for Liberal Studies” regularly to support the teaching of the subject. In addition, the “Liberal Studies School Network Scheme” jointly implemented by EDB and the HKEAA will serve to provide curriculum consultation service and SBA quality assurance for schools. Teachers with experience in the teaching and public assessment of subjects relating to Liberal Studies will be appointed as District Co-ordinators to provide curriculum related enquiry service to schools within the district.

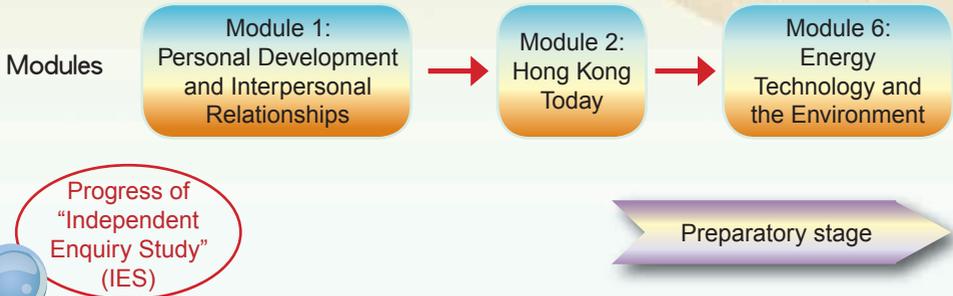


How should schools plan their three-year Liberal Studies curriculum?

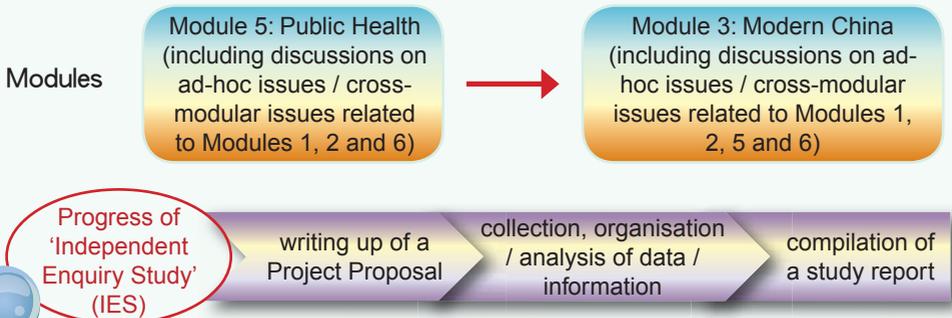
- The total lesson time allocated to Liberal Studies in the three-year senior secondary curriculum is approximately 250 hours, of which about 168 hours are allocated to the six modules and 82 hours are reserved for the IES. Schools may arrange the lesson time flexibly throughout the three years, and they may also work in coordination with other curricula (e.g. Languages, Moral and Civic Education, etc.) to achieve the objectives of the subject.
- The issues to be explored in Liberal Studies often concern more than a single module (e.g. human swine flu or Influenza A H1N1 can be discussed under both modules of “Public Health” and “Hong Kong Today”). However, it is common for schools to arrange students to study certain modules earlier, so that they can make effective use of the knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired from these modules to enquire into the others at a later time.
- In planning their Liberal Studies curriculum, schools will consider the abilities, interests and habits of their students, the expertise of their teachers, and the curriculum characteristics of the school, and draw up teaching plans and work schedules for each form, including the deadlines for the submission of assignments for each of the three stages of IES.

The curriculum planning of a secondary school for Liberal Studies under the three-year senior secondary curriculum

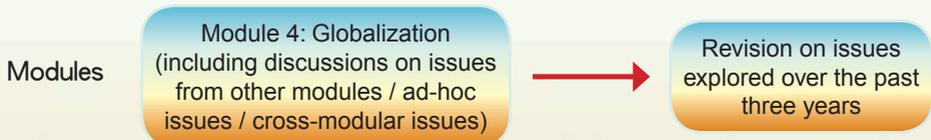
Secondary 4



Secondary 5



Secondary 6



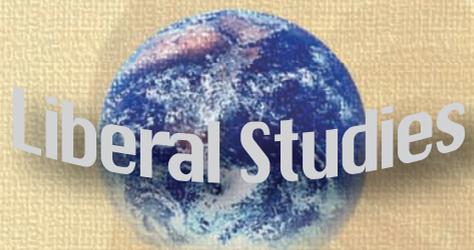


How can parents obtain the latest information on Liberal Studies?

- In order to help parents understand the subject nature of Liberal Studies and its pedagogical approaches, the EDB has been putting in place various measures, including organising district-based parents' seminars, publishing pamphlets and this Parents' Handbook, and producing promotional videos. Parents may visit the EDB's website (<http://www.edb.gov.hk/parentstalks>) and look for more details about the parents' seminars.
- EDB will continue to maintain a close contact with schools' Careers Groups and ensure that the Parent-Teacher Association in each school has proper access to the latest information on the subject, so that parents understand how Liberal Studies is implemented in schools and may better support their children to adjust to the modes of learning in Liberal Studies in a short time.
- Parents may also visit the "Web-based Resource Platform for Liberal Studies" (<http://ls.edb.hkedcity.net>) for relevant information on the subject.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Liberal Studies Web-based Resource Platform. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Join Us', 'Forgot Password', 'Search', 'Master Calendar', and 'School Map'. Below this is a banner with the text 'Liberal Studies' and 'Web-based Resource Platform' over a background of a globe and modern buildings. A navigation menu includes 'Home', 'About LS', 'Teachers', 'Resources', and 'Parents'. The main content area is divided into two sections: 'Curriculum Resources' and 'Latest programmes'. Under 'Curriculum Resources', there is a link to a 'Resource Sheet' PDF. Under 'Latest programmes', there is a table of courses.

Latest programmes	
Course	
17/07/2014, 19/07/2014	SS Learning and Teaching Series for the Liberal Studies Curriculum: Basic Methods of Independent Enquiry Study – Field Observation (New) download / map Deadline: 10/07/2014
05/07/2014	Interpreting the Senior Secondary Liberal Studies Curriculum (Refreshed) download / map Deadline: 02/07/2014
04/07/2014	Senior Secondary Enriching Knowledge cum Learning and Teaching Strategies for the Liberal Studies Curriculum: Organ Donation - Value Judgment and Decision Affecting Life (New) download



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