



# Changing tests for teachers: English language school-based assessment in Hong Kong



Dr Chris Davison  
Faculty of Education

**Abstract:** The Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) has recently moved from norm-referenced to standards-referenced assessment, including the incorporation of a substantial school-based summative oral assessment component into the compulsory English language subject in the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE). Starting in Secondary 4, teachers now assess their own students' oral English language competencies through a range of authentic classroom-embedded activities over two years. This high-profile assessment initiative marks a significant shift in policy as well as in practice for the HKEAA. Although school-based assessment (SBA) is in line with the Education and Manpower Bureau's (EMB) general move to align assessment with curriculum reform, the developers have had to address a number of challenges, including socio-cultural, theoretical and practical issues. The impact of the change on teachers, students and the curriculum, in particular, is being systematically researched and evaluated. This presentation will first briefly describe the specific content and structure of the HKCEE English language SBA component, then explore the processes for ensuring valid and reliable assessments and effective integration into the curriculum. The presentation then examines some of the challenges that are being addressed in the implementation of the initiative, and concludes by highlighting the benefits for learning and teaching that are already being demonstrated.

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*Dr Chris Davison is Associate Dean (Research) at the University of Hong Kong and the lead researcher, together with Prof Liz Hamp-Lyons, of the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination English language school-based assessment initiative, funded by the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA). She has worked for many years in English language teacher education in the Asian-Pacific region, and has published widely in the area of curriculum and assessment in English as a second language. Her most recent books are on integrating language and content (Longman Pearson, 2001), information technology in English language education (Hong Kong University Press, 2005) and English language teaching internationally (Springer, 2006, with Jim Cummins).*

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LG06 Hui Oi Chow Science Building, Faculty of Education  
The University of Hong Kong, Pokfulam Road  
Chair: Dr David Carless

**All are welcome! RSVP by 12 December**  
Enquiries: Christy Poon at 2859 8003, Email: typhoon@hkucc.hku.hk