

(Final Version)

# Technology Education Key Learning Area

## **Business, Accounting and Financial Studies** Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4 - 6)

Jointly prepared by the Curriculum Development Council and  
the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority

Recommended for use in schools by the Education and Manpower Bureau  
HKSARG  
2007



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## Preamble

The Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) stated in its report<sup>1</sup> in 2005 that the implementation of a three-year senior secondary academic structure would commence at Secondary 4 in September 2009. The senior secondary academic structure is supported by a flexible, coherent and diversified senior secondary curriculum aimed at catering for students' varied interests, needs and abilities. This Curriculum and Assessment (C&A) Guide is one of the series of documents prepared for the senior secondary curriculum. It is based on the goals of senior secondary education and on other official documents related to the curriculum and assessment reform since 2000, including the *Basic Education Curriculum Guide* (2002) and the *Senior Secondary Curriculum Guide* (2007). To gain a full understanding of the connection between education at the senior secondary level and the basic education level, and how effective learning, teaching and assessment can be achieved, it is strongly recommended that reference should be made to all related documents.

This C&A Guide is designed to provide the rationale and aims of the subject curriculum, followed by chapters on the curriculum framework, curriculum planning, pedagogy, assessment and use of learning and teaching resources. One key concept underlying the senior secondary curriculum is that curriculum, pedagogy and assessment should be well aligned. While learning and teaching strategies form an integral part of the curriculum and are conducive to promoting learning to learn and whole-person development, assessment should also be recognised not only as a means to gauge performance but also to improve learning. To understand the interplay between these three key components, all chapters in the C&A Guide should be read in a holistic manner.

The C&A Guide is jointly prepared by the Curriculum Development Council (CDC) and the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA). The CDC is an advisory body that gives recommendations to the HKSAR Government on all matters relating to curriculum development for the school system from kindergarten to senior secondary level. Its membership includes heads of schools, practising teachers, parents, employers, academics from tertiary institutions, professionals from related fields/bodies, representatives from the HKEAA and the Vocational Training Council (VTC), as well as officers from the EMB. The HKEAA is an independent statutory body responsible for the conduct of public assessment, including the assessment for the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE). Its governing council includes members drawn from the school sector, tertiary institutions and government bodies, as well as professionals and members of the business community.

The C&A Guide is recommended by the EMB for use in secondary schools. The subject curriculum forms the basis of the assessment designed and administered by the HKEAA. In this connection, the HKEAA will issue a handbook to provide information on the rules and regulations of the HKDSE examination as well as the structure and format of public assessment for each subject.

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<sup>1</sup> The report is *The New Academic Structure for Senior Secondary Education and Higher Education – Action Plan for Investing in the Future of Hong Kong*.

The CDC and HKEAA will keep the subject curriculum under constant review and evaluation in the light of classroom experiences, students' performance in the public assessment, and the changing needs of students and society. All comments and suggestions on this C&A Guide may be sent to:

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## Acronym

ApL	Applied Learning
C&A	Curriculum and Assessment
CDC	Curriculum Development Council
EMB	Education and Manpower Bureau
HKALE	Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination
HKCEE	Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination
HKDSE	Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education
HKEAA	Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority
HKedCity	Hong Kong Education City
HKSAR	Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
IT	Information Technology
KLA	Key Learning Area
OLE	Other Learning Experiences
P1/2/3/4/5/6	Primary 1/2/3/4/5/6
S1/2/3/4/5/6/7	Secondary 1/2/3/4/5/6/7
SBA	School-based Assessment
SLP	Student Learning Profile
SSCG	Senior Secondary Curriculum Guide
VTC	Vocational Training Council

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# Chapter 1 Introduction

This chapter provides the background, rationale and aims of Business, Accounting and Financial Studies (BAFS) as an elective subject in the three-year senior secondary curriculum, and highlights how it articulates with the junior secondary curriculum, post-secondary education, and future career pathways.

## 1.1 Background

Technology Education (TE) in the Hong Kong school curriculum focuses on how human beings solve their daily problems and how the processes involved can be replicated and transferred to solve new problems. It is an essential area of study for all students in Hong Kong.

In the 21st century, technology has become an integral part of our life. Citizens of today require much more than a basic ability to read, write, and do simple mathematics. To live in the modern world, we must understand how technology affects us. In this regard, we must be equipped to use technology effectively and flexibly to solve daily problems with positive attitude at home, in the community, and around the world; and to create new solutions, products, and services for the well-being of humankind.

By studying the related subjects developed in TE Key Learning Area, our students will be better prepared to meet the uncertainties and challenges of the future with regard to social, economic, ecological, scientific and technological changes, both locally and globally. Their studies in this area will help them to lead a healthy lifestyle in adulthood and to contribute to building a caring and harmonious society.

Building on the strengths of the existing TE curriculum and catering for social, economic and technological development, Business, Accounting and Financial Studies is one of the five elective subjects developed under Technology Education Key Learning Area in the senior secondary curriculum.

The *Senior Secondary Business, Accounting and Financial Studies Curriculum and Assessment Guide* incorporates the key recommendations of the Education and Manpower Bureau's *Senior Secondary Curriculum Guide* (CDC, 2007) and *Technology Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 3)* (CDC, 2002), as well as its final report on the Holistic Review of the School Curriculum: *Learning to Learn – The Way Forward in Curriculum Development* (CDC, 2001). These three documents outline the overall direction for both education and curriculum development in Hong Kong, and seek to promote lifelong learning and whole-person development.

## 1.2 Rationale

### **Response to changing social and economic forces**

The main pillars of the Hong Kong economy are financial services, producer services, logistics and tourism. To maintain both our competitive edge and economic sustainability as a service-oriented and knowledge-driven economy, Hong Kong needs a workforce which can transform ideas into high value-added services.

Business is the process of creating value through commerce and production. Business education aims to nurture students' interest and talent in business by developing in them the necessary knowledge and skills, positive values and attitudes to create value through identifying needs, generating ideas and transforming them into business opportunities.

### **Capacity for lifelong learning**

The school curriculum should equip students with the abilities and attitudes to become independent learners. At senior secondary level, business education develops in students the intellectual breadth and capacity for lifelong learning to cope with the demands of an increasingly complex world.

### **Qualities of citizenship**

Business and financial activities constitute an integral part of our daily lives as we work, consume, save and invest. Besides providing students with knowledge and skills for dealing with business and financial activities in adult life, business education should also aim to promote qualities of citizenship. Students should be given opportunities to develop ethical and responsible behaviour so that they can fulfil their roles effectively as consumers, investors, employees and/or entrepreneurs in adult life. Students are expected to take social and ethical considerations into account in analysing and evaluating business issues. In a fast-changing and knowledge-based local and global economy, they need to possess a variety of intellectual and communication skills, as well as positive values and attitudes, so that they can act competently, confidently, and ethically in both familiar and novel situations. They also have to be conversant with the business environment, so as to make effective decisions, not only as members of the business world, but also as socially responsible citizens.

### **Accounting as an integral part of business education**

In tackling business problems, one needs to draw upon knowledge and skills from different business areas, such as accounting, finance and management. Students need a solid foundation to understand and integrate knowledge and practice from the various areas that play a contributory role. In the business environment, accounting serves as a language of business for both internal and external communication. People use accounting information, together with other business knowledge such as finance, marketing, and human resources, in making business decisions. The business curriculum should, therefore, enable students to acquire a common body of business knowledge, including accounting, to deal with the dynamic business environment.

### 1.3 Curriculum Aims

The overall aims of the Business, Accounting and Financial Studies (BAFS) curriculum are:

- to provide students at senior secondary level with fundamental business knowledge and skills, and develop their positive values and attitudes, so that they can fulfil their roles competently and confidently as consumers, investors, employees and/or entrepreneurs;
- to develop students' generic skills in research, analysis, leadership, team-building, communication, critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving and transfer them to different domains; and
- to explore different aspects of business to prepare students for life, for learning and for employment.

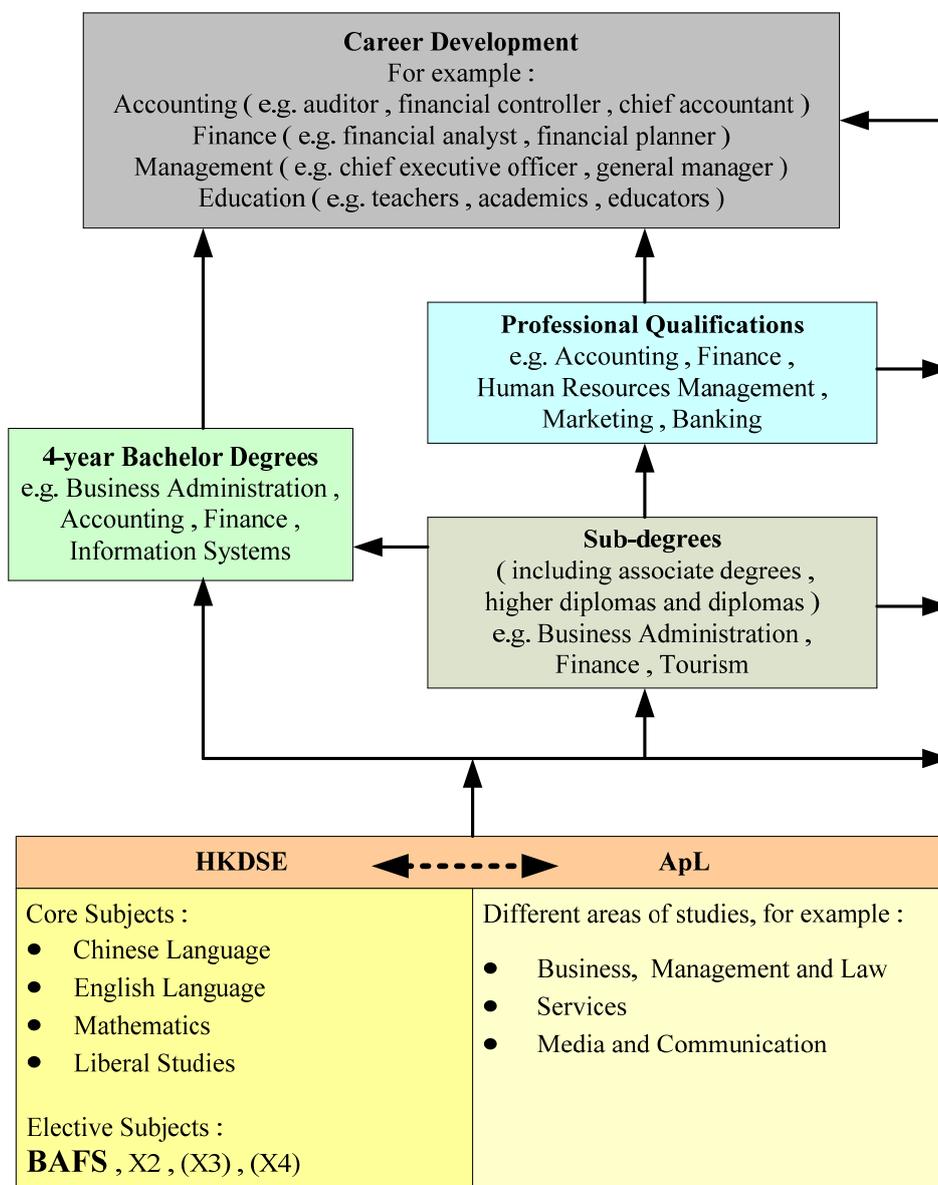
### 1.4 Interface with the Junior Secondary Curriculum and Post-Secondary Pathways

The importance of business and financial services in Hong Kong makes the study of business, accounting and finance important for developing students to become valuable human beings with an entrepreneurial spirit in the future. At junior secondary level, as suggested in the *Technology Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (P1–S3) (CDC, 2002)*, students are expected to be equipped with some of the basic concepts of business and management through selected themes embedded in other TE curricula, and through co-curricular activities which give them some exposure to business.

After completing basic education, students are expected to have developed an interest in knowing more about the business world and be prepared to make informed decisions on their choice of subjects in their senior secondary studies. The study of BAFS at the senior secondary level will provide students with essential business knowledge and skills for higher education/tertiary studies in business and for various careers.

The linkages between the curriculum at the senior secondary level and future studies/careers are shown in the figure below:

**Figure 1.1 Post-secondary pathways**



## 1.5 Cross-curricular Links

The trend towards globalization requires one to possess knowledge and skills across a wide range of disciplines, such as technology, science, languages and humanities, to solve business problems. Through the BAFS curriculum, students can build a solid foundation in business, and by studying the subject in combination with other electives in a complementary way, they can also gain exposure to a range of knowledge and skills. To this end, students may, for example, study BAFS together with Information and Communication Technology in Technology Education, and Tourism and Hospitality Studies in Personal, Social and Humanities Education. For details about how cross-curricular collaboration can be achieved through curriculum planning and development, please refer to Section 3.3.6.

## Chapter 2 Curriculum Framework

The curriculum framework for Business, Accounting and Financial Studies (BAFS) embodies the key knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that students are to develop at senior secondary level. It forms the basis on which schools and teachers can plan their school-based curriculum and design appropriate learning, teaching and assessment activities.

### 2.1 Design Principles

The design of the BAFS curriculum is based on the learning goals and overarching design principles of the senior secondary curriculum as explained in Booklet 1 of the *Senior Secondary Curriculum Guide (CDC, 2007)*:

- ***Prior knowledge***

To provide effective progression from the junior secondary to the senior secondary curriculum, BAFS is based upon the prior knowledge, skills, positive values and attitudes that students will have acquired in basic education.

- ***Balance between breadth and depth***

In BAFS, the compulsory part serves as a broad-based foundation for students to gain a holistic picture of business before they choose to extend their studies in specialised modules in the elective part.

- ***Balance between theoretical and applied learning***

The BAFS curriculum balances theoretical and applied learning to cater for students' learning needs, interests and aptitudes. Students have the opportunity to apply the knowledge they have acquired to solve business problems.

- ***Balance between essential learning and a flexible and diversified curriculum***

In the BAFS curriculum, the compulsory part provides students with essential business knowledge and concepts, preparing them to further their studies through the elective part or Applied Learning (ApL) courses.

- ***Learning how to learn and inquiry-based learning***

To develop students' capacity for self-directed, lifelong learning, the BAFS curriculum provides them with a solid foundation in business studies and develops their independent learning and generic skills to meet the rapidly changing business environment.

- ***Progression***

In BAFS, students are expected to study the compulsory part to explore their interests first and then progress to their chosen studies.

- ***Smoother articulation to multiple progression pathways***

The BAFS curriculum prepares students to pursue further academic and vocational/professional education and training through articulation to a range of post-secondary and university level programmes, or to enter the workplace.

- ***Greater coherence***

Cross-curricular elements are incorporated into the BAFS curriculum to strengthen its connections with different subjects.

## 2.2 Learning Targets

BAFS equips students with the necessary knowledge and skills, positive values and attitudes to contribute to the business sector and society at large. The learning targets of the curriculum are to enable students to:

- understand and critically evaluate local and global business issues, not only as members of the business world but also as responsible and effective citizens;
- appreciate the pace of change in the business world, so that they become reflective, self-motivated and self-managed lifelong learners, who can act proactively and make informed decisions in an ever-changing environment;
- be equipped with an understanding and capability to search for, interpret, analyse and make use of information for business development; and
- develop an awareness of and interest in business for planning their academic and career development.

## 2.3 Learning Objectives

Through the study of the BAFS curriculum, students will be able to develop **knowledge and understanding** of:

- the intertwined relationships of different business areas;
- the dynamic environment in which businesses operate, where changes influence planning and decision-making;
- the importance of accounting in managing a business;
- the functions of management in formulating effective strategies for businesses; and
- the importance of managing personal finance.

Students are expected to develop **generic skills**, in particular, the ability to:

- use information technology to locate, select, and organise relevant business information for decision-making;
- investigate, analyse, and evaluate business issues from a variety of perspectives;
- communicate business information and issues effectively; and
- work in a team situation and assume a leadership role.

Students are expected to develop positive **values and attitudes** so that they may:

- be informed, active and responsible participants in the business world;
- be critically aware of the importance of socially responsible and ethical business behaviour; and
- behave responsibly in controlling their personal finances.

## 2.4 Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

### **Knowledge and understanding**

- apply concepts and knowledge in an integrated manner to attain specified goals for business ventures and solve problems encountered in the business context;
- identify opportunities, generate innovative ideas and manage resources for business development;
- analyse how management reacts to the dynamic business environment in formulating strategic plans;
- evaluate the management efficiency and financial performance of businesses to make personal and/or business financial decisions;
- apply the management concepts related to human resource, finance and marketing in business decision-making; and
- use accounting information effectively to monitor business performance and suggest means to add value to human and financial resources.

### **Skills**

- collect, process and analyse business information necessary for strategic planning and business development;
- apply critical thinking and problem-solving skills in evaluating business issues and making ethical decisions;
- demonstrate effective communication, team-building and interpersonal skills in business; and
- use basic business application software and apply ICT skills in business projects.

### **Values and attitudes**

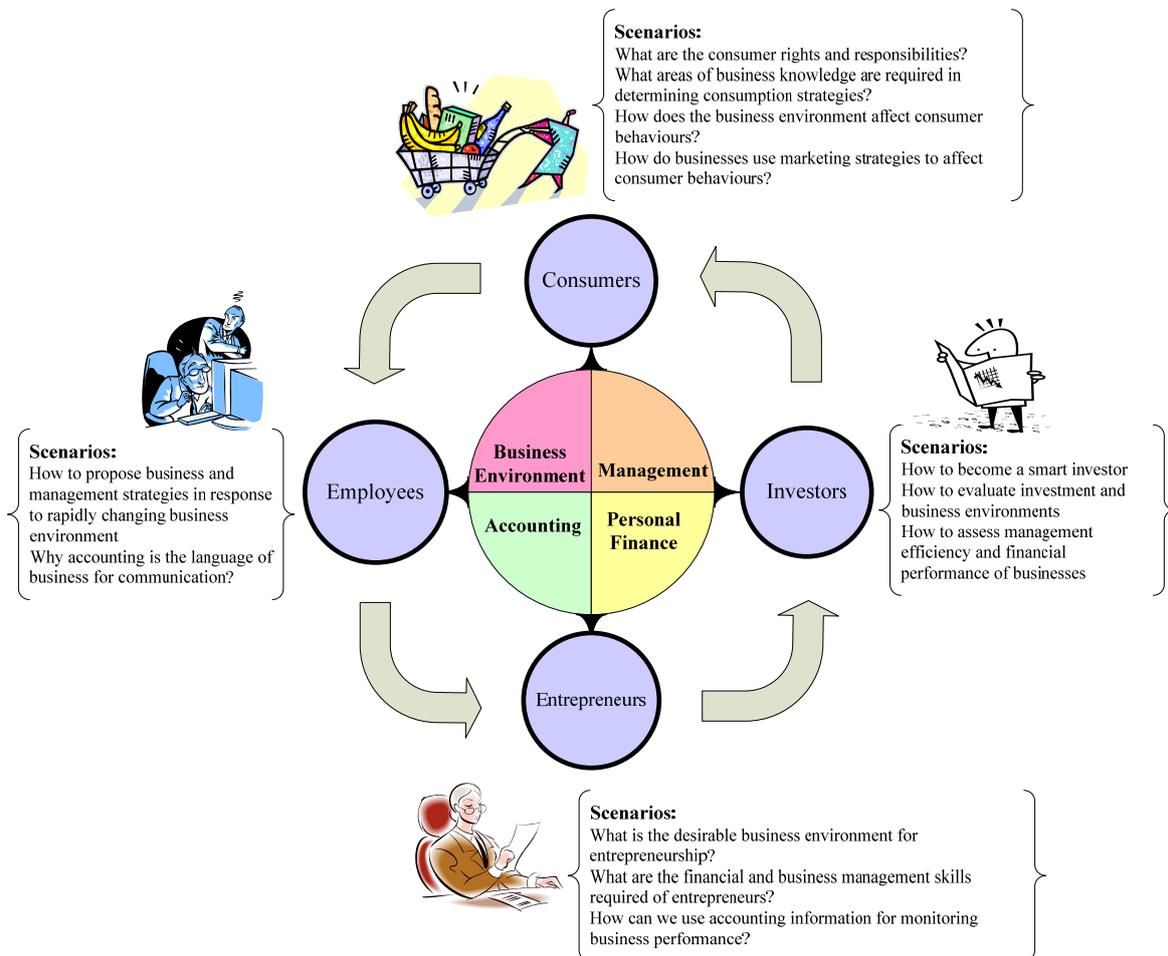
- be socially responsible and caring, in particular when playing the roles of consumers / employees / entrepreneurs / investors in the business world, and in society at large;
- appreciate themselves as valuable human capital and enhance their commitment to society; and
- be reflective and self-motivated lifelong learners to meet the demands of the rapidly changing business world.

## 2.5 Curriculum Structure and Organisation

The BAFS curriculum is built upon a contemporary business curriculum structure planned in line with the fast-changing local and global social and economic circumstances. It draws on a range of business-related disciplines (such as finance, accounting and business management) to highlight their complex interrelationships. The learning elements are interrelated, to mirror the real business world.

It is considered that an integrated understanding of the essential business areas: business environment, accounting, management and personal finance will prepare students well for dealing with their personal financial concerns when they engage in business and financial activities such as consumption, work and investment in adulthood. The emphasis on different roles as consumer, employee, entrepreneur and investor will enhance their understanding of business knowledge as a whole, and enable them to view business-related decisions from different angles.

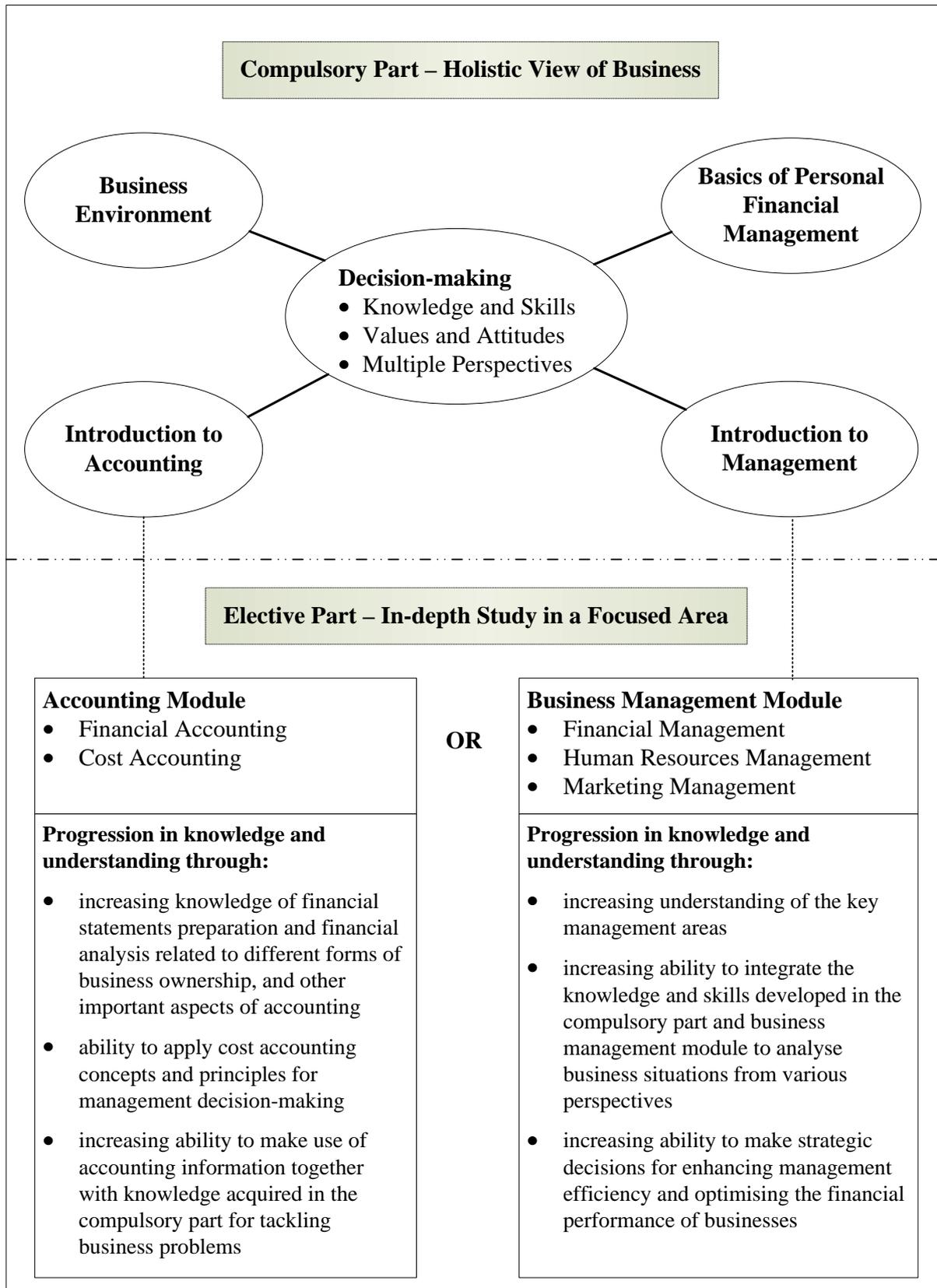
**Figure 2.1 Major roles when engaging in business and financial activities**



The curriculum comprises a compulsory and an elective part to strike a balance between breadth and depth in different business areas. The compulsory part provides a broad-based foundation for students for more in-depth study of concepts and knowledge in specific modules in the elective part. It is thus important that the concepts and learning elements in the compulsory part should be re-examined, integrated and synthesised in the related module

in the elective part whenever appropriate.

**Figure 2.2 Curriculum structure**



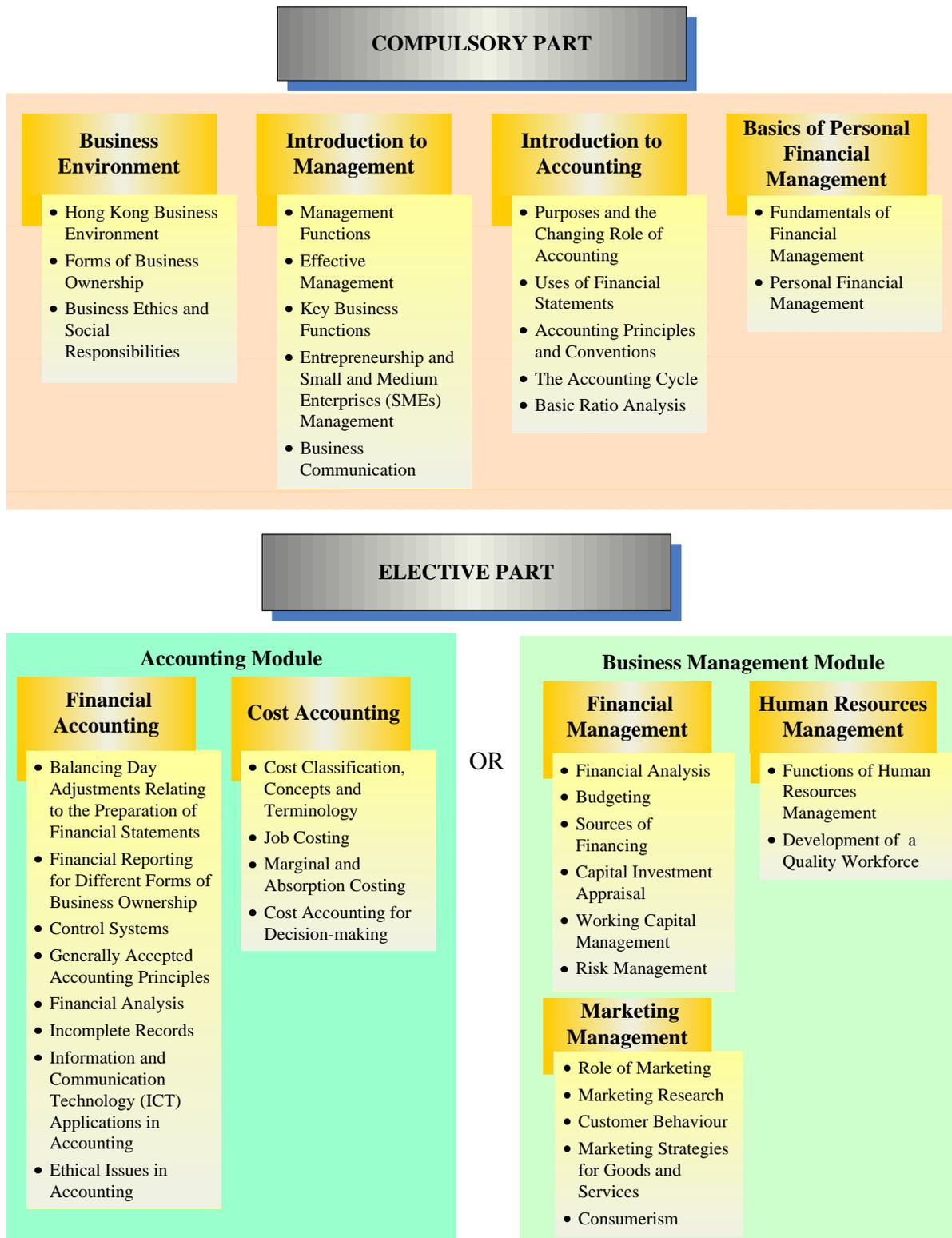
### **Linkage between the compulsory and elective parts**

The compulsory part of the BAFS curriculum covers four main areas, namely: **Business Environment, Introduction to Management, Introduction to Accounting and Basics of Personal Financial Management**. They provide a threshold, in terms of knowledge and skills, for students' future studies or careers.

The elective part, which builds upon the knowledge and skills in the compulsory part, provides students with an opportunity to pursue a more in-depth study in a focused area. Students can choose either **Accounting** or **Business Management**, according to their interests and inclinations.

An integrated and contextual approach to organise learning elements in the compulsory and elective parts is recommended. The purpose is to enhance students' understanding of how to apply principles, concepts, models and skills from interrelated areas of business in authentic / simulated contexts. The individual learning elements can be introduced in a flexible manner by linking, elaborating or re-examining them in greater depth in topics in both the compulsory and elective parts through case studies of different business entities.

**Figure 2.3 Overview of the learning elements of the curriculum framework**





Topics	Explanatory Notes
<p><b>Business Ethics and Social Responsibilities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explain why and how a business should be ethically responsible to various stakeholders.</li> <li>- Describe how business ethics and social responsibilities affect business decisions.</li> <li>- Explain the principles and objectives of corporate governance, and appreciate the importance of good corporate governance.</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>1(b) Introduction to Management</i></b></p> <p><b>Management Functions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explain the importance of management.</li> <li>- Demonstrate a basic understanding of the following management functions for organisations: planning, organising, leading and controlling.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Effective Management</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Illustrate the major management skills required of managers.</li> <li>- Apply the following principles of effective management: division of work, unity of command, unity of direction, authority and responsibility, and management by objectives.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Key Business Functions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Describe the role and importance of the following key functional areas in business: human resources management, financial management, operations management, marketing management, information management and risk management.</li> <li>- Explain and appreciate the interrelationship and integrated nature of different business functions in solving business problems.</li> </ul>

Topics	Explanatory Notes
<p><b>Entrepreneurship and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entrepreneurship</li>   <li>• SMEs management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Describe the characteristics and aptitudes of an entrepreneur.</li> <li>- Explain the importance of entrepreneurship in business development and economic growth.</li>   <li>- Describe the characteristics of SMEs.</li> <li>- Explain the importance of SMEs to the local economy.</li> <li>- Compare the differences between small and large businesses from management perspectives.</li> <li>- Describe the governmental support measures for the development of SMEs.</li> <li>- Describe the process of developing a business plan.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Business Communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Means and principles of effective communication</li>   <li>• Business information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Appreciate the need for and importance of effective communication.</li> <li>- Explain the following principles of effective communication: clarity, courtesy, conciseness, completeness and concreteness.</li> <li>- Identify barriers to effective communication and means for enhancing communication.</li>   <li>- Describe the characteristics of quality business information.</li> <li>- Discuss the contribution of information and communication technology (ICT) to information management.</li> </ul>

Topics	Explanatory Notes
<b><i>1(c) Introduction to Accounting</i></b>	
<b>Purposes and the Changing Role of Accounting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Describe the functions of accounting.</li> <li>- Appreciate the importance of accounting and its relevance to decision-making.</li> </ul>
<b>Uses of Financial Statements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explain how information in financial statements can assist decision-making.</li> <li>- Explain the uses and limitations of financial statements.</li> </ul>
<b>Accounting Principles and Conventions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- State the meaning of fundamental accounting principles and conventions: business entity, going concern, accrual, historical cost and consistency.</li> </ul>
<b>The Accounting Cycle</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Double entry system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explain the accounting equation and demonstrate how transactions affect it.</li> <li>- Apply the principles of double entry to the recording of business transactions.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Books of original entry and different types of ledgers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explain the functions of books of original entry and ledgers.</li> <li>- Record transactions in books of original entry and post to ledger accounts.</li> <li>- Identify the major classifications in ledgers.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trial balance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explain the functions and limitations of a trial balance.</li> <li>- Prepare a trial balance.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial statements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prepare income statements and balance sheets for sole proprietorships.</li> </ul>
<b>Basic Ratio Analysis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- State the general functions of accounting ratios.</li> </ul>

Topics	Explanatory Notes
<p><b>1(d) Basics of Personal Financial Management</b></p> <p><b>Fundamentals of Financial Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structure and role of financial market</li> <li>• Time value of money</li> <li>• The relationship between risks and returns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Calculate and interpret the following ratios: gross profit ratio, net profit ratio, working capital/current ratio, quick/liquid ratio and return on capital employed.</li> <li>- Evaluate the profitability and liquidity of a business using accounting ratios.</li> <li>- Differentiate the roles of different sectors of the Hong Kong financial market.</li> <li>- Distinguish between:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) primary and secondary markets</li> <li>(ii) capital and money markets</li> <li>(iii) listed exchanges and over-the-counter.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Discuss the roles of different participants in the financial market.</li> <li>- Define opportunity cost and demonstrate how it relates to personal financial decisions.</li> <li>- Explain the concepts of compounding, discounting, present value and future value.</li> <li>- Apply the concepts of present value and future value to compute net present value.</li> <li>- Distinguish between nominal and effective rate of return.</li> <li>- Identify the basic characteristics and the relationship between risks and returns of common financial products.</li> <li>- Identify the factors that affect the risks and returns of common financial products.</li> </ul>

Topics	Explanatory Notes
<p><b>Personal Financial Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumer credit</li>   <li>• Personal financial planning and investments</li>   <li>• Investor protection in Hong Kong</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explain different types of consumer credit and finance products.</li> <li>- Compare and select the most suitable consumer credit and finance products with understanding of how interest is calculated.</li> <li>- Appreciate the importance of maintaining a good personal credit record.</li>   <li>- Adopt positive values and attitudes towards personal financial planning in a life-cycle context.</li> <li>- Adopt a proper personal financial planning process: setting investment objectives, portfolio construction and portfolio review.</li> <li>- Discuss the issues to be considered in selecting appropriate financial products for a personal investment portfolio.</li> <li>- Apply budgeting principles and techniques to prepare personal budgets.</li> <li>- Demonstrate a basic understanding of the Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF) system.</li>   <li>- Explain the roles of regulators in regulating financial products and financial service providers in Hong Kong.</li> <li>- Describe the investor compensation regime in Hong Kong.</li> <li>- Be aware of the rights and responsibilities of individual investors and consumers of financial services.</li> <li>- Demonstrate how to make an informed investment decision.</li> </ul>

Topics	Explanatory Notes
<p><b>2(a) Financial Accounting</b></p> <p><b>Balancing Day Adjustments Relating to the Preparation of Financial Statements</b></p> <p><b>Financial Reporting for Different Forms of Business Ownership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial statements</li> <li>• Accounting for partnership</li> <li>• Accounting for limited companies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Differentiate between cash accounting and accrual accounting.</li> <li>- Distinguish between bad debts and allowance for doubtful accounts.</li> <li>- State the meaning and objectives of providing depreciation in accounting.</li> <li>- Compare the commonly used depreciation methods: straight-line, reducing-balance and depreciation based on usage; and explain the effect of depreciation charge on profits.</li> <li>- Prepare adjusting entries in the general journal, income statement and balance sheet.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prepare properly presented income statements and balance sheets for sole proprietorships, partnerships and limited companies.</li> <li>- Define goodwill and explain the factors affecting its valuation.</li> <li>- Prepare the necessary adjustments to partner(s)' capital and/or net assets arising from changes in profit-sharing ratio, admission and retirement of partner(s).</li> <li>- Analyse the factors leading to the dissolution of a partnership.</li> <li>- Prepare the necessary accounting entries required in dissolution.</li> <li>- Distinguish between authorised / registered and issued capital.</li> <li>- Prepare journal and ledger entries relating to</li> </ul>

Topics	Explanatory Notes
<p><b>Control Systems</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Control accounts and their reconciliation</li> <li>• Bank reconciliation statement</li> <li>• Correction of errors</li> </ul>	<p>the issue of ordinary shares and debentures fully paid on application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Distinguish between the nature of reserves and provisions.</li> <li>- Describe the regulatory framework of accounting in Hong Kong.</li> <li>- Explain the need to keep ledger control accounts for the accounts receivable and accounts payable ledgers.</li> <li>- Prepare ledger control accounts and reconcile them with respective subsidiary ledgers.</li> <li>- Explain the functions of a bank reconciliation statement.</li> <li>- Identify reasons for discrepancies between cash book and bank statement balances and prepare a bank reconciliation statement.</li> <li>- Identify the types of accounting errors and their effects on accounting records.</li> <li>- Prepare correcting entries and, where appropriate, a suspense account.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Generally Accepted Accounting Principles</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explain the key assumptions underlying the preparation of financial statements: accrual and going concern.</li> <li>- Describe the principal qualitative characteristics of financial statements: understandability, relevance, reliability and comparability.</li> <li>- Explain the meaning, importance and shortcomings of the following principles and concepts: business entity, historical cost,</li> </ul>

Topics	Explanatory Notes
<p><b>Financial Analysis</b></p>	<p>prudence, consistency, materiality, matching, objectivity, timeliness, realisation, money measurement and substance over form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Apply the relevant accounting principles and concepts in accounting situations.</li> <li>- Describe the following types of financial statement analysis: ratio analysis, trend analysis, horizontal analysis and vertical analysis.</li> <li>- Calculate ratios and comment on a company's profitability, liquidity, solvency, management efficiency and return on investment: mark-up, margin, inventory turnover, days' sales in accounts receivable, days' purchases in accounts payable, accounts receivable turnover, accounts payable turnover, earnings per share, total assets turnover, gearing, dividend cover and price-earnings ratio.</li> <li>- Propose remedial actions which will improve the financial performance of a company.</li> <li>- Explain the functions and limitations of accounting ratios in financial analysis.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Incomplete Records</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Determine profits or losses from statement of affairs.</li> <li>- Prepare an income statement and a balance sheet from incomplete records.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Applications in Accounting</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify the major types of ICT applications in accounting.</li> <li>- Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of using computerised accounting.</li> <li>- Describe and appreciate the importance of an</li> </ul>

Topics	Explanatory Notes
<b>Ethical Issues in Accounting</b>	<p>accounting information system in management decisions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Discuss the ethical issues involved in accounting activities.</li><li>- Adopt positive values and attitudes in making ethical decisions.</li><li>- Explain and appreciate the significance of accounting information in corporate governance.</li></ul>
<b>2(b) Cost Accounting</b> <b>Cost Classification, Concepts and Terminology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Explain the general nature of cost accounting and appreciate its importance for financial decision-making.</li><li>- Distinguish between direct and indirect costs, fixed and variable costs, and factory and administrative overheads.</li></ul>
<b>Job Costing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Explain the job costing system for manufacturing operations.</li><li>- Illustrate the allocation and apportionment of costs to a single job or product.</li></ul>
<b>Marginal and Absorption Costing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Compare the use of marginal and absorption costing in preparing:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(i) manufacturing accounts</li><li>(ii) income statements.</li></ul></li><li>- Compare the advantages and disadvantages of adopting marginal and absorption costing.</li></ul>

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Explanatory Notes</b>
<b>Cost Accounting for Decision-making</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Identify the nature of various cost items and their relevance to decision-making: sunk costs, incremental costs and opportunity costs.</li><li>- Apply costing concepts and techniques in business decisions e.g. ‘hire, make or buy’, ‘accept or reject an order at a special price’, ‘retain or replace equipment’, ‘sell or process further’, and ‘eliminate or retain an unprofitable segment’.</li><li>- Conduct cost-volume-profit analysis to assess the effects of changes in costs, selling price and units sold on the breakeven point and target profit.</li></ul>

Topics	Explanatory Notes
<p><b>3(a) Financial Management</b></p> <p><b>Financial Analysis</b></p> <p><b>Budgeting</b></p> <p><b>Sources of Financing</b></p> <p><b>Capital Investment Appraisal</b></p> <p><b>Working Capital Management</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explain the role of financial management in running an organisation.</li> <li>- Assess business performance from a range of accounting ratios in terms of profitability, liquidity, solvency and management efficiency.</li> <li>- Explain the purposes of budgeting.</li> <li>- Describe the usefulness and limitations of budgetary control.</li> <li>- Identify the causes of budgeting variance and propose remedial action.</li> <li>- Compare different sources of financing: debt and equity financing, short-term and long-term financing, and internal and external financing.</li> <li>- Apply the basic principles for selecting financing methods.</li> <li>- Evaluate financial and non-financial factors affecting capital investment decisions.</li> <li>- Apply the basic capital investment appraisal methods to evaluate capital projects: payback period, net present value, internal rate of return and accounting rate of return.</li> <li>- Compare the usefulness and limitations of different capital investment appraisal methods.</li> <li>- Explain the importance of working capital management.</li> <li>- Describe the basic principles of cash management and the relevance of cash budgeting.</li> </ul>

Topics	Explanatory Notes
<p><b>Risk Management</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Analyse the factors affecting the formulation of accounts receivable and accounts payable policies.</li> <li>- Explain the objectives of inventory management and apply simple inventory control techniques: Economic Order Quantity (EOQ) and re-order level methods.</li> <li>- Appreciate the importance of risk management in a business organisation.</li> <li>- Identify different types of risk faced by business firms and analyse their impact on business activities.</li> <li>- Demonstrate an understanding of various types of insurance protection available to business.</li> <li>- Explain the following risk management strategies: risk avoidance, risk assumption, risk reduction and risk transfer.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3(b) Human Resources Management</b></p> <p><b>Functions of Human Resources Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manpower planning</li> <li>• Staffing</li> <li>• Performance management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explain the importance of manpower planning for an organisation.</li> <li>- Describe the manpower planning process.</li> <li>- Describe the staffing process.</li> <li>- Compare different methods of staffing.</li> <li>- Describe the objectives of performance management.</li> <li>- Explain the methods, processes and application of performance management.</li> </ul>

Topics	Explanatory Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compensation and benefit management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Describe the characteristics and advantages of direct and indirect compensation.</li> <li>- Compare different forms of compensation.</li> <li>- Explain job evaluation and its relationship with compensation.</li> <li>- Explain grade and salary structure and related administration.</li> <li>- Explain the purposes of benefits.</li> <li>- Describe how to conduct and analyse compensation and benefit surveys.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training and development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explain the objectives of training and development.</li> <li>- Describe the essential features of a systematic training function.</li> <li>- Evaluate the effectiveness of different modes of training.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Development of a Quality Workforce</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employee relations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Describe the industrial relations system.</li> <li>- Explain the application of employment-related legislation.</li> <li>- Explain the functions of collective bargaining, conciliation, mediation and arbitration in industrial conflicts.</li> <li>- Suggest appropriate orientation and internal communication programmes.</li> <li>- Explain grievances handling and disciplinary action procedures.</li> </ul>



Topics	Explanatory Notes
<p><b>Customer Behaviour</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Describe the customer decision-making process.</li> <li>- Analyse the factors which affect customer decisions.</li> <li>- Identify the major business customers: producers, resellers, governments and institutions.</li> <li>- Distinguish between business and consumer markets.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Marketing Strategies for Goods and Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target markets</li> <li>• Marketing mix</li> <li>• Customer relationship management (CRM)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explain different types of market segmentation methods.</li> <li>- Explain the factors affecting the determination of target market: market niche and positioning.</li> <li>- Explain the concept of marketing mix.</li> <li>- Illustrate different pricing, promotion, product and place strategies for goods.</li> <li>- Apply various marketing mix strategies to different stages of the product life cycle.</li> <li>- Explain the characteristics of services and their effect on marketing mix design.</li> <li>- Compare the differences between traditional marketing strategies and e-marketing strategies.</li> <li>- Explain the importance of CRM to the marketing process.</li> <li>- Evaluate the factors affecting customer loyalty and develop marketing strategies to enhance customer loyalty.</li> </ul>

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Explanatory Notes</b>
<b>Consumerism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Adopt appropriate consumer values and attitudes in making consumption decisions.</li><li>- Explain and appreciate the importance of contracts in business.</li><li>- Evaluate the rights and responsibilities of consumers.</li><li>- Describe the major consumer protection measures in Hong Kong.</li></ul>

## Time Allocation

The suggested time allocation for the various topics is a rough indication intended for teachers' reference only. The sequencing and percentage of time given to each topic do not imply a hierarchical order of relative importance. For effective learning and teaching, teachers are encouraged to employ cases or themes to integrate learning elements from related topics in the curriculum. The actual time allocated may be used flexibly according to students' abilities and teachers' approaches and strategies.

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Suggested percentage of lesson time (%)</b>
<b>Compulsory Part</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Business Environment</li> <li>● Introduction to Management</li> <li>● Introduction to Accounting</li> <li>● Basics of Personal Financial Management</li> </ul>	7 9 15 9
<i>Sub-total</i>	<b>about 40%</b>
<b>Elective Part (Students select ONE module)</b>	
<b><i>Accounting Module</i></b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Financial Accounting</li> <li>● Cost Accounting</li> </ul>	40 20
<i>Sub-total</i>	<b>about 60%</b>
<b><i>Business Management Module</i></b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Financial Management</li> <li>● Human Resources Management</li> <li>● Marketing Management</li> </ul>	18 17 25
<i>Sub-total</i>	<b>about 60%</b>
<b>Total</b> <i>(Assumption: Total lesson time = 270 hours)</i>	<b>100%</b>

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## Chapter 3 Curriculum Planning

This chapter provides guidelines to help schools and teachers to develop a flexible and balanced curriculum that suits the needs, interests and abilities of their students, and the context of their school, in accordance with the central framework provided in Chapter 2.

### 3.1 Guiding Principles

It is of the utmost importance that school management, BAFS panel chairpersons and the teachers concerned to discuss, plan, and collaborate in designing and implementing the BAFS curriculum to facilitate student learning, cultivates their generic skills, positive values and attitudes with reference to the following principles:

#### **Alignment for a broad and balanced whole-school curriculum**

The provision of a wide range of elective subjects in the senior secondary curriculum aims to widen the knowledge base for student selection and to provide opportunities for in-depth study of individual subjects in preparation for students' further studies and careers. To achieve the overall goals of senior secondary education as stipulated in the Senior Secondary Curriculum Guide (CDC, 2007), schools should design and develop a broad and balanced school-based curriculum by offering elective subjects from various Key Learning Areas, including the Technology Education Key Learning Area, to complement or supplement student learning as a whole. In other words, the traditional way of grouping subjects in a specific stream (e.g. science / arts / business only) can be replaced by a mixture of elective subjects from various KLAs together with BAFS to widen student choice and whole-person development. In addition, the offering of related Applied Learning (ApL) courses may be considered to cater for diverse student learning abilities and interests. Schools may also consider collaborating with other schools to form networked classes for effective implementation.

#### **Meeting student needs and developing their full potential**

For effective planning of the BAFS curriculum and to achieve the curriculum aims, learning targets, learning objectives and learning outcomes specified in Chapter 2, the following questions can be considered:

- How can the curriculum be organised to achieve the aims, learning targets, learning objectives and broad learning outcomes? (Refer to Sections 1.3, 2.2– 2.4.)
- How can the curriculum be organised to cater for the different learning needs of students? (Refer to Sections 3.3 and 3.4.)
- How can the curriculum be organised to facilitate students' decisions on progression in their studies? (Refer to Section 3.2.)
- How can 'assessment for learning' be promoted? (Refer to Chapter 5.)

## Maximising available human and other resources

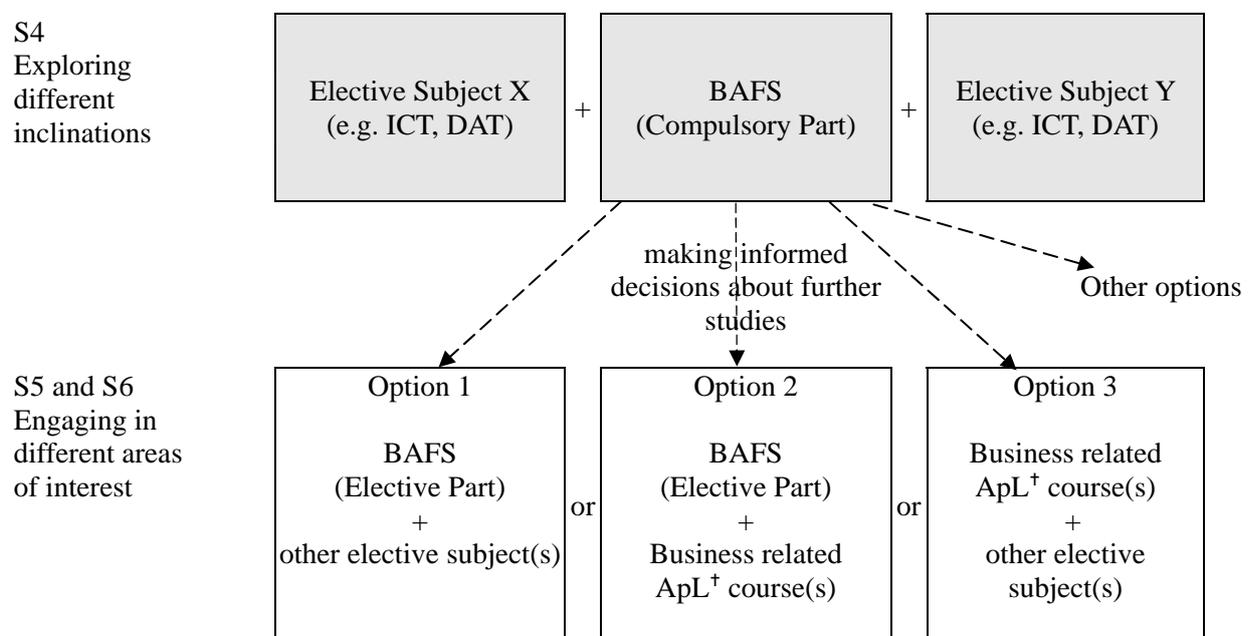
The school management and BAFS panel chairpersons must be flexible in deploying appropriate teaching and administrative staff, time-tabling, and the use of school facilities and equipment, to provide the necessary professional and logistic support for carrying out various BAFS-related student learning activities outside the classroom. Alternatively, such activities can be incorporated in school or community events as enrichment for students' other learning experiences.

## 3.2 Progression

The BAFS curriculum expects students to study the compulsory part before they proceed to more in-depth study in their chosen elective module. Schools may employ different ways of organising the three-year BAFS curriculum to provide more room for student learning and use the learning time effectively.

As students are promoted from junior to senior secondary education, it is essential for them to make informed decisions about their studies, in line with their inclinations, learning styles, abilities and interests. Schools may utilise a flexible curriculum framework to enable students to explore their preferences among the various elective subjects in S4. This will help them to gather more information before progressing to S5–6. The compulsory part of BAFS provides students with a macro view of business. Students may either apply their acquired knowledge and skills, positive values and attitudes through further studies in the elective part of the curriculum or transfer to other subjects, as illustrated in the following figure.

**Figure 3.1 Progression for BAFS**



† ApL stands for Applied Learning

After completing the compulsory part of BAFS, students will need to select either the “Accounting” or the “Business Management” module in the elective part. To help them to make decisions about their further studies, schools may conduct an induction programme to explore their interests. For instance, an induction programme for the elective part could include activities such as sample lessons, guest lectures or visits related to the “Accounting” and “Business Management” modules, as indicated below.

**Figure 3.2 Examples of induction programme**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Accounting Module</b>	<b>Business Management Module</b>
<b>Overview of the Elective Part</b>	Overview of the Accounting Module	Overview of the Business Management Module
<b>Sample lessons</b>	Suggested topics in Financial Accounting and/or Cost Accounting	Suggested topics in Financial Management, Marketing Management, and/or Human Resources Management
<b>Guest lectures</b>	A professional accountant from a business enterprise e.g. financial controller, chief accountant	An entrepreneur or Chief Executive Officer from the business sector
<b>Extra-curricular activities</b>	Visits to financial institutions or corporations Focus: accounting, human resources, marketing, etc.	

### 3.3 Curriculum Planning Strategies

Students vary in many respects, and so do teachers and schools. In planning the BAFS curriculum, implementation strategies may be based on students’ ability, teachers’ expertise, the availability of school facilities and resources, and the time-tabling patterns in schools. The following suggestions provide ideas as to how schools may plan the curriculum to cater for students with different abilities and interests, to integrate learning with life-wide learning experiences and assessment, and to make student learning more meaningful.

#### 3.3.1 Catering for learner diversity

Students differ in their abilities, inclinations, interests, motivation and learning styles. Guidance should be provided to help students explore their inclinations and develop their potential to the full. BAFS includes two modules: “Accounting” and “Business Management” in the elective part to cater for such student differences. Schools are encouraged to offer both elective modules, from which students may choose one. In addition, schools may design a range of learning activities outside class hours to fulfil students’ different learning needs.

### **Example**

Schools can be flexible in designing learning and teaching activities. The following example illustrates how a school might arrange different activities for two groups of students. The first group of students is more inclined to self-directed learning, while the second group prefers interactive activities. In addition to the regular lesson time, each group will have additional learning activities based on their learning styles to enhance their learning in BAFS.

<b>Group A</b>	<b>Group B</b>
e.g. simulated business competitions, independent reading, challenging learning tasks	e.g. guidance tutorials, role-plays, debates, visits, seminars

### 3.3.2 Promoting life-wide learning

Schools may arrange their time-tables in a way that involves student participation in life-wide learning activities in authentic contexts. As the learning activities may take half a day or longer, schools may consider allocating a long session on a weekly basis for activities such as visits to firms or business talks. Such an arrangement will give teachers flexibility in planning and arranging life-wide learning or extended activities for their students.

### **Examples**

To support student learning with life-wide learning experiences, teachers may organise the following activities during their weekly long sessions:

- a visit to a flea market to enrich students' understanding of entrepreneurship;
- participation in business competitions or events;
- visits to different banks or financial institutions and collecting information on various financial products and services; and
- attending tradeshow or exhibitions.

### 3.3.3 Flexible use of learning time

Booklet 2 of the *Senior Secondary Curriculum Guide (CDC, 2007)* advises schools to allocate 10% of the curriculum time to each elective subject, and also a minimum of 15% to Other Learning Experiences. The latter may include moral and civic education, community service and career-related experiences that enhance student learning of BAFS. Schools may make use of the curriculum time for Other Learning Experiences to arrange activities such as participation in business competitions and visits to business corporations which provide students with a wider exposure to the business world. Schools may wish to refer to case 1 in the examples of curriculum planning in section 3.3.7 for more information.

### 3.3.4 Making student learning more meaningful

Schools should make effective use of a range of human, learning and administrative resources to enhance student learning. Within the school environment, there are many extra-curricular activities or school clubs and societies in which BAFS students can apply their business knowledge and skills. By engaging in such activities, students can reinforce their learning and recognise the usefulness and relevance of business knowledge and skills to their daily lives.

#### **Examples**

The following examples illustrate how students may practise their business knowledge and skills in different school activities:

- Applying accounting knowledge in preparing financial records and statements for the student union and clubs;
- Applying management strategies in organising school events such as open days, school dramas, fashion shows, singing contests and community services; and
- Performing cost-volume-profit analysis in selling refreshments or souvenirs to visitors at school open days.

### 3.3.5 Integrating curriculum planning and learning with assessment

Effective assessment involves collecting evidence about students' learning, on the basis of which useful feedback can be provided to students, and to enable teachers to adjust their teaching. Assessment activities support student learning. A variety of modes of assessment, including presentations or debates on business issues, preparation for and review of business talks/visits, and pen-and-paper tests, can be adopted to help teachers monitor student progress.

SBA and internal assessment should be built into ongoing learning and teaching activities to

avoid excessive workload pressure on teachers and students. They should not be “add on elements”. The delivery of SBA activities should form an integral part of the curriculum plan. Schools might like to consider connecting the activities under ‘Other Learning Experiences’ (see section 3.3.7: case 1) with SBA tasks for effective use of time. More information on assessment, including SBA and public examinations, is given in Chapter 5.

### 3.3.6 Collaboration with other senior secondary subjects

The BAFS curriculum can be connected to the learning of other senior secondary subjects. Indeed, it is desirable that teachers of BAFS cooperate with teachers of other senior secondary subjects to organise learning and teaching activities, as illustrated in the following examples:

#### **Collaboration with core subjects**

BAFS teachers may collaborate with teachers of Liberal Studies to organise learning and teaching activities such as debates on business ethics and social responsibilities to supplement the learning of the two subjects.

#### **Collaboration with elective subjects**

BAFS teachers may cooperate with teachers of different elective subjects, such as Economics, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Tourism and Hospitality Studies, and Physical Education to arrange joint activities within or outside normal school hours. For instance, schools may organise visits or guest lectures on ICT applications in business as an essential learning experience in studying BAFS and ICT.

#### **Collaboration with Applied Learning (ApL)**

At S4, BAFS teachers may collaborate with the co-ordinators of ApL courses to organise induction activities to support students in making informed decisions about their study options. For example, a sharing session with students who are studying business-related ApL courses or guest lectures by ApL course providers might complement students’ knowledge in studying business at senior secondary level.

### 3.3.7 Examples of curriculum planning

Curriculum planning and development is an on-going process. Schools are encouraged to develop their own school-based curricula whenever appropriate and feasible. Some examples of BAFS curriculum planning are given below:

<b>Case 1 BAFS Curriculum Planning in ABC Secondary School</b>				
<b>Background</b>				
ABC secondary school plans to offer BAFS as one of the elective subjects in the senior secondary curriculum. To support student learning by enriching their exposure to the business world, the school arranges some ‘Other Learning Experiences’ such as career-related experiences, community service and moral and civic education to supplement the learning of BAFS.				
<b>Progression at senior secondary level</b>				
<b>Level</b>				
S6	Chinese Language, English Language, Mathematics, Liberal Studies	BAFS	X2 (X3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entrepreneur experience such as organising fund-raising activities or starting up a small business in a flea market</li> <li>• Study tour / field trip</li> <li>• Job attachment</li> <li>• Organising school functions such as an Xmas party, carnival, open day</li> <li>• Participating in a business competition</li> <li>• Attending workshops /seminars/exhibitions on business</li> <li>• Attending career talks on business</li> <li>• Visits to business corporations</li> <li>• School debates on business issues, etc.</li> </ul>
S5	Chinese Language, English Language, Mathematics, Liberal Studies	BAFS	X2 (X3)	
S4	Chinese Language, English Language, Mathematics, Liberal Studies	BAFS	X2 (X3) (X4)	
	Core Subjects	Elective Subjects		Other Learning Experiences
( ) optional				
<b>Rationale</b>				
To enrich and supplement student learning by providing students with a wider exposure to the business world through ‘Other Learning Experiences’				



## 3.4 Curriculum Management

The following are some major considerations when making decisions on how to manage the curriculum more effectively:

### 3.4.1 Understanding the curriculum and student needs

A thorough understanding of the positioning, rationale, aims, learning targets, key concepts and critical features of the BAFS curriculum among the teachers concerned will greatly enhance the effectiveness of learning. Under the leadership of the BAFS panel chairpersons, teachers can collaborate in the planning of lessons / functions / events and share their expertise in designing a wide range of meaningful and authentic learning and teaching activities using the school and the community context as a business setting. This will motivate and encourage students to study and apply their knowledge and skills to solve problems and try out new ideas.

To prepare students for the transition from junior secondary to senior secondary BAFS, schools may offer ‘taster’ junior secondary business education modules under the Technology Education Key Learning Area to give students an idea of what the subject is about. Various study options should be provided for students after they complete the compulsory part of BAFS (refer to Section 3.3.7: examples of curriculum planning).

### 3.4.2 Roles of curriculum leaders

For effective learning and teaching, school heads, Technology Education Key Learning Area co-ordinators/BAFS panel chairpersons and teachers, who are change agents for implementing the BAFS curriculum, must cooperate in the planning, development and management of the school-based BAFS curriculum.

School heads are expected to direct the planning of the whole-school curriculum and assessment policies based on the needs of their students and the strengths of their school and teachers. They should set priorities for development, and steer the transition to the curriculum framework in phases and by levels. Effective communication with all the parties concerned, such as Key Learning Area co-ordinators/subject panel chairpersons, teachers, parents and students is vital for successful implementation of curriculum change.

The Technology Education Key Learning Area co-ordinator/BAFS panel chairperson is expected to lead and guide panel members to review their practices regularly, and focus on how student learning can be improved through changes in pedagogy. They should help to ease teachers’ worries, share knowledge with them, clarify their misconceptions and support them in coping with change.

BAFS teachers should take on the roles of curriculum leaders by initiating innovative curriculum practices. As their work has a direct impact on the quality of student learning, they are also expected to keep abreast of the latest developments in the subject, and develop and try out new learning and teaching strategies, assessment modes, and curriculum design and organisation; and they can foster the development of a learning community to establish a platform for continuous improvement.

### 3.4.3 Managing change

The implementation of the BAFS curriculum should take into consideration the formal curriculum, induction programmes, life-wide learning activities and assessment activities. Schools are also encouraged to develop a school-based business curriculum, make effective use of learning and teaching resources, and deploy appropriate teaching staff to support the delivery of the curriculum. Reference should be made to Booklets 2, 3 and 4 of the *Senior Secondary Curriculum Guide* (CDC, 2007) for more comprehensive coverage of this area.

### 3.4.4 Resources management

Schools are expected to optimise the use of their facilities and resources. They need to coordinate the utilisation of their IT resources within and among different subjects. Since the use of IT complements the learning of BAFS, schools may arrange appropriate lesson times and/or time slots after school hours for students to use the IT facilities.

### 3.4.5 Planning for effective progression

Students should be given opportunities to experience business education at junior secondary level through different modes of learning for effective transition to the BAFS curriculum. It is essential that schools deploy their teaching force well, based on their strengths, academic backgrounds and work experience. Schools may establish a business education team led by a panel chairperson to monitor the progress and development of their school-based business curriculum.

### 3.4.6 Capability building and professional development

It is important for schools to develop a culture of lifelong learning in which teachers recognise the importance of enhancing their professional competencies through continuing professional development. Schools are encouraged to formulate staff development plans so that teachers are fully prepared for the implementation of the BAFS curriculum and assessment framework in schools.

## Chapter 4 Learning and Teaching

This chapter provides guidelines for effective learning and teaching of the Business, Accounting and Financial Studies (BAFS) curriculum. It is to be read in conjunction with Booklet 3 in the *Senior Secondary Curriculum Guide* (CDC, 2007), which provides the basis for the suggestions about learning and teaching set out below.

### 4.1 Knowledge and Learning

The continual advances in technology and the changes that have taken place in the business environment mean that there is a need to rethink and review existing learning and teaching practices and explore how the BAFS curriculum can be learned and taught in an interesting, effective and meaningful way.

#### 4.1.1 Views of knowledge

In the study of BAFS, the focus for learning must be on seeking meaning rather than simply reproducing knowledge. Constructivist learning theory views knowledge as constructed rather than transmitted. Students should develop knowledge through active learning instead of passively taking in factual information; and they should be encouraged to call upon a wide range of sources of knowledge rather than just the teacher.

BAFS stresses the importance of developing students' understanding of how to create value through the process of identifying needs. To keep pace with the dynamic changes in an economy full of business opportunities, BAFS emphasises the development of students' ability to apply knowledge flexibly to tackle business or daily-life problems to meet future challenges. Knowledge is therefore acquired from different business areas, such as accounting, management and finance, for making informed decisions. In the learning process, students need to construct their knowledge by reflection, exploration, analysis, carrying out tasks and evaluation, thereby nurturing their capacity for learning how to learn.

#### 4.1.2 Views of learning and teaching

In BAFS, student learning should be viewed as an active, holistic and purposeful process of acquiring and constructing knowledge. Teaching strategies based on different views of learning – as a “product”, as a “process” and as “co-constructed” – should be utilised flexibly to promote understanding at different levels. For example, direct instruction, which views learning as a “product”, is particularly suitable when students are learning factual information and accessing stored and recorded knowledge; learning as a “process” should be promoted where the emphasis is on the understanding of concepts and their applications in different business areas; and learning as “co-construction” is encouraged where business knowledge and skills are being developed through various interactive activities.

Teachers should adopt pedagogical practices which meet the learning targets and objectives of the curriculum and their students' needs. Noted below are several intertwined learning and teaching approaches which can be adopted by teachers of BAFS; and in Figure 4.1, examples are placed along a spectrum for reference (for details, see Examples A, B, C and D in Appendix).

### **Teaching as direct instruction**

Direct instruction helps students to acquire knowledge in predictable and manageable ways which can reinforce ongoing learning. It is especially useful where explanation and demonstration are required to provide basic concepts and understanding to enable students to study issues further through enquiry.

This is a “teacher-centred” approach which demands that students are attentive and motivated to learn. It is desirable to complement it with more student-centred approaches which involve active student participation and interaction, and encourage them to move beyond memorisation to higher levels of learning which involve clarification, expansion, generalisation and inference.

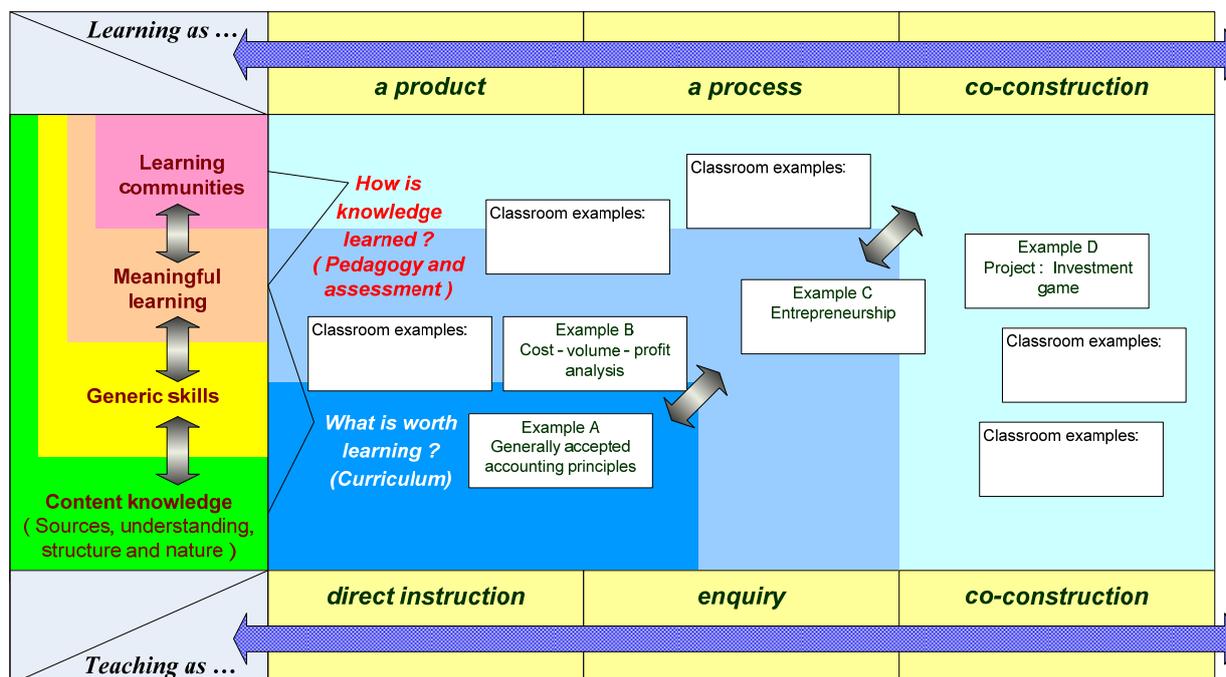
### **Teaching as enquiry**

The essence of enquiry is active involvement leading to understanding and the construction of new knowledge. BAFS stresses the development of decision-making skills to solve business issues through various activities in which students learn how to identify problems, investigate issues, generate and evaluate possible solutions and make reasoned decisions. As such, it requires students to go beyond facts and information accumulation and move to meaning-making and application of knowledge. This helps to nurture skills and attitudes that enable students to pursue lifelong learning.

### **Teaching as co-construction**

Knowledge is constructed socially by collaborating with others in a learning community. In an era when knowledge is expanding dramatically, it is essential to promote a collaborative culture in which students create and share knowledge rather than acquire it passively in isolation. As business emphasises communication and problem-solving skills, teachers and students are encouraged to work together as partners in selecting business issues for further investigation and analysis and co-construction of knowledge.

**Figure 4.1 Approaches to learning and teaching**



### 4.1.3 Roles of teachers and students

To promote student learning, teachers need to expand their roles: they have to become facilitators of learning, not just experts transmitting knowledge. They need to concern themselves with teaching their students *how* to learn rather than just *what* to learn; and they should ensure that students are actively involved in learning. It is recommended that teachers should adopt a variety of student-centred pedagogies which emphasise active learning and collaboration through authentic tasks. Students in turn are expected to learn interactively and initiate learning activities which articulate with their learning needs. They have to move from being passive listeners to becoming independent learners who engage in the construction of their own knowledge. It is hoped that through this they will become intrinsically motivated and develop a lifelong interest in learning about business.

### 4.1.4 Effective pedagogy and teaching for understanding

Learning and teaching strategies should be designed to bring about understanding and stimulate students to pursue knowledge on their own. Sections 4.2– 4.5 of this chapter provide further guidance on effective learning and teaching for the BAFS curriculum, and Appendix includes some examples of practices for developing business knowledge, generic skills, and positive values and attitudes.

## 4.2 Guiding Principles

In teaching BAFS, the following principles need to be considered.

- ***Building on prior knowledge and experience:*** One of the design principles for BAFS is to provide an interface between the junior and senior secondary curriculum. Particularly for first year senior secondary students, teachers need to be fully aware of the knowledge they have gained, and the approaches to study they have used, at junior secondary level. Learning activities should be planned with students' prior knowledge and experience in mind.
- ***Understanding learning targets:*** The quality of learning and teaching can be improved when both the teacher and students are clear about the learning targets and objectives. This enables teachers to reflect on what they want students to learn, and why; and it helps students to see what is worth learning and to select appropriate methods for studying. Examples A to D in Appendix illustrate the incorporation of clear learning targets in learning activities.
- ***Adopting a wide range of learning and teaching approaches and strategies:*** Teachers are encouraged to adopt a wide repertoire of strategies to achieve the curriculum aims and learning objectives of BAFS, such as developing decision-making and communication skills, according to the learning styles, abilities, interests and needs of their students. For further information, please refer to section 4.3: "Approaches and Strategies".
- ***Effective use of resources:*** It is important for teachers to use a variety of learning and teaching resources (e.g. the Internet and newspapers) instead of relying solely on textbooks. Community resources can be utilised to maximise the opportunities for learning BAFS within and outside the school environment – for example by arranging for students to participate in seminars, visits or exhibitions. Section 6.3.5 provides information on how to make effective use of community resources.
- ***Enhancing motivation:*** Schools and teachers often need to apply a variety of learning and teaching strategies to motivate student learning. In BAFS, an effective strategy is to relate the theoretical ideas to everyday experience so that students see the relevance of what they learn in the classroom to the world outside (please refer to Example B in Appendix). To motivate those with less ability, teachers may need to design structured learning tasks which they can complete successfully.
- ***Promoting classroom interaction:*** Classroom interaction is essential for developing business knowledge and skills. Teachers may need to incorporate strategies for encouraging teacher-student and student-student interaction. In interacting with their students, teachers need to give them feedback on their progress and how they can improve. This not only benefits students but allows teachers to make any necessary adjustments to their pedagogies and pace of teaching. For more information on classroom interaction and feedback, please refer to section 4.4.
- ***Promoting independent, self-directed learning:*** Students should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. The overall objective is to develop students' capacity for self-directed learning in which they consult not just textbooks but also

other up-to-date resources such as business journals, magazines and newspapers.

- ***Catering for learner diversity:*** Teachers are encouraged to apply different learning and teaching strategies to cater for students' different learning needs, interests and aptitudes. For more information, please refer to section 4.5.

## 4.3 Approaches and Strategies

Since student learning is dynamic and complex, there is no single approach that is best for all learning and teaching. A variety of learning and teaching approaches, strategies and activities should be adopted to cater for students' different learning styles.

### 4.3.1 Engaging in the decision-making process

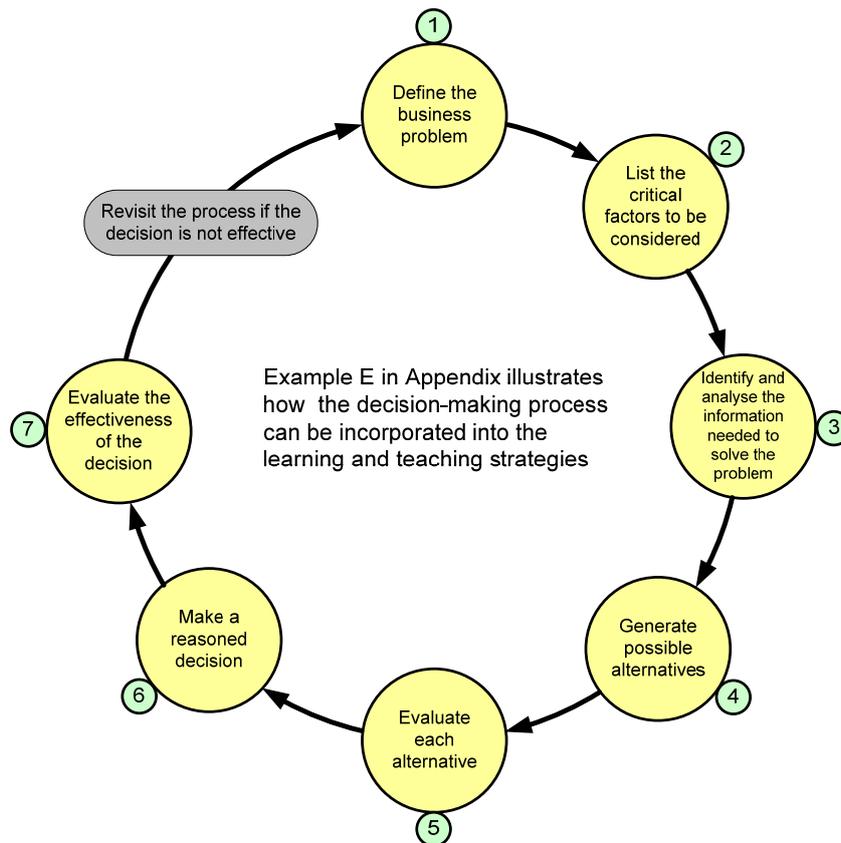
In the world of business, enterprises demand employees who can think logically and critically to solve business problems. In order to enhance students' problem-solving ability, it is essential to develop their decision-making skills when analysing business issues. Activities should be designed to encourage students to go through the process of decision-making which can develop the ability to make reasoned business decisions. This is illustrated in Figure 4.2.

The roles of teachers in engaging students in the decision-making process are as follows:

- Introduce the benefits of developing decision-making skills.
- Develop students' critical thinking skills and ability to analyse issues and justify their viewpoints with evidence.
- Nurture creativity.
- Encourage freedom of expression of ideas in discussion.
- Enhance students' exposure to the business world by accessing a variety of sources of information.
- Provide classroom opportunities for practising business decision-making.

Sometimes, the same business problem may be used several times during the course of study for in-depth investigation of the same issue. By going through the decision-making model, students are asked to revisit the same problem or situation and recall the suggestions made before. They then apply the newly acquired knowledge to produce a more comprehensive analysis of the same problem. Through this process of synthesising new with prior knowledge, students are helped to reframe and restructure their business concepts.

**Figure 4.2** *The decision-making process in analysing business issues*



### 4.3.2 Selection of learning and teaching approaches

The following table gives examples of learning and teaching approaches that teachers may adopt for developing students’ decision-making and higher-order thinking skills.

<b>Examples of learning and teaching approaches</b>
<p><b>Theme-based learning</b></p> <p>The learning elements in BAFS are inter-related, not discrete. A theme-based approach is used to organise and integrate the learning elements of different business areas around a theme that connects to real-world issues. Selecting the topics related to students’ life experiences and interests can make learning more meaningful. The learning elements should be delivered flexibly and build on each other around a theme by integrating the relationships among the elements of knowledge. This approach equips students with the necessary knowledge and skills to bring together the relevant perspectives in making business decisions (please refer to Example C in Appendix for more details).</p>
<p><b>Project-based learning</b></p> <p>Working on tasks or integrated projects that simulate a business environment enables students to learn how to solve real-life problems. For example, through working on an investment project, students not only have the opportunity to reaffirm or reconstruct the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes they have acquired but also to develop their research, team-building, interpersonal and high-order thinking skills (please refer to Example D in Appendix for more details).</p>

**Problem-based learning**

This approach engages students actively in learning rather than just receiving knowledge passively. Students act like professionals in confronting real business scenarios. They need to identify the problems embedded in the scenarios, develop hypotheses, collect relevant information, evaluate different alternatives and recommend the desirable solution. This is an example of learning how to learn. Students participate actively in contextualising information, and the teachers provide guidance and feedback, and nurture an environment that supports active student learning.

**Collaborative learning**

Collaborative learning involves students working together on a learning task to share their knowledge and skills. In collaborative learning, students learn how to resolve group conflict and develop their interpersonal skills in a social learning environment that mirrors the real business world in which building a harmonious relationship with team members is a key factor in success.

### 4.3.3 Choosing an appropriate instructional strategy

After deciding on the appropriate approach for learning and teaching, teachers may adopt different instructional strategies to engage students in the learning process. It is recommended that BAFS teachers adopt a wide range of strategies to motivate students to achieve the curriculum aims. Through carefully selected strategies such as group discussion, debate, role-play and project work, students learn how to learn and accept learning as their own responsibility.

The following strategies are suggested for teachers' reference.

**Table 4.1 Possible instructional strategies**

Types	Purposes	Examples
<b>Group discussion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allows students to share and compare ideas, views and knowledge with peers</li> <li>• encourages students to think from wider perspectives to generate business solutions</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Compulsory Part – Basics of Personal Financial Management</i></b></p> <p>Discuss the potential problems with the misuse of credit cards.</p>
<b>Case study</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allows students to relate subject knowledge to real-life situations</li> <li>• helps students to apply business knowledge to understand how people solve business problems and make decisions</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Elective Part – Cost Accounting</i></b></p> <p>How do changes in the cost of production affect businesses?</p> <p><b><i>Compulsory Part – Introduction to Accounting</i></b></p> <p>Analyse and apply the relevant accounting concepts in case problems.</p>
<b>Debate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provokes critical thinking</li> <li>• involves discussing issues from opposing angles, evaluating the ideas generated, and defending positions against counter-proposals</li> <li>• requires students to synthesise their knowledge</li> <li>• provides opportunities for students to demonstrate their communication skills</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Compulsory Part – Business Environment</i></b></p> <p>Debate whether globalization has had a positive impact on the business environment and business relationships.</p> <p>Debate the view that the prime objective of running a business is to maximise profit.</p>

Types	Purposes	Examples
<b>Role-play</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>allows students to put themselves in the position of participants in real-life situations</li> <li>encourages reflective thinking</li> <li>involves applying knowledge and skills in business scenarios</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Compulsory Part – Introduction to Management</i></b></p> <p>Act as members of a board of directors meeting to discuss collaboration among different departments in given scenarios.</p>
<b>Simulation game</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provides opportunities for students to practise business skills and apply business knowledge</li> <li>motivates students to enjoy learning by involving them in competing/cooperating according to prescribed rules</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Elective Part – Business Management</i></b></p> <p>Carry out a simulated management game to make business decisions, e.g. business expansion or developing a new product line.</p>
<b>Field visit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>enables students to explore the business world</li> <li>enriches students’ exposure to the realities of business</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Compulsory Part - Introduction to Management</i></b></p> <p>Arrange visits to a business firm to learn about its operations and understand its business activities, e.g. the workflow, staff management and marketing strategies.</p>
<b>Questioning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>when thought-provoking, encourages logical and in-depth analysis</li> <li>challenges students to justify their viewpoints with evidence</li> </ul>	<p>Any issue that requires the exploration of reasons and factors</p> <p><b><i>Compulsory Part – Business Environment</i></b></p> <p>Open-ended questions such as “Why do we need business? Discuss.”</p>
<b>Reading newspapers /business journals/ articles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>enhances students’ awareness of the richness of information available</li> <li>helps students to learn how to collect, analyse, and acquire updated knowledge independently</li> <li>enables students to keep abreast of the latest issues and developments in the business</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Compulsory Part - Introduction to Management</i></b></p> <p>Read articles on the following topics and summarise the content with the aid of diagrams:</p> <p>Investigate the business opportunities arising from economic development in the Pearl River Delta region.</p>

Types	Purposes	Examples
	world as a whole, both locally and globally <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• encourages students to share information and views on business issues with peers and teachers</li> </ul>	Explain why a country's entrepreneurial activities are so important for its economic growth.
<b>Information technology (IT) applications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allows students to experience interactive learning</li> <li>• reinforces students' understanding and helps them to progress at their own pace</li> <li>• encourages students to access world-wide information without the constraints of time and location for self-directed learning</li> </ul>	IT applications can help students in conducting research, surveys and numeracy work.  <i>Compulsory Part – Basics of Personal Financial Management</i> Use software e.g. spreadsheets to prepare personal budgets and investment projects.  <i>Elective Part – Financial Accounting</i> Demonstrate the use of accounting software in preparing financial statements.

#### 4.3.4 Meaningful assignments

To promote effective learning, it is very important for teachers to involve students in tasks which are meaningful. In doing so, teachers are expected to follow the guidelines below and exercise their professional judgment.

##### *Balancing theory and practice*

When designing assignments, BAFS teachers should incorporate tasks which help students to develop both theoretical knowledge and practical applications in different business areas. Example D in Appendix illustrates the use of a task in which students have to search for and analyse authentic information which involves them in thinking about both business theories and practices.

##### *Using authentic business contexts*

Using tasks which involve authentic business contexts can develop an understanding of the integrated nature of various business areas. It can also motivate students as they see the relevance of what they are learning to the real world. Example B in Appendix illustrates how to assign tasks that require students to apply their business knowledge in supporting school clubs and societies.

## 4.4 Classroom Interaction

Classroom interaction plays an important role in learning. It involves not only communication between teachers and students but also among students. Interaction helps teachers to understand how well their students are progressing and enables students to explore what they know and don't know, and to try out their ideas and receive reactions to them.

### 4.4.1 Types of classroom interaction

The following table provides examples of classroom interaction, which are classified into two categories (a) direct instruction complemented with questioning and (b) group activities. These are considered further in section 4.4.2 and 4.4.3 respectively.

**Table 4.2** *Examples of classroom interaction*

<b>Direct instruction complemented with questioning</b>	
<b>Teacher to students (whole class)</b>	Through direct instruction complemented with questioning, teachers can lead the whole class to discuss an issue, investigate some difficult concepts or disseminate some important information.
<b>Group activities</b>	
<b>Student to student (pair)</b>	Students work with a partner to solve a business problem by asking each other questions, sharing information, etc. An activity involving this type of interaction is given in Example A in Appendix.
<b>Student to student (small groups)</b>	Group work provides excellent opportunities for students to share their knowledge, solve problems, brainstorm ideas, participate in discussion and develop team-building skills.
<b>Student to student (whole class)</b>	Teachers may arrange group presentations, debates, role-play or student-led activities to allow them to learn from each other.
<b>Teacher to students (small groups)</b>	When group work is used in class, the teacher plays the role of a facilitator, moving from group to group to check on their progress, help with any problems and encourage students to ask questions.

### 4.4.2 Direct instruction complemented with questioning

Direct instruction (e.g. lecturing) is one of the main forms of knowledge transmission in a learning environment. Students' understanding will be enhanced if teachers include thought-provoking questions based on students' previous knowledge and the lesson content

during presentations. The questions should be carefully constructed to stimulate students' thinking and reasoning skills. Teachers should also give constructive and helpful feedback or hints to facilitate further questions for improving student learning. Effective use of questioning and feedback during direct instruction can increase students' participation and interaction in lessons. Example A in Appendix illustrates direct instruction combined with questioning.

#### 4.4.3 Group activities

Group activities provide opportunities for interaction between students. Teachers should use activities such as role-play and discussion so that students can learn how to exchange ideas, confront competing views and develop more effective communication skills. To function well, groups need to have a clear focus, with each member being assigned a specific role. For group activities in class, teachers have to create an environment in which students feel free to discuss their ideas without feeling embarrassed about making mistakes and respect each other's opinions. An example of group activities as an instructional strategy is given in Example B in Appendix.

To gain the full benefit from interaction and cooperation among students, teachers have to organise effective and different grouping arrangements. The following guidelines are suggested for group activities:

- Include students with different levels of achievement, interests and learning styles in groups so that they can share their differing viewpoints;
- Stress individual accountability where students are working independently on a specific portion of a task and helping each other to complete it; and
- Nurture an encouraging atmosphere in which students undertake individual work but help each other by giving feedback and suggestions to achieve the learning goals.

### 4.5 Catering for Learner Diversity

It is essential to cater for learner differences in, for example, ability and attainment, interests and learning styles. This requires teachers to design a wide range of learning activities which meet students' individual needs. For students with special educational needs, the learning and teaching strategies and arrangements have to be adjusted to help them to progress as well possible in their learning.

#### 4.5.1 Students with different learning styles and abilities

Students differ in their preferred ways of learning. For example, some students may prefer to learn business concepts first, and then apply them to problems while others may prefer to solve business problems by interacting with their classmates in team-work. Some strategies for BAFS teachers to consider in coping with learner differences are noted below (please refer also to Examples A, B, C and D in Appendix):

**General strategies:**

- Adopt different teaching strategies to attain the same learning targets and outcomes according to the interests and abilities of students;
- Assign a common task to all students but provide different levels/types of support;
- Design activities at various levels of difficulty;
- Encourage collaboration among students by flexible grouping (please refer to section 4.4.3);
- Include open-ended questions in the learning tasks which allow students to suggest different solutions based on their strengths and learning styles;
- Include various modes of assessment to allow students of differing ability to fulfil their potential; and
- Adopt a collaborative learning strategy which encourages students with different ability and expertise to work together on learning tasks.

**Strategies for students with learning difficulties:**

- Equip students with simple and effective study tools and skills for organising information (e.g. the use of graphic organisers, planners and note-taking skills);
- Assign more able students as mentors to support their individual learning; and
- Provide frequent feedback and encouragement to enhance students' motivation.

**4.5.2 Gifted students**

Teachers should adopt different teaching strategies, including extended activities, to maximise the potential of gifted students. Some suggested approaches are noted below:

- Allow students to select their own learning paths;
- Introduce them to the skills of independent learning, such as reflective thinking and study skills, at an early stage so that they can assume responsibility for their own learning;
- Provide opportunities for them to master more demanding information during the process of knowledge-construction;
- Provide challenging learning tasks and extra learning materials to encourage in-depth study of the BAFS curriculum; and
- Engage them in working together to share their reflections in knowledge-building.

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## Chapter 5      Assessment

This chapter discusses the role of assessment in learning and teaching Business, Accounting and Financial Studies (BAFS), the principles that should guide assessment of the subject and the need for both formative and summative assessment. It also provides guidance on internal assessment and details of the public assessment of BAFS. Finally, information is given on how standards are established and maintained, and how results are reported with reference to these standards. General guidance on assessment can be found in the *Senior Secondary Curriculum Guide* (2007).

### 5.1    The Roles of Assessment

Assessment is the practice of collecting evidence of student learning. It is a vital and integral part of classroom instruction, and serves several purposes and audiences.

First and foremost, it gives feedback to students, teachers, schools and parents on the effectiveness of teaching and on students' strengths and weaknesses in learning.

Second, it provides information to schools, school systems, government, tertiary institutions and employers to enable them to monitor standards and to facilitate selection decisions.

The most important role of assessment is in promoting learning and monitoring students' progress. However, in the senior secondary years, the more public roles of assessment for certification and selection come to the fore. Inevitably, these imply high-stakes uses of assessment since the results are typically employed to make critical decisions about individuals.

The Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) provides a common end-of-school credential that gives access to university study, work, and further education and training. It summarises student performance in the four core subjects and in various elective subjects, including both discipline-oriented subjects (including BAFS) and the new Applied Learning courses. It needs to be interpreted in conjunction with other information about students given in the Student Learning Profile.

### 5.2    Formative and Summative Assessment

It is useful to distinguish between the two main purposes of assessment, namely “assessment *for* learning” and “assessment *of* learning”.

“Assessment *for* learning” is concerned with obtaining feedback on learning and teaching and utilising this to make learning more effective and introduce any necessary changes to teaching strategies. We refer to this kind of assessment as “formative assessment” because it is all about forming or shaping learning and teaching. Formative assessment should take place on a daily basis and typically involves close attention to small “chunks” of learning.

“Assessment *of* learning” is concerned with determining progress in learning, and is referred

to as “summative” assessment, because it is all about summarising how much learning has taken place. Summative assessment is normally undertaken at the conclusion of a significant period of instruction (e.g. at the end of the year, or of a key stage of schooling) and reviews much larger “chunks” of learning.

In practice, a sharp distinction cannot always be made between formative and summative assessment, because the same assessment can in some circumstances serve both formative and summative purposes. Teachers can refer to the SSCG for further discussion of formative and summative assessment.

Formative assessment should be distinguished from continuous assessment. The former refers to the provision of feedback to improve learning and teaching based on formal or informal assessment of student performance, while the latter refers to the assessment of students’ on-going work and may involve no provision of feedback that helps to promote better learning and teaching. For example, accumulating results in class tests carried out on a weekly basis, without giving students constructive feedback, may neither be effective formative assessment nor meaningful summative assessment.

There are good educational reasons why formative assessment should be given more attention and accorded a higher status than summative assessment, on which schools tended to place a greater emphasis in the past. There is research evidence indicating that formative assessment is beneficial when used for refining instructional decision-making in teaching and generating feedback to improve learning. For this reason, the CDC report *Learning to Learn – The Way Forward in Curriculum Development* (CDC, 2001) recommended that there should be a change in assessment practices, with schools placing due emphasis on formative assessment to make assessment *for* learning an integral part of classroom teaching.

It is recognised, however, that the primary purpose of public assessment, which includes both public examinations and moderated School-based Assessments (SBA), is to provide summative assessments of the learning of each student. While it is desirable that students are exposed to SBA tasks in a low-stakes context and that they benefit from practice and experience with such tasks (i.e. for formative assessment purposes) without penalty, similar tasks will need to be administered subsequently as part of the public assessment process to generate marks to summarise the learning of students (i.e. for summative assessment purposes).

Another distinction to be made is between internal assessment and public assessment. Internal assessment refers to the assessment practices that teachers and schools employ as part of the ongoing learning and teaching process during the three years of senior secondary studies. In contrast, public assessment refers to the assessment conducted as part of the assessment process in place for all schools. Within the context of the HKDSE, this means both the public examinations and the moderated SBA conducted or supervised by the HKEAA. On balance, internal assessment should be more formative, whereas public assessment tends to be more summative. Nevertheless, this need not be seen as a simple dichotomy. The inclusion of SBA in public assessment is an attempt to enhance formative assessment or assessment *for* learning within the context of the HKDSE.

### 5.3 Assessment Objectives

The assessment objectives in BAFS are closely aligned with the curriculum framework and the broad learning outcomes presented in earlier chapters.

The learning objectives to be assessed in BAFS are listed below. Students should be able to:

#### *Knowledge and understanding*

- apply concepts and knowledge in an integrated manner to attain specified goals for business ventures and solve problems encountered in the business context;
- identify opportunities, generate innovative ideas and manage resources for business development;
- analyse how management reacts to the dynamic business environment in formulating strategic plans;
- evaluate the management efficiency and financial performance of businesses to make personal and/or business financial decisions;
- apply the management concepts related to human resources, finance and marketing in business decision-making; and
- use accounting information effectively to monitor business performance and suggest means to add value to human and financial resources.

#### *Skills*

- collect, process and analyse business information necessary for strategic planning and business development;
- apply critical thinking and problem-solving skills in evaluating business issues and making ethical decisions;
- demonstrate effective communication, team-building and interpersonal skills in business; and
- use basic business application software and apply ICT skills in business projects.

#### *Values and attitudes*

- be socially responsible and caring, in particular when playing the roles of consumers / employees / entrepreneurs / investors in the business world, and in society at large;
- appreciate themselves as valuable human capital and enhance their commitment to society; and
- be reflective and self-motivated lifelong learners to meet the demands of the rapidly changing business world.

The majority of the above assessment objectives are applicable to both internal and public assessment, while some may not be applicable to public assessment. Those objectives applicable to public assessment will be listed in the approved Regulations and Assessment Frameworks published by the HKEAA.

## 5.4 Internal Assessment

This section presents the guiding principles that can be used as the basis for designing internal assessment and some common assessment practices for BAFS. Some of these principles are common to both internal and public assessment.

### 5.4.1 Guiding principles

Internal assessment practices should be aligned with curriculum planning, teaching progression, student abilities and local school contexts. The information collected will help to motivate, promote and monitor student learning, and will also help teachers to find ways of promoting more effective learning and teaching.

#### (a) *Alignment with the learning objectives*

A range of assessment practices should be used to assess the achievement of different learning objectives for whole-person development. These include group discussion, projects, and fieldwork. The weighting given to different areas in assessment should be discussed and agreed among teachers. The assessment purposes and criteria should also be made known to students so that they have a full understanding of what is expected of them.

#### (b) *Catering for the range of student ability*

Assessment practices incorporating different levels of difficulty and diverse modes should be used to cater for students with different aptitudes and abilities. This helps to ensure that the more able students are challenged to develop their full potential and the less able ones are encouraged to sustain their interest and succeed in learning.

#### (c) *Tracking progress over time*

As internal assessment should not be a one-off exercise, schools are encouraged to use practices that can track learning progress over time (e.g. portfolios). Assessment practices of this kind allow students to set their own incremental targets and manage their own pace of learning, which will have a positive impact on their commitment to learning.

#### (d) *Timely and encouraging feedback*

Teachers should provide timely and encouraging feedback through a variety of means, such as constructive verbal comments during classroom activities and written remarks on assignments. Such feedback helps students to sustain their momentum in learning, and to identify their strengths and weaknesses.

#### (e) *Making reference to the school's context*

As learning is more meaningful when the content or process is linked to a setting which is familiar to students, schools are encouraged to design a few assessment tasks that make reference to the school's own context (e.g. its location, relationship with the community, and mission).

**(f) *Making reference to current progress in student learning***

Internal assessment tasks should be designed with reference to students' current progress, as this helps to overcome obstacles that may have a cumulative negative impact on learning. Teachers should be mindful in particular of concepts and skills which form the basis for further development in learning.

**(g) *Feedback from peers and from the students themselves***

In addition to giving feedback, teachers should also provide opportunities for peer assessment and self-assessment in student learning. The former enables students to learn among themselves, and the latter promotes reflective thinking which is vital for students' lifelong learning.

**(h) *Appropriate use of assessment information to provide feedback***

Internal assessment provides a rich source of data for providing evidence-based feedback on learning in a formative manner.

#### 5.4.2 Internal assessment practices

A range of assessment practices, such as open book test, oral presentations, case studies, and portfolios suited to BAFS should be used to promote the attainment of the various learning outcomes. However, teachers should note that these practices should be an integral part of learning and teaching, not "add-on" activities.

##### *Essays*

Students may be asked to write essays in which they discuss or elaborate on given statements, and these may be done as homework, or written under time restrictions in class or in an examination. This form of assessment calls for mastery of concepts and skills, and effective application of business knowledge to novel situations.

##### *Open book tests*

Open book tests, in which students are allowed access to the source materials, are particularly suitable for assessing stimulus-based skills, such as the interpretation of financial statements, or investigation and analysis of an industrial dispute. Questions for this type of test should aim to stimulate the use of reference materials and help students organise their ideas.

##### *Group discussion*

Using authentic or simulated business scenarios, students can be assigned roles in which they have to discuss the relevant management concerns (e.g. staffing and financial implications, internal and/or external environmental factors); and they can argue about relevant issues in the form of debates. In both cases, students are expected to demonstrate in-depth knowledge of the related areas as well as critical thinking and communication skills.

### ***Case studies***

Case studies allow students to adopt a more holistic management perspective in applying their knowledge to authentic business scenarios. The tasks can involve, for example: studying a firm's human resources or financial performance indicators; planning an advertising project; conducting a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis for an SME; and evaluating a retail store's sales performance and prospects.

### ***Projects***

A project is any piece of extended work from which the constraints of lesson time have been largely removed. Asking students to carry out project work provides them with an opportunity to study a topic of interest in depth, so as to demonstrate their problem-solving and decision-making skills. For example, in BAFS, they may study topics such as the formulation of a business plan for a new venture, or the analysis of the business implications of a local or overseas policy measure. The products need not be solely in the conventional written form, but might include a video, tape, compact disc (read-only memory) (CD-ROM) etc. Teachers may wish to draw the following steps to students' attention:

- Clarifying the areas of interest
- Establishing a framework for enquiry
- Finding out and selecting resource materials
- Organising data
- Presenting findings.

### ***Oral presentations***

Oral questioning need not be seen as a test suitable only for language subjects. It can be helpful for assessment in other subjects such as BAFS. For example, a student or group of students can present an analysis of a contemporary business issue to the rest of the class, followed by a question-and-answer session. Oral techniques can be advantageous as a method of assessment because they allow teachers to see how students discuss matters in depth, tease out the meaning of obscure statements and reach conclusions. Teachers are encouraged to try using oral assessment as it can be a valuable supplement to conventional assessment methods.

### ***Fieldwork***

Students come into contact with the actual business world through, for example, reflecting on visits to organisations, meetings with entrepreneurs and professionals, and taking part in job shadowing programmes and/or business ventures. Such fieldwork calls for keen observation and accurate recording by students who have to apply their business knowledge to what they see. It can also contribute significantly to establishing good relations between the school and the community. The results of fieldwork can be very rewarding for students, both in learning the subject-matter and enhancing their social development.

## ***Portfolios***

Portfolios are collections of student work during the course of study. Students may be asked to select their own favourite pieces of work from the year for assessment. Teachers may like to see drafts as well as final versions in the portfolios. Students should be encouraged to become aware of the progress they have made in terms of level of understanding and variety of work.

## **5.5 Public Assessment**

### **5.5.1 Guiding principles**

Some principles guiding public assessment are outlined below for teachers' reference.

#### **(a) *Alignment with the curriculum***

The outcomes that are assessed and examined through the HKDSE should be aligned with the aims, objectives and intended learning outcomes of senior secondary curriculum. To enhance the validity of public assessment, the assessment procedures should address the range of valued learning outcomes, and not just those that are assessable through external written examinations.

The public assessment for BAFS ensures that its assessment objectives are aligned with the curriculum's emphasis on application and integration of broad-based knowledge to authentic or novel business scenarios. In addition, the SBA component extends the public assessment to include valued business and generic skills such as research and analysis skills for business decision-making.

#### **(b) *Fairness, objectivity and reliability***

Students should be assessed in ways that are fair and are not biased against particular groups of students. A characteristic of fair assessment is that it is objective and under the control of an independent examining authority that is impartial and open to public scrutiny. Fairness also implies that assessments provide a reliable measure of each student's performance in a given subject so that, if they were to be repeated, very similar results would be obtained.

#### **(c) *Inclusiveness***

The HKALE is designed for a relatively elite group of students, most of whom aspire to university study. However, the new assessments and examinations will accommodate the full spectrum of student aptitude and ability.

The public examination for BAFS is designed in such a way that students are given opportunities to demonstrate both foundation and specialist knowledge. At the same time, the SBA of BAFS offers room for a wide range of assessment activities to cater for the differing preferences among students and/or schools. Ultimately, the five levels of performance to be developed at a later stage for BAFS will ensure that the full spectrum of student ability can be covered.

**(d) *Standards-referencing***

The new system will be ‘standards-referenced’, i.e. student performance will be matched against standards, which indicate what students have to know and be able to do to merit a certain level of performance. The level descriptors will provide a specific indication of the expected student performance in the subject.

**(e) *Informativeness***

The new qualification and the associated assessment and examinations system should provide useful information to all parties. Firstly, it should provide feedback to students on their performance and to teachers and schools on the quality of the teaching provided. Secondly, it should communicate to parents, tertiary institutions, employers and the public at large what it is that students know and are able to do, in terms of how their performance matches the standards. Thirdly, it needs to facilitate selection decisions that are fair and defensible.

### 5.5.2 Assessment design

The assessment design is subject to continual refinement in the light of feedback. Full details will be provided in other supplementary documents, in particular the approved Regulations and Assessment Frameworks for the year of the examination.

Component		Weighting	Duration
Public Examination	Paper 1 Compulsory part	34%	1½ hours
	Paper 2 Elective part (choose one only) 2A Accounting module 2B Business management module	51%	2½ hours
School-based Assessment		15%	

Paper 1 will contain questions on the Compulsory Part. For Paper 2, candidates will attempt either Paper 2A or 2B, but they will be required integrate into their answers the knowledge and skills learned in the Compulsory Part to demonstrate in-depth knowledge of the module.

### 5.5.3 Public examinations

The overall aim of the public examination is to assess candidates’ ability to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding in different areas of business and to apply this to novel situations in the context of business decisions.

Different types of items will be used to assess students’ performance in a broad range of skills and abilities. The item types will include multiple-choice questions, short questions, accounting problems, business cases and essays. Multiple-choice questions permit a more comprehensive coverage of the syllabus, while short questions can be used to test basic

knowledge and essential concepts. Business cases and accounting problems focus on comprehension and knowledge application, and essay questions allow candidates to discuss open-ended issues in depth. Item types will be similar to those adopted in the HKCE and HKAL examinations. Specimen papers will be provided to schools by the HKEAA to illustrate the format of the examination and the standards at which the questions are pitched.

#### 5.5.4 School-based Assessment (SBA)

In the context of public assessment, SBA refers to assessments administered in schools and marked by the students' own teachers. The primary rationale for SBA in BAFS is to enhance the validity of the assessment by including the assessment of students' business and generic skills such as research and analysis, and presentation and IT skills.

There are, however, some additional reasons for SBA in BAFS. For example, it reduces dependence on the results of public examinations, which may not always provide the most reliable indication of the actual abilities of candidates. Obtaining assessments based on student performance over an extended period of time and developed by those who know the students best – their subject teachers – provides a more *reliable* assessment of each student.

Another reason for including SBA is to promote a *positive “backwash effect” on students, teachers and school staff*. Within BAFS, SBA can serve to motivate students by requiring them to engage in meaningful activities; and for teachers, it can reinforce curriculum aims and good teaching practice, and provide structure and significance to an activity in which they are already involved on a daily basis, namely assessing their own students.

A brief outline of the assessment task and criteria, activities and implementation schedule for SBA are given below.

##### **Assessment task**

Students are required to analyse and present business issues related to an authentic or simulated business scenario, collecting and evaluating primary and/or secondary information and making reasoned recommendations on those issues. It is envisaged that students will have to work over an extended period of time on the task, in which the following stages will normally be involved:

- Deciding on a theme or title
- Devising a list of questions for research and analysis
- Designing appropriate information-collection method(s)
- Analysing major findings
- Writing up a report
- Presenting the report and receiving feedback from teacher and/or peers
- Reflecting on the strengths and weaknesses of the study

To encourage students to follow through a systematic work schedule and to help teachers authenticate students' work, students are also required to do the critical stages of work in class under direct teacher supervision.

## **Assessment criteria**

The SBA tasks will be assessed with respect to the following three areas:

1. business knowledge and understanding
2. analytical skills for business decision-making
3. business presentation skills.

The SBA for BAFS focuses on students' application and integration of their knowledge in authentic or simulated business scenarios. Students are expected to analyse business issues in terms of various business/management functions and/or from the perspectives of different stakeholders. Such analyses typically cover a wide range of viewpoints and consider a number of viable options; but, at the same time, effective and practical application requires that a business presentation concludes with suggestions and/or recommendations that are concise, logical and realistic. In general, students will have to conduct reasonably thorough research and analysis to arrive at their recommendations and to communicate them in a convincing manner to the parties concerned.

If deemed appropriate, teachers may make use of the SBA tasks to require their students to demonstrate other valuable learning outcomes — such as positive values and work attitudes — even though these are not counted in the public assessment.

## **SBA activities**

Teachers should plan suitable SBA activities through which students can perform SBA tasks and be assessed. Schools may organise various SBA activities ranging from news commentaries and company visits to work shadowing and actual business ventures. Such activities represent different levels of immersion in real-world workplace operations or market deals. Where school and student readiness permits, a higher level of experiential learning associated with a greater degree of authenticity and immersion is preferred, as this enables students to develop a more holistic and deeper understanding of essential business skills.

Some SBA activities may have to be done on a group or class basis, but the assessment task must be carried out as individual work for assessment purposes. For example, the report on a company visit should emphasise personal reflections on any business issues identified during the visit and keep generic descriptions of the activity to a minimum.

It should be noted that SBA is not an “add-on” element in the curriculum. The requirement to implement the SBA will take into consideration the wide range of student ability and efforts will be made to avoid unduly increasing the workload of both teachers and students. Detailed information on the requirements and implementation of the SBA and samples of assessment tasks will be provided to teachers by the HKEAA.

## **Implementation schedule**

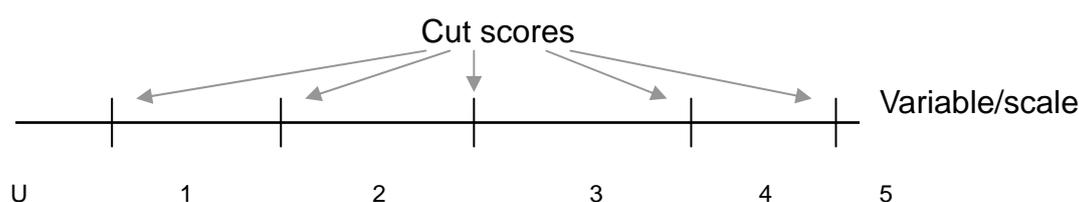
To accommodate variations between schools, and allow teachers more time to familiarise themselves with the curriculum for better planning of suitable SBA activities, SBA for this subject will be phased in as follows:

Year of Examination	Implementation of SBA
2012	Schools are not required to submit SBA marks. Public examination results constitute 100% of the final subject results.
2013	Schools are not required to submit SBA marks. Public examination results constitute 100% of the final subject results.
2014	All schools have to submit SBA marks for feedback from the HKEAA on the outcomes of moderation. Public examination results constitute 100% of the final subject results.
2015	All schools have to submit SBA marks for feedback from the HKEAA on the outcomes of moderation. Public examination results constitute 100% of the final subject results.
Starting from 2016, all schools have to submit SBA marks contributing 15% to the final subject results.	

The detailed requirements, regulations, assessment criteria and guidelines on SBA will be made known to schools in 2009 so that they can start practising SBA before it is formally implemented.

### 5.5.5 Standards and reporting of results

The HKDSE will make use of standards-referenced reporting. What this means is that candidates' levels of performance will be reported with reference to a set of standards as defined by cut scores on the variable or scale for a given subject. Standards referencing relates to the way in which results are reported and does not involve any changes in how teachers or examiners mark student work. The set of standards for a given subject can be represented diagrammatically as shown in Figure 5.1.



**Figure 5.1** *Defining levels of performance via cut scores on the variable or scale for a given subject*

Within the context of the HKDSE there will be five cut scores, which will be used to distinguish five levels of performance (1–5), with 5 being the highest. A performance below the threshold cut score for Level 1 will be labelled as “Unclassified” (U).

For each of the five levels, a set of written descriptors will be developed that describe what the typical candidate performing at this level is able to do. The principle behind these descriptors is that they describe what typical candidates *can* do, not what they *cannot* do. In other words, they describe performance in positive rather than negative terms. These descriptors will necessarily represent “on-average” statements and may not apply precisely to

individuals, whose performance within a subject may be variable and span two or more levels. Samples of students' work at various levels of performance may be used to illustrate the standards expected of them. These samples, when used together with the level descriptors, will clarify the standards expected at the various levels.

In setting standards for the HKDSE, Levels 4 and 5 will be set with reference to the standards achieved by students awarded grades A–D in the HKALE. It needs to be stressed, however, that the intention is that the standards will remain constant over time – not the percentages awarded different levels, as these are free to vary in line with variations in overall student performance. Referencing Levels 4 and 5 to the standards associated with the old grades A–D is important for ensuring a degree of continuity with past practice, for facilitating tertiary selection and for maintaining international recognition.

The overall level awarded to each candidate will be made up of results in both the public examination and the SBA. The SBA results for BAFS will be statistically moderated to adjust for differences among schools in marking standards, while preserving the rank ordering of students as determined by the school.

To maintain current levels of discrimination for selection purposes, the Level 5 candidates with the best performance will have their results annotated with the symbols \*\* and the next top group with the symbol \*. The Diploma itself will record the Level awarded to each candidate. There will also be a Statement of Results which will in addition provide level descriptors.

## Chapter 6 Learning and Teaching Resources

This chapter discusses the importance of selecting and making effective use of learning and teaching resources, including textbooks, to enhance student learning. Schools need to select, adapt and, where appropriate, develop the relevant resources to support student learning.

### 6.1 Purpose and Function of Learning and Teaching Resources

The purpose of learning and teaching resources is to provide a basis for students' learning experiences. The resources include not only textbooks, workbooks, and audio-visual teaching aids produced by the Education and Manpower Bureau or other organisations but also web-based learning materials, IT software, the Internet, the media, libraries, resources in the natural environment, and people. All of these should be drawn upon to extend students' learning experiences and meet their different learning needs. If used effectively, they will help students to: consolidate what they have learned; extend and construct knowledge for themselves; and develop the learning strategies, generic skills, positive values and attitudes they need – and thus lay a solid foundation for lifelong learning.

### 6.2 Guiding Principles

Teachers should use textbooks flexibly in combination with other learning materials to provide up-to-date information to achieve the learning targets. The basic considerations for the selection and effective use of learning and teaching resources are as follows. They should

- be in line with the curriculum aims, learning targets and objectives, and contain core elements of the curriculum;
- be based on students' prior knowledge and experience;
- arouse students' interest and engage them actively in learning tasks;
- provide access to knowledge, as well as scaffolding, to help students progress in their learning;
- cater for students' individual differences by providing a variety of learning activities at different levels of difficulty;
- promote independent learning by complementing and extending what students have learned in class; and
- support learning and teaching strategies such as investigation, discussion, scaffolding, reflection and nurturing of generic skills.

### 6.3 Types of Resources

To ensure that the BAFS curriculum keeps pace with the ever-changing business environment and is aligned with new technologies, students and teachers are encouraged to make use of a wide range of up-to-date educational resources in combination with textbooks for effective learning. To assist schools in the implementation of the senior secondary curriculum, EMB

will continue to provide them with additional funding and to encourage flexibility in the use of resources to cater for their diverse needs. Schools are advised to refer to the relevant and latest circulars issued by EMB from time to time.

### 6.3.1 Textbooks

Textbooks can play an important role in helping students to develop effectively the core knowledge, skills, positive values and attitudes. The resources and activities in textbooks should also help to develop critical and creative thinking as well as other generic skills.

Schools should consider the needs, interests and prior knowledge of students in choosing textbooks. Some suggestions for the selection of textbooks for BAFS are noted below:

- The coverage should develop the necessary knowledge, skills, and positive values and attitudes promoted in the curriculum.
- The content should be appropriate in breadth and depth.
- The sequence and organisation should promote understanding of the inter-relationships of different business areas.
- They should provide real cases and deal with current issues to relate theory to practice.
- They should include learning activities (e.g. simulated games and role-plays) to develop students' diverse learning skills.
- The learning tasks should promote "assessment for learning".
- They should recommend sources for useful materials and references.

Some websites which can help in choosing textbooks and other learning and teaching resources are:

- ***Recommended textbook list***  
(<http://www.emb.gov.hk/cd>)
- ***Notes on the selection of textbooks and other learning materials for use in schools***  
(<http://www.emb.gov.hk/index.aspx?langno=1&nodeid=2842>)
- ***Selection criteria based on guiding principles for quality textbooks***  
This is issued annually through a school circular.  
(<http://www.emb.gov.hk/UtilityManager/circular/upload/embc/EMBC04004E.pdf>)

Finally, teachers need to be cautioned that textbook alone will not be able to meet the requirements of the BAFS curriculum in view of its multi-faceted nature and emphasis on both theoretical concepts and practical application.

### 6.3.2 Reference materials

In addition to textbooks, students should be encouraged to read a wide range of reference materials (e.g. business journals, magazines, newspapers, company reports and research reports) from various sources to broaden their understanding of the business world and keep abreast of the latest developments in the world economy. For this purpose, students need to be provided with an environment which is conducive to “Reading to Learn”. Through effective reading of such reference materials, students can learn how to handle information from sources with different perspectives, analyse current business issues systematically and independently, and develop solutions to business problems in novel situations.

### 6.3.3 Senior secondary curriculum guide, curriculum and assessment guide and key learning area websites

The Senior Secondary Curriculum Guide, BAFS Curriculum and Assessment Guide, and related Key Learning Area websites provide details and examples on curriculum design and implementation of the BAFS curriculum. For example, teachers can refer to the curriculum aims, learning targets, learning objectives, pedagogies, learning outcomes and the like when developing their teaching schemes, lesson plans, learning and teaching materials.

### 6.3.4 The Internet and other technologies

The massive increase in the quantity of information available today has led to new approaches to learning and teaching. Teachers can act as facilitators of learning by helping students to search for information and put it into an intellectual context that turns it into knowledge.

The use of technology can promote learning by:

- providing audio-visual aids for understanding difficult concepts;
- providing access to information from a wide range of sources and processing large quantities of information;
- allowing students to work at their own pace, including the use of specially designed software such as accounting software;
- enhancing interaction among the students, resources and teachers;
- promoting collaboration between students and teachers; and
- facilitating the acquisition of information and the development of critical thinking.

### 6.3.5 Community resources

A spirit of partnership is necessary among the many parties who can contribute in different ways to helping our students learn effectively. Some examples of the specific roles of various relevant parties are suggested below.

### ***Community organisations and government departments***

Schools are encouraged to make use of the wide range of resources available within the community. Various community organisations, government departments, educational institutions, statutory bodies and non-profit making organisations may wish to support business education through providing educational programmes and resources for young people. Collaboration with such bodies can enrich students' learning by providing opportunities for them to engage in authentic business scenarios which make the learning of BAFS more interesting and meaningful.

### ***Parents, alumni and entrepreneurs***

Schools can also form strategic partnerships with entrepreneurs, parents and alumni who have relevant experience in various areas. They can contribute their expertise in business to support student learning by, for example, giving talks or seminars, or being mentors. Students will benefit from sharing experiences with these professionals.

The following examples illustrate how teachers can choose from a range of learning activities supported by outside parties to meet their students' varied needs.

#### **Examples of community learning activities**

Students may:

- enter a competition on financial planning. Through participating in the workshops provided by the organisers, and with the help of the professional financial planners, students can enhance their understanding in the area and learn to apply the skills of personal financial management in preparing an investment plan.
- participate in a job attachment scheme which will give them a better understanding of how the knowledge learned and the generic skills developed in studying BAFS are related to the workplace.
- attend workshops and seminars organised by statutory bodies and accounting bodies. Real-life cases may cover topics such as securities investment and the importance of maintaining a good personal credit record.
- join the school-company partnership programmes organised by non-profit-making organisations. Through a series of workshops, company visits or projects, students may come to appreciate success factors in the business world and be encouraged to plan their career paths.
- participate in setting up and running their own businesses under the school-company programme, to develop creativity and entrepreneurship. The organisers may provide training sessions, business advisors and platforms for students to gain business experience.
- learn from parents, alumni and entrepreneurs through experience-sharing with them by various means such as talks, seminars and mentorship.

## 6.4 Flexible Use of Learning and Teaching Resources

A wide range of resources which reflect current and authentic business situations can be used. These include television and radio programmes, business journals, business conference papers, web resources and other community resources. With real business problems and issues brought into the classroom, students can develop a wider understanding of them and see more clearly the relevance of what they are learning. To assist schools in managing curriculum change, EMB has provided them with a one-stop curriculum resources directory service at [www.emb.gov.hk/cr](http://www.emb.gov.hk/cr). The directory provides a central pool of ready-to-use learning and teaching resources and useful references developed by EMB and other parties.

Teachers can take the following points into account when deciding on the resources they will use:

- They should help students to achieve the learning targets.
- They should be authentic and related to daily life to arouse interest and cater for individual needs.
- Digital resources can enhance the learning and teaching process and promote the exchange of views as well as self-directed learning.
- Learning tasks should involve students in learning actively and help them to the construct knowledge.
- The materials should be appropriate for the linguistic and cognitive abilities of students and should promote the habit of reading.

The following example illustrates the use of a variety of learning and teaching resources for supporting student learning.

### An example on financial analysis

#### **Task: Designing an investment portfolio**

Your parents are going to retire after 15 years and they ask you to help them in their financial planning for investment. After going through the financial planning process, a comprehensive plan has been developed to meet their specific needs and goals. To balance between the risks and returns, the investment portfolio has included stock besides the other relatively low risk financial products. Regarding the stock investment, you are required to perform the financial analysis of any five blue chip companies to justify your investment choice.

- **Textbooks and reference books:** Teachers can use textbooks and reference books to provide students with the basic knowledge about financial statement analysis.
- **Web resources:** As the annual reports and information about listed companies are available in their websites, students learn how to apply the knowledge they have acquired in authentic situations by evaluating the financial performance of the companies.
- **Newspapers, journal articles, television and radio programmes:** Students should be encouraged to get up-to-date information from newspapers, journal articles, television and radio programmes to evaluate the current investment environment. Teachers may advise students to select the relevant information for completing the task and also to develop their learning skills through reading.
- **Simulated games organised by financial institutions:** Students' motivation will be enhanced when they learn through simulated situations as they apply their knowledge of financial statement analysis, make decisions on stock trading, and receive immediate feedback on their investment choices.

## 6.5 Resource Management

Given the wide range of learning and teaching resources available to schools, BAFS panel chairpersons and teachers need to work together to set up an effective system to manage the resources and share them among the teachers and students. Some suggested ways of achieving this are outlined below.

### ***School-based resource bank***

Teachers and students are encouraged to share learning and teaching resources through the Intranet or other means within the school. Schools may build up a school-based resource bank for this purpose.

### ***Network sharing and resource platforms***

Teachers can also make use of electronic tools such as Hong Kong Education City (HKedCity) which provides a useful e-platform to exchange information, learning and teaching resources, ideas and practices with teachers in other schools and outside agencies. This is also a powerful base for self-learning which promotes a culture of collegial sharing and continuing professional development.

### ***Teacher-librarians***

Teacher-librarians, as information specialists, should work closely with business teachers to co-ordinate curriculum-related resources and help to develop students' information literacy.

### ***Cross-curricular collaboration***

For effective resource management, schools are encouraged to promote a culture of collaboration among teachers of the TE KLA and also other KLAs. They should cooperate to organise cross-curricular activities which can serve as Other Learning Experiences for more than one subject. Some examples of such activities are given below.

### Examples of cross-curricular collaboration in FYK School

Different KLA co-ordinators/subject panel chairpersons meet regularly to explore common activities for supporting the learning and teaching of two or more subjects. The following are some of the activities proposed by the BAFS panel chairpersons, which may possibly complement or supplement the learning of other senior secondary subjects:

Activities	Related learning area in BAFS	Related senior secondary subjects
A guest lecture on e-commerce	– Marketing Management	– Information and Communication Technology
A debate on the motion: “Globalization has a positive impact on the business environment and business relationships.”	– Business Environment	– Liberal Studies – Economics
Visits to local small and medium enterprises in the tourism industry	– Introduction to Management	– Tourism and Hospitality Studies – Economics
An inter-school competition on a financial simulation game	– Basics of Personal Financial Management	– Economics
Job shadowing	– Introduction to Management	– Tourism and Hospitality Studies – Information and Communication Technology – Design and Applied Technology
A guest lecture by a professional accountant	– Introduction to Accounting – Financial Accounting – Cost Accounting	– Applied Learning courses

## Examples of Learning Activities

**Example A: Direct instruction complemented with questioning**

**Learning targets:** The questioning technique is designed to encourage students to participate actively and move beyond memorisation to higher levels of learning that involve clarification, expansion, generalisation and inference.

**Level:** S5

**Duration:** 2 hours

**Prior knowledge:** Fundamental accounting principles and conventions in the Compulsory Part

**Topic:** “Generally accepted accounting principles” in the accounting module

**Learning objective:** Students should be able to apply the accounting principles and concepts in accounting situations to provide quality accounting information.

### Lecturing with questioning techniques

Practical examples on the application of accounting concepts such as objectivity, money measurement, realisation and timeliness are given. Students are expected to ask thought-provoking questions for discussion in the class and generalise the definition of the concepts.

Although lecturing is sometimes criticised for being one-way communication (i.e. a teacher-centred approach), it can be modified and converted into a student-centred approach if a question-and-answer method is used to complement lectures.

## Learning tasks

### *Questioning approach*

#### **Task 1:**

- (a) Each pair of students is given three or four scenarios related to the application of the same concept (e.g. objectivity). Different accounting concepts are assigned to different groups for discussion.
- (b) Student A sets a question for student B to answer.
- (c) Student B challenges the rationale behind the question and student A has to comment on the answer.

#### **Task 2:**

- (d) Each group shares the questions raised and the answers suggested by them.
- (e) Each group provides a definition of the concept through the findings generated from their questions and answers.

#### **Task 3:**

Suggest more examples of the application of each concept.

The third learning task allows students to relate theory to practice so that deeper thinking and understanding of this topic is developed.

#### **Knowledge**

Students will grasp the essence of the application of accounting concepts in real cases through a questioning approach.

#### **Generic skills**

The task aims to stimulate students' critical thinking, creativity and communication skills in raising constructive questions and answers.

#### **Knowledge**

The second learning task aims to help students consolidate what they have learned in the previous activity. Teachers may use their findings to deepen the understanding of the concepts.

#### **Generic skills**

Higher-order thinking skills are required to generalise the definition of the concepts. This develops deductive reasoning skills.

### **Teaching as direct instruction – roles of teachers**

- To provide a frame for students to generate meaningful questions
- To monitor the discussion closely and provide assistance when necessary
- To give feedback and guide students to think about the rationale behind the questions asked and what the implications are

### **Learning as a “product” – roles of students**

- To engage actively in the discussion and report the results
- To focus on the questions and present a logical and in-depth analysis
- To challenge other students' ideas with evidence

**Example B: Group activities**

**Learning targets:** The group activities provide opportunities for students to share and compare views, ideas and knowledge with peers and motivate them to learn through the application of concepts in the school context.

**Level:** S5 or S6

**Duration:** In-class: two hours; outside class: five hours

**Prior knowledge:**

- Business Environment and Introduction to Management in the Compulsory Part
- Basic cost classification and concepts in the accounting module

**Topic:** Cost-volume-profit analysis

**Grouping:** Students form groups of five to complete the following tasks.

**Learning objective:** Students should be able to conduct cost-volume-profit analysis to assess the effects of changes in cost, selling price and units sold on the breakeven point and target profit.

Based on students' learning needs, teachers may refer to para. 4.4.3 on grouping strategies to assign appropriate members to the groups.

**School carnival for charity fund-raising**

The school is planning to organise a school carnival for charity fund-raising. The business club is responsible for producing a product such as T-shirts, candies, etc. within a budget of \$1,500 to be sold at the carnival. As members of the club, you have to contribute to the following activities.

**Values and attitudes**

This can be conducted as BAFS activities or community services. Besides developing knowledge and skills, it also aims to nurture students to be caring members of society and enhance their personal commitment to it.

**Learning tasks**

**Income statement forecast**

**Task 1:**

- (a) Conduct a small-scale market survey to help identify the product(s) to be sold at the carnival.
- (b) Based on the survey results, identify the cost of product(s) in terms of direct and indirect costs, fixed and variable costs, etc.
- (c) Decide on the expected selling price and target profit, and then prepare an income statement forecast, with reasons to support it.
- (d) Present your findings to the class.

**Knowledge**

This task enables students to integrate the knowledge developed in the Compulsory Part and the accounting module to make informed decisions. It enhances students' understanding of how to apply concepts and skills from inter-related areas of business in authentic contexts.

**Generic skills**

The group work develops students' ability to work in a team situation and assume a leadership role. It aims to enhance communication, team-building and interpersonal skills through teamwork.

### ***Cost-volume-profit analysis***

#### **Task 2:**

- (e) Your competitor, the home economics club, has decided to sell similar products at a lower price at the carnival. How will you revise your marketing strategies in response to the competition?
- (f) Conduct a cost-volume-profit analysis based on your new marketing strategies. If you have not changed your strategy (i.e. the target profit and costs are unchanged), what will be the effects of changes in the unit price and units sold?

#### **Knowledge**

The second learning task aims to demonstrate how a dynamic environment influences planning and decision-making. Also, it develops the ability to make use of accounting information for tackling business problems.

#### **Generic skills**

Problem-solving skills will be developed as students are expected to suggest solutions in response to market changes and examine their effects on business.

### **Teaching as enquiry – roles of teachers**

- To provide a learning environment for students to relate knowledge to a real-life situation
- To encourage students to think from a wider perspective to generate business solutions
- To encourage students to develop team-building, communication and interpersonal skills
- To give feedback on the learning tasks

### **Learning as a ‘process’ – roles of students**

- To participate actively in the activities and be open-minded in exchanging views with peers
- To synthesise the knowledge they have gained in the Compulsory and Elective Parts
- To assume a leadership role and get consensus on designing and revising the marketing strategies

**Example C: Theme-based learning**

**Learning targets:** Theme-based learning helps students to organise and integrate the learning elements of entrepreneurship, and business ethics and social responsibility, around a theme.

**Level:** S4

**Duration:** In-class: six hours; outside class: four hours

**Prior knowledge:** Forms of business ownership

**Topics covered:** The Hong Kong business environment, business ethics and social responsibility, entrepreneurship and the management of small and medium enterprises in the Compulsory Part

**Learning objectives:** Students should be able to understand the characteristics of entrepreneurship and its contribution to economic development, and develop their awareness of ethical business practices.

**Theme:**

**Hong Kong thrives on entrepreneurship with social responsibility**

To maintain Hong Kong as one of the most competitive international business centres in the 21st century, we need energetic, creative, socially responsible and risk-taking human beings. These kinds of entrepreneurial attributes are regarded as the economic driving force for a knowledge-based economy.

The demise of Enron triggered a global debate on entrepreneurs' ethical and socially responsible leadership. Malpractice in organisations affects the benefits and rights of different interested parties. In today's business world, we expect entrepreneurs to comply with legal requirements, uphold moral standards in leadership, and maintain an ethical organisational culture. These attributes are the basis of good corporate governance and proper ethical practices. Entrepreneurs and corporate executives need to make their business decisions with respect to not only profit but also social responsibility.

**Learning tasks**

***Am I a potential entrepreneur?***

**Task 1:** \_\_\_\_\_

(a) Identify and classify different success factors for a small business by a site visit and observation.

(b) Discuss and justify the critical success factors for setting up and running a small business.

**Task 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

(a) Find different definitions of entrepreneurship and the characteristics of entrepreneurs from various sources.

(b) Generalise the definition of entrepreneurship and compile a list of the key characteristics of an entrepreneur.

(c) Compare entrepreneurs and managers with respect to their roles in business operations.

**Task 3:** \_\_\_\_\_

Complete an online self-assessment of your entrepreneurial potential and present the results in class.

**Knowledge**  
The first two learning tasks aim at introducing the entrepreneurial spirit. Students are expected to generate an understanding of the key attributes and skills of entrepreneurs and their entrepreneurial spirit.

**Generic skills**  
Analytical skills will be developed through analysing the critical success factors.

**Knowledge**  
The third learning task aims to help students reflect on what they have learned in the previous activities. Teachers may use their findings to reinforce the understanding established in the previous two tasks.

**Generic skills**  
In the process, students can develop their IT skills in organising and presenting the information. They will also understand their own strengths and areas for improvement which helps to develop their entrepreneurial attributes.

***Do we need entrepreneurs in Hong Kong?***

**Task 1:** \_\_\_\_\_

By reading economic reports and business journals, explain why entrepreneurial activities are so important to a country's economic growth.

**Task 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

Propose recommendations for the development of an entrepreneurial culture in Hong Kong for economic growth and sustainability.

**Knowledge**  
The first task aims to help students visualise the importance of entrepreneurship in business development and economic growth.

**Generic skills**  
Skills in IT applications, research and written communication will be developed through this learning process.

**Generic skills**  
The second task expects students to make use of the information collected in Task 1 and make suggestions for improving economic growth in Hong Kong. The activity aims to develop students' creativity and critical thinking skills in tackling business problems.

### *What's wrong with our business world?*

#### **Task 1:**

- (a) Identify some local and international unethical business practices.
- (b) Discuss the causes and negative impact of such practices.
- (c) Distinguish between illegal and unethical business practices, with examples.

#### **Knowledge**

Task 1 aims to trigger students' awareness of unethical business practices. Students will learn how to identify and differentiate illegal and unethical business practices.

#### **Generic skills**

Communication skills and creativity will be developed as students need to draw on and share different views on the causes and impact of malpractice with peers.

#### **Values and attitudes**

Through the learning process, students can recognise the negative impact of illegal and unethical practices on society, which can nurture positive values and attitudes towards business ethics and social responsibilities.

### *How to become a good corporate citizen*

#### **Task 1:**

- (a) Explain the concept of business ethics.
- (b) Discuss the conflict of interest faced by businesses when making their decisions.
- (c) Identify any three local/international good practices concerning social responsibility.
- (d) Demonstrate how the entrepreneurs and corporate executives dealt with business dilemmas while still upholding ethical standards in (c) above.

#### **Knowledge**

This task aims to help students understand the importance of business ethics and relate it to corporate social responsibilities.

#### **Generic skills**

Students are expected to develop their higher-order thinking skills as they have to criticise business decisions made by entrepreneurs and corporate executives with respect to the benefits and interests of various types of stakeholders.

#### **Values and attitudes**

Students are expected to develop positive values and attitudes when dealing with business dilemmas and to become socially responsible members of society.

### **Extended learning activities**

- Apart from classroom activities, teachers can arrange business talks by entrepreneurs and SME visits to enable students to understand authentic business situations in an interactive and interesting way. Teachers can further develop students' collaborative learning by encouraging them to participate in business projects and competitions.
- Schools may invite speakers from statutory bodies and professional organisations – such as HKICPA (Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants), SFC (Securities and Futures Commission), ICAC (Independent Commission Against Corruption) and the Consumer Council – to deliver talks or conduct forums on business ethics and corporate governance for students.

### **Teaching as enquiry – roles of teachers:**

- To provide feedback and guide students to bring together various perspectives in making ethical decisions
- To stimulate students' critical thinking in discussing issues from different angles

### **Learning as a 'process' – roles of students:**

- To participate actively in discussion and group work to share and compare views, ideas, and knowledge with peers
- To learn how to collect, analyse and acquire updated knowledge independently
- To generate ideas and opinions and generalise the concepts from their own findings

**Example D: Project-based learning**

**Learning targets:** The project aims to engage students in real-life experience and learn how to relate their learning to the real business world. It develops students' skills in integrating different areas of knowledge to solve problems.

**Level:** S5–6

**Duration:** In-class: two hours; outside class: 10–15 hours

**Prior knowledge:** Business Environment, Introduction to Management and Introduction to Accounting in the Compulsory Part

**Learning objectives:** Students should be able to develop knowledge and understanding of the intertwined relationships of business areas and the dynamic environment of business.

**Grouping:** Students can form groups of five to complete the project.

Based on students' learning needs, teachers may refer to section 4.4.3 on grouping strategies to assign appropriate members to the groups.

**Requirements:** Students are expected to:

- (a) integrate the knowledge developed in the Compulsory and Elective Parts to complete the following tasks;
- (b) conduct in-depth studies on the area of their chosen Elective module in Task 2.

- Accounting module: evaluation of the financial performance of the company
- Business management module: evaluation of the management excellence of the company

**Project: Investment game**  
Suppose you have HK\$500,000 to invest in the Hong Kong stock market. You are required to invest in one of the following five blue chip companies – A, B, C, D and E – or decide not to make any investment if an unfavourable investment environment is anticipated. You are required to submit a proposal and justify your choice.

**Learning tasks**

**Values and attitudes**  
In addition to acquiring knowledge on personal finance, this activity increases students' awareness of the relationship between risks and returns to develop prudent values and attitudes towards personal finance.

**Analysis of the business environment**

**Task 1:**

- (a) Study the related information on the five listed companies.
- (b) Select a listed company the business of which has potential to grow in the future.
- (c) Conduct a business environment analysis to justify your choice from different perspectives.

**Knowledge**  
This learning task aims at developing students' understanding of how business and investment decisions are affected by the dynamic business environment.

**Generic skills**  
This activity enhances students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills in evaluating business issues.

### ***Evaluation of the financial performance of the company***

#### **Task 2:**

- (a) Read the annual reports of the listed company you have chosen.
- (b) Read the relevant chapters such as “management discussion and analysis” and “financial highlights”, focusing on the discussion of the company’s financial performance.
- (c) Evaluate the performance of the company based on a financial analysis.

#### **Knowledge**

This learning task aims at developing students’ understanding of the importance of financial reporting and the interpretation of accounting ratios.

#### **Generic skills**

This activity develops students’ ability to apply critical thinking skills in evaluating financial performance.

### ***Evaluation of the quality of management in the company***

#### **Task 3:**

- (a) Evaluate the contribution of management to business from professional perspectives.
- (b) Search for information from newspapers, business journals, websites, etc. to investigate from various perspectives how the management of the company evaluated the business environment in order to identify opportunities for business development.
- (c) Describe the contribution of the management skills of the company to its organisational performance.

#### **Knowledge**

This learning task helps students to analyse how the management reacts to the dynamic business environment in formulating strategic plans.

#### **Generic skills**

This activity develops skills in collecting and processing relevant business information and critical thinking skills in analysing management performance.

### ***Presentation of the proposal***

#### **Task 4:**

- (a) Justify your investment choice from consolidating the analyses of the different areas studied. If an unfavourable investment environment is predicted and you decide not to make any investment, you should justify your decision.
- (b) Present your arguments and submit your proposal.

#### **Knowledge**

It aims to develop students’ holistic understanding of business and help them to consider various perspectives in making decisions.

#### **Generic skills**

This learning task helps students to develop higher-order thinking skills as they need to synthesise the findings to make reasoned decisions. Their communication and interpersonal skills are also strengthened through collaborating with group members. Students are expected to apply their IT skills to process and present the information.

### ***Evaluation of the investment choice***

#### **Task 5:**

- (a) Compare the share price after six months with the price on the date you made your investment.
- (b) Analyse the investment results and compare them with your expectations.

#### **Values and attitudes**

It aims to develop students’ positive values and attitudes towards investment. Students have to make informed decisions and be aware of the investment risks.

### ***Reflective journal***

#### **Task 6:**

Write about your thoughts on the project with the help of the following questions.

- (a) What have you learned from the activity?
- (b) Give examples of your contributions to the activity.
- (c) What obstacles have you faced?
- (d) What strategies did you use in learning?
- (e) Give examples of areas in which you could improve.

#### **Values and attitudes**

This learning task helps students to develop an awareness of and an interest in constructing knowledge on their own. It enables them to become reflective and self-managed learners.

#### **Teaching as “co-construction” – roles of teachers:**

- To stimulate students’ thinking and guide them to collect and analyse relevant information through scaffolding approach
- To encourage students to ask questions instead of giving direct answers
- To encourage active participation
- To give feedback and suggest areas for improvement
- To encourage students to reflect freely with less structured guidelines

#### **Learning as “co-construction” – roles of students:**

- To play an active role in the learning process by raising questions
- To be aware of what and how to learn
- To commit in the learning process and have control over their own learning
- To interact with the teachers and the group members
- To review and evaluate their learning performance to plan future learning

**Example E: Embedding the decision-making process in a case study**

**Learning targets:** This example illustrates how to guide students going through the decision-making process to conduct a preliminary investigation of a business case.

**Level:** S4

**Duration:** 2 hours

**Prior knowledge:** Business Environment and Introduction to Management in the Compulsory Part

**Learning objectives:** Students should be able to:

- (a) understand internal and external factors affecting business decisions; and
- (b) develop decision-making skills in analysing a business problem.

<b>Learning task</b>	
<p>Students are given a real business case by the teacher. They are formed into groups and are required to go through the decision-making process (details are given in section 4.3) to examine the issue.</p> <p><b>Step I: Define the business problem</b></p> <p>In the following steps, teachers may provide guided questions to lead students to analyse the case and make reasoned decisions.</p> <p><b>Step II: List the critical factors to be considered</b></p> <p>Questions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What are the economic factors the company should consider?</li><li>• What are the social factors the company should consider?</li><li>• What are the characteristics of consumer behaviours?</li><li>• Is the cost of transportation of the stock reasonable?</li><li>• Do we face competition in the market?</li><li>• What are the legal requirements for setting up a boutique in these two places, and how do they affect the management structure of an international company?</li></ul>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"><p>The problem is to decide whether an international babies' clothing company should set up its first boutique in Hong Kong or in Shanghai.</p></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"><p><b>Knowledge</b> This step enables students to recall and apply the knowledge developed in the Hong Kong Business Environment and the Introduction to Management.</p><p><b>Generic skills</b> Students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills can be stimulated.</p></div>

**Step III: Identify and analyse the information needed to solve the problem**

(Students may use the information provided in the case and also their understanding of the business environment in Hong Kong and Shanghai to analyse the issue.)

Questions such as:

- What information do we need in order to identify the critical factors?
- How should we analyse the information revealed in the case?

**Step IV: Generate possible alternatives**

Question such as:

- Having listed the factors to be considered, what are the priorities?

**Step V–VI: Evaluate each alternative and make a reasoned decision**

Questions such as:

- What are the pros and cons, risks involved and the expected outcomes in each of the alternatives?
- Why have you made this decision?

**Step VII: Evaluate the effectiveness of the decision**

**Generic skills**

These steps help students to develop higher-order thinking skills as they need to analyse the findings, generate and evaluate the possible alternatives, and make reasoned decisions.

Students cannot evaluate the effectiveness of the decision as they are not actually involved in the implementation process. Teachers should provide students with the final management reports on this problem, and then students can compare their own decisions with professional management views. In this process, students can reflect on how and why decisions were made in order to enhance their decision-making skills.

**Teaching as enquiry – roles of teachers**

- To guide students and ensure the discussion is aligned with the learning objectives
- To provide assistance such as giving cues, organising the information presented by the students and leading students forward to the next steps
- To provide feedback and stimulate students' critical thinking in discussing issues from different angles

**Learning as a 'process' – roles of students**

- To participate actively in discussion and group work to share and compare views, ideas and knowledge with peers
- To learn how to justify their viewpoints with evidence, and critically analyse the problem from different viewpoints before making a reasoned decision.

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## Glossary

<b><u>Term</u></b>	<b><u>Description</u></b>
<b>Applied Learning (ApL, formerly known as Career-oriented Studies)</b>	Applied Learning (ApL, formerly known as Career-oriented Studies) is an essential component of the senior secondary curriculum. ApL uses broad professional and vocational fields as the learning platform, developing students' foundation skills, thinking skills, people skills, values and attitudes and career-related competencies, to prepare them for further studies and / or for work as well as lifelong learning. ApL courses complement 24 senior secondary subjects, diversifying the senior secondary curriculum.
<b>Assessment objectives</b>	The outcomes of the curriculum to be assessed in the public assessments.
<b>Co-construction</b>	Different from the direct instruction and construction approaches to learning and teaching, the co-construction approach emphasises the class as a community of learners who contribute collectively to the creation of knowledge and the building of criteria for judging such knowledge.
<b>Core subjects</b>	Subjects recommended to all students to take at senior secondary level: Chinese Language, English Language, Mathematics and Liberal Studies
<b>Curriculum and Assessment (C&amp;A) Guide</b>	A guide prepared by the CDC-HKEAA Committee. It embraces curriculum aims/ objectives/ contents and learning outcomes, and assessment guidelines.
<b>Curriculum Interface</b>	Curriculum interface refers to the interface between the different key stages/educational stages of the school curriculum (including individual subjects), e.g. the interface between Kindergarten and Primary; Primary and Secondary; and Junior Secondary and Senior Secondary. The Hong Kong school curriculum, made up of eight key learning areas (under which specific subjects are categorised), provides a coherent learning framework to enhance students' capabilities for whole-person development through engaging them in the five essential learning experiences and helping them develop the nine generic skills as well as positive values and attitudes. Thus when students move on to senior secondary education, they will already have developed the basic knowledge and skills that the study of various subjects requires. When designing the learning and teaching content and strategies, teachers should build on the knowledge and learning experiences students have gained in the previous key stages.

<b><u>Term</u></b>	<b><u>Description</u></b>
<b>Elective subjects</b>	A total of 20 subjects in the proposed new system from which students may choose according to their interests, abilities and aptitudes.
<b>Generic skills</b>	Generic skills are skills, abilities and attributes which are fundamental in helping students to acquire, construct and apply knowledge. They are developed through the learning and teaching that take place in the different subjects or key learning areas, and are transferable to different learning situations. Nine types of generic skills are identified in the Hong Kong school curriculum, i.e. collaboration skills, communication skills, creativity, critical thinking skills, information technology skills, numeracy skills, problem solving skills, self-management skills and study skills.
<b>Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE)</b>	The qualification to be awarded to students after completing the three-year senior secondary curriculum and taking the public assessment.
<b>Internal assessment</b>	This refers to the assessment activities that are conducted regularly in school to assess students' performance in learning. Internal assessment is an inseparable part of the learning and teaching process, and it aims to make learning more effective. With the information that internal assessment provides, teachers will be able to understand students' progress in learning, provide them with appropriate feedback and make any adjustments to the learning objectives and teaching strategies they deem necessary.
<b>Key Learning Areas (KLA)</b>	Organisation of the school curriculum structured around fundamental concepts of major knowledge domains. It aims at providing a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum for all students in the essential learning experiences. The Hong Kong curriculum has eight KLAs, namely, Chinese Language Education, English Language Education, Mathematics Education, Personal, Social and Humanities Education, Science Education, Technology Education, Arts Education and Physical Education.
<b>Knowledge construction</b>	This refers to the process of learning in which learners are involved not only in acquiring new knowledge, but also in actively relating it to their prior knowledge and experience so as to create and form their own knowledge.
<b>Learning community</b>	A learning community refers to a group of people who have shared values and goals, and who work closely together to generate knowledge and create new ways of learning through active participation, collaboration and reflection. Such a learning community may involve not only students and teachers, but also parents and other parties in the community.

<b><u>Term</u></b>	<b><u>Description</u></b>
<b>Learning differences</b>	This refers to the gaps in learning that exist in the learning process. Catering for learning differences does not mean rigidly reducing the distance between the learners in terms of progress and development but making full use of their different talents as invaluable resources to facilitate learning and teaching. To cater to learners' varied needs and abilities, it is important that flexibility be built into the learning and teaching process to help them recognise their unique talents and to provide ample opportunities to encourage them to fulfil their potential and strive for achievement.
<b>Learning outcomes</b>	Learning outcomes refer to what learners should be able to do by the end of a particular key stage of learning. Learning outcomes are developed based on the learning targets and objectives of the curriculum for the purpose of evaluating learning effectiveness. Learning outcomes also describe the levels of performance that learners should attain after completing a particular key stage of learning and serve as a tool for promoting learning and teaching.
<b>Learning targets and learning objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning targets set out broadly the knowledge/concepts, skills, values and attitudes that students need to learn and develop.</li> <li>• Learning objectives define specifically what students should know, value and be able to do in each strand of the subject in accordance with the broad subject targets at each key stage of schooling. They are to be used by teachers as a source list for curriculum, lesson and activity planning.</li> </ul>
<b>Level descriptors</b>	A set of written descriptions that describes what the typical candidates performing a certain level is able to do in public assessments.
<b>Other learning experiences</b>	For whole person development of students, 'Other Learning Experiences' (OLE) is one of the three components that complement the examination subjects and Applied Learning (formerly named as Career-oriented Studies) under the senior secondary curriculum. It includes Moral and Civic Education, Aesthetics Development, Physical Development, Community Service and Career-related Experiences.
<b>Public assessment</b>	The associated assessment and examination system for the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education.

<b><u>Term</u></b>	<b><u>Description</u></b>
<b>SBA moderation mechanism</b>	The mechanism adopted by HKEAA to adjust SBA marks submitted by schools to iron out possible difference across schools in marking standards and without affecting the rank order determined by the school.
<b>School-based Assessment (SBA)</b>	Assessments administered in schools as part of the teaching and learning process, with students being assessed by their subject teachers. Marks awarded will count towards students' public assessment results.
<b>School-based curriculum</b>	Schools and teachers are encouraged to adapt the central curriculum to develop their school-based curriculum to help their students achieve the subject targets and overall aims of education. Measures may include readjusting the learning targets, varying the organisation of contents, adding optional studies and adapting learning, teaching and assessment strategies. A school-based curriculum, hence, is the outcome of a balance between official recommendations and the autonomy of the schools and teachers.
<b>Standards-referenced Reporting</b>	Candidates' performance in public assessment is reported in terms of levels of performance matched against a set of standards.
<b>Student learning profile</b>	It is to provide supplementary information on the secondary school leavers' participation and specialties during senior secondary years, in addition to their academic performance as reported in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education, including the assessment results for Applied Learning courses, thus giving a fuller picture of the student's whole person development.
<b>Values &amp; attitudes</b>	Values constitute the foundation of the attitudes and beliefs that influence one's behaviour and way of life. They help form principles underlying human conduct and critical judgment, and are qualities that learners should develop. Some examples of values are rights and responsibilities, commitment, honesty and national identity. Closely associated with values are attitudes. The latter supports motivation and cognitive functioning, and affects one's way of reacting to events or situations. Since both values and attitudes significantly affect the way a student learns, they form an important part of the school curriculum.

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(From December 2003)

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