

Excellence Indicators for Teaching Practices in Special Educational Needs

Foreword

The *Excellence Indicators for Teaching Practices in Special Educational Needs* are worked out as a reference for the assessment of nominations considered by the Assessment Panel on Special Educational Needs of the Chief Executive's Award for Teaching Excellence (ATE) (2007-2008).

When drafting the indicators, references have been made to various sources. Among the major references are *Towards a Learning Profession: The Teacher Competencies Framework and the Continuing Professional Development of Teachers* (Advisory Committee on Teacher Education and Qualifications, 2003), *Performance Indicators for Hong Kong Schools* (Education Department, Quality Assurance Division, 2002) and various curriculum guides for students with special educational needs issued by the Curriculum Development Council. Moreover, considerations have been given to the complex nature of teachers' work and the indicators have been structured to reflect the diverse patterns of teachers' competencies.

For this Award, teaching excellence means teaching practices that are:

- (a) **innovative with proven effectiveness** in arousing students' **motivation in the Key Learning Areas/subjects** and/or in helping students to **achieve the desired learning outcomes**; or
creatively adapted from exemplary teaching practices from elsewhere to **suit the local (i.e. school-based and/or student-based) context** with proven effectiveness in enhancing students' learning outcomes;
- (b) based on a coherent conceptual framework, showing reflective practices;
- (c) inspiring and can be shared with colleagues to improve the quality of education; and

- (d) *instrumental in achieving the learning targets* of Special Educational Needs, i.e. helping students with special educational needs to develop their potential to the fullest as well as nurturing their personal development according to their individual differences.

The indicators are categorised into four domains, namely, (1) Professional Competence, (2) Student Development, (3) Professionalism and Commitment to the Community, and (4) School Development. The focus of the first two domains is on recognising teaching excellence and that of the other two domains is on fostering professional development among teachers. As the ATE does not aim to identify all-round teachers, the indicators should be regarded as examples of evidence, but not a rigid model, of excellence in *teaching students with Special Educational Needs*.

Apart from being an assessment instrument for the ATE, the indicators also highlight the qualities of accomplished teachers of *Special Educational Needs*. We hope that this will help pursue excellence in the teaching profession.

All awardees are expected to possess the fundamental professional qualities of a teacher such as professionalism, as well as love and care for students. Recognising that teaching practices cannot be separated into discrete areas, we will adopt a holistic approach, using professional knowledge and judgment when assessing the nominations. However, as the focus of the ATE is on Learning and Teaching, we are looking for exemplary and effective teaching practices that are inspiring and can be shared.

For group nominations, effective team work which entails the contribution of each group member, the interactions among group members, and how the combined efforts of the group have contributed to the described outcomes will also be assessed.

**Assessment Panel on Special Educational Needs
Chief Executive's Award for Teaching Excellence (2007-2008)
November 2007**

Excellence Indicators for Teaching Practices in Special Educational Needs

1. Professional Competence Domain

Area	Performance Indicator	Evidence of Excellence
Curriculum	1.1 Curriculum Planning & Organisation	<p>The teacher is able to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● demonstrate knowledge and insights in developing a broad and balanced school-based curriculum according to the diverse needs of students and keep in line with mainstream curriculum framework; enable students to develop their multiple talents and potentials ● link the school-based curriculum to the NSS curriculum framework to help students progress beyond basic education ● demonstrate leadership in formulating strategic curriculum development plans with clear and attainable learning goals at different stages to facilitate students in life – long learning ● select and adapt a variety of differentiated curricula that incorporate advance and conceptually challenging content to suit different learning styles and learning abilities ● incorporate the elements of the Four Key Tasks¹ into curriculum planning to develop students' generic skills², values and attitudes, and to integrate with Key Learning Areas³/subjects -based

¹ According to *Learning to Learn – Life-long Learning and Whole-person Development* issued by the CDC in 2001, the Four Key Tasks are: Moral and Civic Education, Reading to learn, Project Learning and Information Technology for Interactive Learning

² According to *Learning to Learn – Life-long Learning and Whole-person Development* issued by the CDC in 2001, the generic skills include: collaboration skills, communication skills, creativity, critical thinking skills, IT skills, numeracy skills, problem-solving skills, self-management skills and study skills

³ According to *Learning to Learn – the Life-long Learning and Whole-person Development* issued by the CDC in 2001, the Key Learning Areas include: Chinese Language Education, English Language Education, Mathematics Education, Personal, Social & Humanities Education, Science Education, Technology Education, Arts Education, and Physical Education.

Area	Performance Indicator	Evidence of Excellence
		<p>curricular to ensure students' all round development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plan and organise diversified cross-curricular and extra-curricular activities to enrich students' learning experiences and promote life-wide learning⁴
Curriculum	1.2 Curriculum Management	<p>The teacher is able to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monitor/keep the pace of implementing the school curriculum across different subjects; carefully carry out curriculum evaluation with concrete and effective follow-ups, and systematically record information to be shared among stakeholders at the appropriate time • work in close collaboration with colleagues in curriculum adaptation and continuously developing a broad and balanced and well-articulated school-based curriculum to maximise the effects on students' learning

⁴ According to *Learning to Learn – the Life-long Learning and Whole-person Development* issued by the CDC in 2001, life-wide learning refers to learning in different environments: in the classroom, school, home, community and work place. The learning experiences gained in these different environments complement each other.

Area	Performance Indicator	Evidence of Excellence
Teaching	1.3 Strategies and Skills	<p>The teacher is able to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● identify students’ starting point and set clear learning objectives for lessons; design differentiated learning plans and activities effectively to ensure students’ attainment of the Learning Targets of the Key Learning Areas (KLAs)/subjects ● demonstrate the mastery of differentiated teaching strategies in catering for students with different learning needs; make connections between teaching strategies and the setting of learning objectives which makes teaching effective ● adopt higher-level thinking and metacognitive skills in content areas to provide challenging learning opportunities for students, especially those with potentials and talents in specific domains ● make good use of questioning and feedback techniques so as to help students learn effectively ● create and maintain a caring and supportive learning environment, and make conscientious efforts to motivate students’ interest in learning ● involve parents and appropriate stakeholders (e.g. guidance teacher) working in the Individualized Education Plan to bring about fruitful outcomes in students’ learning ● possess good classroom management skills through purposeful teaching arrangement so that students are always engaged in appropriate tasks during the lesson ● assume the different roles of a teacher, from a transmitter of knowledge to a resource person, a facilitator, a consultant, a counsellor, and/or an assessor ● establish collaboration with various stakeholders (parents, community members, the related professionals) within and outside the school setting who serve students with special learning/social-emotional needs to provide the supportive environment and resources for maximizing their potentials

Area	Performance Indicator	Evidence of Excellence
	1.4 Professional Attitude and Knowledge	<p>The teacher is able to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show enthusiasm in teaching students with special educational needs and have a reasonably high expectations of what students can achieve • display a sound command of knowledge in Special Educational Needs (SEN) and KLAS/subjects concerned, it includes (a) to understand variations in characteristics and development of students with special educational needs (b) to identify students with special educational needs at an early stage to ensure early intervention, (c) to plan appropriate and challenging educational goals to maximize students' potentials, (d) to apply pedagogical content knowledge to enhancing students' potentials and talents, (e) to integrate subject-based/Key Learning Area-based curricular to provide students with holistic context for learning, and (e) to have a thorough understanding of the trends and issues in SEN in which he/she teaches, making reflection on and improvement in his/her teaching practices

Area	Performance Indicator	Evidence of Excellence
Performance Assessment	1.5 Assessment Planning and Use of Information	<p>The teacher is able to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • design, use and evaluate the various assessment modes so as to gather more accurate and comprehensive information; use these information effectively to diagnose students' learning to improve the effectiveness of learning and teaching

Area	Performance Indicator	Evidence of Excellence
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● give students timely and useful feedback with appropriate encouragement and provide them with the viable ways for improvement ● establish home-school co-operation mode of assessment, work collaboratively with parents to observe and record students' learning progress at home, exchange views on ways to help enhance students' learning ● work in collaboration with the parties concerned on the effective criteria and strategies for assessment and provide them with accurate and informative assessment reports at appropriate times, so that all parties have better understanding of the students' learning progress

2. Student Development Domain

Area	Performance Indicator	Evidence of Excellence
Student Development	2.1 Attitude	<p>The teacher is able to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● value and affirm students’ potentials and achievements, encourage students to develop upon their strengths, and adopt a proactive attitude towards learning ● recognise students’ efforts and achievements by giving encouragement so as to help students realise their abilities and increase their confidence and sense of achievement ● be aware of students’ special educational needs, understand their learning difficulties, and empathise with their adjustment problems and deviant behavior as a result of mismatch of learning style or curriculum ● provide positive influence on students life-long learning, whole-person development and development of generic skills ● encourage students to respect individual differences and to care for and support each other to cultivate a caring and harmonious school culture ● build trust and rapport with students and gain respect from students
	2.2 Knowledge & Skills	<p>The teacher is able to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● help students acquire the knowledge and skills in the KLAs/subjects concerned with understanding, make good use of different learning strategies and resources to achieve the expected learning outcomes, and actively construct new knowledge from experience and prior knowledge ● help students understand their own abilities, set targets for advancement and develop the capacity for

Area	Performance Indicator	Evidence of Excellence
		<p>self-learning for further studies and/or work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● empower students to acquire adequate language skills and equip them with the skills to express their thoughts and ideas and communicate with others ● help students master social skills in maintaining positive peer relationships and work collaboratively with others; help students develop leadership skills and perform as leaders in group activities and serve their peers ● develop students' abilities of observation, analysis, reasoning, problem solving and creativity, and apply knowledge and skills in daily life ● facilitate students to master independent living skills, study skills and/or pre-vocational skills ● provide students with differentiated guidance/counseling services to meet their socio-emotional development

3. Professionalism and Commitment to the Community Domain

Area	Performance Indicator	Evidence of Excellence
Professionalism and Commitment to the Community	Contribution towards the Profession and Community	<p>The teacher is able to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proactively provide support to the teaching profession and the community by taking part in activities, such as participating in and contributing to professional sharing activities, disseminating good practices, and involving in community services or voluntary work • produce exemplary teaching materials, involve in or contribute to educational research, and/or contribute articles on teaching-related topics; carry out action research, plan or produce successful activities related to special educational needs and co-curricular activities • support the professional development of novice teachers by taking part in activities, such as serving as a mentor • pursue continuous self-improvement and professional development • keep abreast of developments in education practices and policies in the trends of Special Educational Needs • serve as a role model for students in showing keen concern for social issues and living out positive social values • educate the public to have a proper perspective of students with special educational needs • establish and maintain a network connection with other schools/education practitioners for strengthening professionalism in accommodating students with special educational needs

4. School Development Domain

Area	Performance Indicator	Evidence of Excellence
School Development	Support to School Development	<p>The teacher is able to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● provide leadership in the design, implementation and review of school-based activities for Special Educational Needs ● encourage students to actively participate in inter-school and public contests/competitions, exhibitions, performance and public activities ● contribute to school-based teacher professional development on supporting students with special educational needs ● promote a sharing and collaborative culture among colleagues and stakeholders with a view to developing the school as a professional learning community ● inspire peers and colleagues to collaborate among themselves for the improvement of learning and teaching in Special Educational Needs ● enlist and make the best use of the resources and facilities available to establish an accommodating learning environment with a harmonious, caring and supportive school culture ● take a leadership role among colleagues and stakeholders in promoting a consensus on and the actualization of the school vision and mission through own exemplary practice and sharing of experience, and focus energy on achieving continuous school development; realise the essence of the school culture and ethos through a variety of effective channels

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