

Assessment of basic competencies

Amy KM Cheung, Guanzhong Luo and Gregory Chan
Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority, Hong Kong SAR

In its 2000 report entitled *Learning for Life, Learning Through Life*, the Hong Kong Education Commission set out detailed proposals for assessing students' basic competencies in Chinese language, English language and mathematics. This paper reports on the progress in implementing these proposals. Two initiatives were undertaken. One set of initiatives has involved the development of a web-based student assessment system that recently won a silver medal for innovative excellence at *le Salon International Des Inventions 2005*. The other set of initiatives has involved paper and pencil testing of the whole cohort of students at the end of each key stage of schooling. This testing is conducted throughout the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China, and therefore, it is termed the Territory-wide System Assessment. This paper provides an overview of the measurement issues underpinning both assessments, including the calibration of items, equating of tests and the setting of standards. It also presents results of the first two years of implementation and the impact of the policy thus far.