The Requirements of Basic Academic Attainments
for Senior Secondary English
(*First Language)
*English being used as the primary language of instruction

2017

I.　　Basic rationale

Macao is unique for her cultural diversity and is becoming increasingly globalized. English serves as a bridge for effective communication with the world. It has a dominant role in many sectors like business, education, tourism, etc. It is essential to nurture new generations of students with adequate mastery of the English language so that they can meet the challenges of advancing Macao's social and economic development further.

On top of the functional purposes, English also serves as a medium for personal development, both intellectual and aesthetic, as a large proportion of the world's sources of information and language arts is in English. It is a tool that facilitates life-long learning, critical and creative thinking, and harmonious coexistence with others.

Senior secondary English curriculum with English as the primary language of instruction has the additional mission of helping students develop adequate English communication skills that will enhance their learning effectiveness in studying subjects in the content areas through the medium of English. More importantly, the English curriculum will help students increase their motivation to learn English, and cultivate their self-confidence to communicate in English.

On these grounds, the Requirements of Basic Academic Attainments for Senior Secondary English (First Language) should comply with the following fundamental principles:

(1) Catering for individual differences in English proficiency between students in

senior secondary grade levels

At this stage, it is likely that students will fall into a wider range of achievement levels in terms of their English proficiency, and these students may have varied backgrounds in terms of English language learning. The senior secondary English curriculum should take this into account and embrace the need for catering for individual differences in learner motivation and proficiency in English.

At the same time, students in senior secondary grades are more able to manage their own learning. This is the time to introduce students to various language development strategies.

(2) Consideration of students' needs for English for further studies and in the workplace

Students in senior secondary education will begin to plan for their future. While some of them may aspire to tertiary studies, others may be looking to start employment after finishing secondary education. The senior secondary English curriculum, while it should be intrinsically and educationally rigorous, should also attend to students' need for English in terms of further studies and employment.

(3) Attention to the varied functions of English in present-day society

English is important to students for the purpose of further studies and employment. However, on top of the instrumental purposes, English is also a medium through which students can communicate with other peoples, obtain knowledge about the world, and share experiences with others. The senior secondary English curriculum should also present English as a medium for communication, for obtaining knowledge about the world, and for exchanging personal experiences. As such, attention should be paid to the cognitive and emotional needs of senior secondary students in curriculum planning and day-to-day teaching.

(4) Supporting content-area teaching that is delivered through English as the medium of instruction

At schools where English is used as the primary medium of instruction, the school-based English Language curriculum, on top of its own objectives, can also assist students in learning subjects in the content area through English more effectively.

II.   Curriculum goals

(1) Extend and enrich students' knowledge, skills, abilities, emotions, attitudes and values in English Language learning;

(2) Provide students with a foundation in English that will help prepare them for English for further studies or employment;

(3) On top of delivering quality teaching, provide students with training in language development strategies, so that each student can reach his/her full potential in learning English;

(4) Recognise differences between senior secondary students in terms of their ability and proficiency in English and help each student develop his/her full potential in English learning;

(5) Present English language as a medium for communication, obtaining knowledge, and exchanging experiences, on top of teaching students the linguistic components of the language (e.g., vocabulary, grammar items);

(6) Further strengthen students' ability to use English as a medium of learning for subjects in the content area;

(7) Introduce students to literary texts to nurture their language appreciation skills;

(8) Help students to engage personally with a variety of texts and draw connections between self, texts and the world in order to develop intellectual, emotional, socio-cultural and global awareness;

(9) Enable students to articulate their personal and analytical response to informational and literary texts.

III. The requirements of basic academic attainments in different domains

Explanation of coding:

(1) The capital English letters represent the requirements of basic academic attainments in different learning domains; A - Listening, B - Speaking, C - Reading, D – Writing;

(2) The number following the English letter signifies the serial number of learning categories in the learning domains.

Learning domain A: Listening

A-1   Understand degrees of certainty expressed orally through a range of language resources;

A-2   Understand feelings, attitudes and opinions of speakers or interlocutors from grammar and vocabulary as well as from phonology;

A-3   Understand more formal language commonly used in a range of school subjects;

A-4   Take down notes on the main points and supporting details of a talk;

A-5   Identify the purposes, either explicit or implicit, of a spoken text;

A-6   Follow detailed spoken instructions on more complex matters;

A-7   Follow the reasoning of an oral argument or exposition;

A-8   Distinguish between fact and opinion when listening;

A-9   Recognise common roles and relationships between interlocutors when listening;

A-10   Recognise the connections between ideas in spoken texts from a range of cohesive devices, and the logical relationships between the ideas themselves;

A-11   Make connections between spoken discourse and a range of other sources of information including written texts;

A-12   Follow the sequence of events in a spoken recount and recognise their significance;

A-13   Make connections between everyday language and more formal language used to refer to the same phenomenon;

A-14   Begin to understand playful use of language;

A-15   Follow an oral explanation of a more complex process or phenomenon, using visual support provided where necessary;

A-16   Process spoken discourse on less familiar, although not necessarily technical, topics at a pace adequate for sustaining a dialogue;

A-17   Understand speakers who use a range of accents and varieties of English;

A-18   Use information gained from spoken discourse for new purposes and in different texts and formats;

A-19   Make decisions about how to listen and respond to listening depending on the text and its purpose, and also for different elements of one text.

Learning domain B: Speaking

B-1   Pronounce a monosyllabic or multisyllabic new word from its spelling with reasonable accuracy and proper word stress;

B-2   Use a wider range of vocabulary and language patterns in speaking for intended effect;

B-3   Demonstrate a higher level of pronunciation accuracy;

B-4   Use intonation to support more effective communication and convey

B-5 Employ more complex and varied sentence structures, especially in prepared presentations;

B-6 Recount personal experiences in a well-organized manner;

B-7 Express personal feelings and opinions effectively and appropriately;

B-8 Speak with a fairly high degree of fluency without hesitations, especially in prepared presentations;

B-9 Organise and deliver a short presentation on a more complex topic with ideas logically sequenced;

B-10 Use a wider range of cohesive devices proficiently when presenting information, ideas, etc.;

B-11 Highlight important points during a presentation using a variety of techniques;

B-12 Use formal and informal vocabulary appropriate to the topic and context;

B-13 Give clear instructions on a more complex process in daily life;

B-14 Use a wider range of strategies proficiently to develop main ideas;

B-15 Use a wider range of communication strategies, both verbal and non-verbal, when taking part in a discussion;

B-16 Play an appropriate and effective role in a group interaction;

B-17 Speak with a fairly high degree of grammatical accuracy;

B-18 Provide elaboration and clarification during or after a presentation, when requested;

B-19 Show respect for, and understanding of, diverse and opposing opinions during a discussion;

B-20 Self-correct or re-phrase according to interlocutor's reaction;

B-21 Ask for clarification on ideas not fully grasped while following a presentation on concrete subject-matter;

B-22 Provide clear explanation on an event, a procedure, a phenomenon, etc. on an academic topic.

Learning domain C: Reading

C-1 Accumulate new vocabulary from reading and organize them with proper use of vocabulary building skills;

C-2 Infer the meaning of new words by making use of the co-text and context, background knowledge, and common word affixes;

C-3 Understand a word's denotative and connotative meaning and discuss the

writer's reasons for selecting the word;

C-4 Understand how punctuation organizes meaning in a written text and explain how the punctuation affects the reader's interpretation of it;

C-5 Read a text at an appropriate pace with accuracy and fluency to achieve the purpose of reading;

C-6 Read intensively and extensively a wide range of texts for various purposes;

C-7 Construct meaning and locate information from a wide range of information graphics;

C-8 Gather, comprehend, evaluate and use relevant information effectively, efficiently and ethically;

C-9 Recognize a variety of complex text types and identify their purpose, structure and associated language features;

C-10 Make predictions about the content and development of a complex text using prior knowledge, contextual clues, and features of text;

C-11 Understand connections between ideas by identifying cohesive devices such as articles, pronouns, synonyms and connectors;

C-12 Make effective use of an English-English dictionary for advanced learners to assist reading and understanding how new words are used in texts;

C-13 Take notes on the main points of a written text proficiently;

C-14 Make connections between a text and personal experiences or real life;

C-15 Give personal response to a text and interact with others around a text after reading;

C-16 Make inferences and draw conclusions by reading between the lines and look carefully at the facts and information supplied and implied;

C-17 Ask and answer questions, and re-read, to help identify, determine or clarify the main ideas and key details of a text;

C-18 Determine and explain an author's point of view, intention, attitudes and feelings with words and details used within the writing;

C-19 Demonstrate understanding of how a writer's style can impact readers' interpretation of a text in terms of its purpose, context and culture;

C-20 Demonstrate understanding of complex texts through a variety of verbal and graphic presentations;

C-21 Recognize common literary devices and explain the deeper meaning conveyed by the author and the impact made on the readers;

C-22 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information for deeper understanding.

Learning domain D: Writing

D-1 Convey intended meaning using a range of vocabulary, language structures, and linguistic devices accurately and appropriately;

D-2 Include well-developed content and relevant supporting details in writing;

D-3 Use a wide range of techniques to create structured and coherent texts;

D-4 Write texts using appropriate tone, style and register, as well as the salient features of the target genres;

D-5 Write a variety of texts for different purposes, contexts and audiences;

D-6 Research writing topics independently and develop ideas from different sources into an adequate overall plan before writing;

D-7 Demonstrate ability to revise, edit and proofread texts with independence;

D-8 Respond critically to peers' drafts through questions, suggestions and comments;

D-9 Act on teacher feedback and use it to improve own writing;

D-10 Avoid plagiarism by paraphrasing ideas from source texts effectively and accurately;

D-11 Use relevant resources, including dictionaries, thesauruses and online resources, to enhance own writing;

D-12 Indicate properly, where necessary, the sources of others' ideas or materials made use of in own writing;

D-13 Demonstrate ability to work collaboratively with peers at different stages of the writing process, such as brainstorming, outlining, drafting and revising;

D-14 Demonstrate creativity, originality and critical thinking in writing;

D-15 Write with increasing fluency, confidence and motivation.