

Developing Benchmarks for Career and Life Development in the UK and Hong Kong

John Holman¹ & Stephen. Y.W. Yip²

December 2020

Abstract

This article aims to discuss the importance and rationale of the use of benchmarks for careers guidance (or Career and Life Development) in secondary schools. As the forerunner of this global movement, the Gatsby Foundation initiated the groundbreaking development of the Gatsby Benchmarks for careers guidance which was led by Sir John Holman (2014) and research shows positive results among UK schools with promising outcomes in youth's careers readiness and social-economic benefits. While other countries or jurisdictions began to adopt the benchmark-based approach, the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust launched a pilot study to try out the adapted version of Gatsby Benchmarks, namely the Hong Kong Benchmarks for Career and Life Development (HKBM) with seven local secondary schools. The second half of the article discusses how HKBM can address the current issues and concerns of CLD among Hong Kong schools and how the findings of the pilot study has informed the Jockey Club large-scale project, "CLAP for Youth@JC", to devise future scale-up strategies for next phase in promoting betterment of systematic career and life planning education in Hong Kong schools.

Career and Life Development and Careers Guidance: definitions

Career and Life Development (CLD) (sometimes known as 'Life-planning Education' (Hong Kong Education Bureau [EDB], 2014) or 'Career and Life Planning Education' (Hong Kong Legislative Council, 2017)) in Hong Kong contexts refers to a part of school education in its broadest sense that embraces a holistic and comprehensive process to plan one's life and actively implements the goals determined in one's social context (Leung, 2005). It also includes student learning opportunities provided to understand the world of work, often in the umbrella term as 'careers education' or 'careers provisions' in some Western systems. Activities include job shadowing, work experiences/ placements, workplace visits, mentoring, transformative leadership projects, etc, for developing the essential knowledge, confidence and skills that young people need to make well-informed choices and personal plans in transitioning

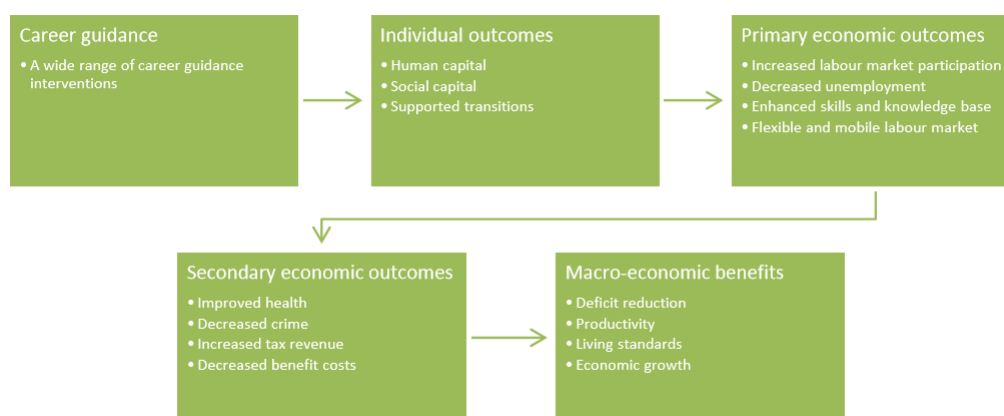
¹ Professor, Department of Chemistry, University of York, UK

² Director (Schools), "CLAP for Youth@JC" Phase 2; Former Senior Lecturer, Department of Curriculum & Instruction, the Education University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

smoothly into their future from study to work (Hughes et al., 2016). In its nutshell, CLD consists of three major components, i.e. (i) self-understanding and related personal development, (ii) career exploration through curriculum learning and experiential learning activities, and (iii) career reflection, planning and personal management (EDB, 2014). Similar to CLD, the notion, ‘careers guidance’³ has been widely used for many decades both in the East Asia and in most Western countries to refer to a range of career-related interventions that aim to enable young people to make their own life and career options, choices or paths. In sum, the definitions of both notions (CLD and Careers Guidance) are in similar broadening process under a globalized trend. Therefore, in this article on the development of benchmark-based approach in UK and Hong Kong, we will use ‘careers guidance’ and CLD inter-changeably depending on the contexts.

The social and economic benefits of careers guidance support for youth

Across the world, governments and NGOs are realising the critical importance of careers guidance or CLD to making a successful transition from school to work. This transition is important at both individual and macroeconomic levels. At the individual level, people who are in jobs which they enjoy and for which they have the right skills, are likely to lead happier lives and play a fuller part in a stable society. At the macroeconomic level, a dynamic economy needs people with the skills and attitudes fitted to perform the roles a modern economy demands. This link between the individual and the macroeconomic level has been explored by Hooley and Dodd (2015) and is summarized by them in the diagram below.



Careers guidance has outcomes at the individual level, in terms of better school-to-work transition and increased social capital. These outcomes in turn lead to primary economic outcomes such as reduced unemployment and enhanced skills and knowledge; these lead to secondary economic outcomes such as decreased benefit costs and increased tax

³ Sometimes “Career Guidance” is used

revenues. The eventual macroeconomic benefits are seen in terms of improved living standards and economic growth. In practice, of course, this is not a linear process but a more complex set of web-like interactions. Such benefits were modelled quantitatively by PwC⁴ as part of their contribution to the Gatsby Foundation's study of Good Career Guidance (Holman, 2014). PwC (2014) constructed a cost-benefit model that used the Standard Cost Model, firstly, to estimate the costs to schools of implementing the benchmarks. PwC estimate that the cost per student, over their school career, of providing the Gatsby Benchmarks is GBP200 (£200). Secondly, PwC estimated the benefits to the national economy in terms, principally, of reduced unemployment and increased earnings by people who are in jobs that match their skills and aptitudes. On the basis of a £200 per student cost, PwC estimate that, for example:

- If one more student attained an undergraduate degree it would offset the cost of providing the benchmarks to **985** pupils.
- If one more student is deterred or prevented from becoming unemployed it would offset the cost for **280** pupils.

At the individual level, the benefits are social as well as economic. Interactions with employers can have a significant effect on social capital: in a study of secondary schools in England, 22% fewer students became unemployed after completing four or more work experiences (Mann, 2015). Students with a greater understanding of how to handle their career transitions have a greater feeling of agency over their own futures. For example, students in Switzerland receiving career guidance scored 67% higher (Hirschi, 2008) on career decidedness than the control group.

The findings from the visits of six countries/ jurisdictions

In 2013, the Gatsby Foundation, a major UK foundation with an interest in delivering social equality through education, commissioned their senior education adviser, Professor Sir John Holman, to carry out an international study to determine the essential elements of good career guidance. At the heart of the study was a series of visits to six territories (Finland, Germany, Hong Kong China, Ireland, the Netherlands and Ontario, Canada), where careers guidance was known to be good (Watts, 2014). The international study group visited schools and colleges and met students, teachers, careers advisers and school leaders, and talked to employers and government officials.

The international study uncovered the key elements of good careers guidance. For example, in the Netherlands, schools have well-organised, stable careers programmes

⁴ PwC stands for Pricewaterhouse Coopers

led by the Careers Leader, known as the *schooldekaan*. This model informed Benchmark 1 in the Gatsby Benchmarks, ‘A Stable Careers Programme’, and led to the concept of the school Careers Leader which proved successful in the pilot of the benchmarks in 2015-2017. In Ontario, Canada, the expectation that career opportunities arising from individual subjects would be included in regular lessons was one of the inspirations for Benchmark 4, ‘Careers in the Curriculum’. In Finland, the model of sustained work experience informed Benchmark 6, ‘Experiences of Workplaces’. In Germany, the practice of giving students multiple encounters with employers and employees helped in the creation of Benchmark 5, ‘Encounters with Employers and Employees’. One of the strongest messages coming out of the international study was the importance of including business and employers in the mix of activities that make for good career guidance.

This international study was augmented by visits to schools in England and by a search of the relevant international literature on good career guidance. On the basis of this evidence, Sir John Holman and his team drafted eight benchmarks for good career guidance. These draft benchmarks were tested in three consultation workshops with school leaders, employers and careers professionals. The revised benchmarks were tested further in a survey of 10% of schools in England. Finally, they were subjected to the cost-benefit study by PwC.

In the light of all this evidence, Sir John Holman and his team finalized the eight Benchmarks for Good Career Guidance in England (Holman, 2014). Gatsby’s international research showed that there is no single panacea for good career guidance: it is a matter of doing a number of things, captured in the eight benchmarks, and doing them well.

The eight Gatsby benchmarks for England

1. **A stable careers programme.** Every school and college should have an embedded programme of career education and guidance that is known and understood by students, parents, teachers, governors and employers.
2. **Learning from career and labour market information.** Every student, and their parents, should have access to good quality information about future study options and labour market opportunities. They will need the support of an informed adviser to make best use of available information.
3. **Addressing the needs of each student.** Students have different career guidance needs at different stages. Opportunities for advice and support need to be tailored

to the needs of each student. A school's careers programme should embed equality and diversity considerations throughout.

4. **Linking curriculum learning to careers.** All teachers should link curriculum learning with careers. STEM subject teachers should highlight the relevance of STEM subjects for a wide range of future career paths.
5. **Encounters with employers and employees.** Every student should have multiple opportunities to learn from employers about work, employment and the skills that are valued in the workplace. This can be through a range of enrichment activities including visiting speakers, mentoring and enterprise schemes.
6. **Experiences of workplaces.** Every student should have first-hand experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience to help their exploration of career opportunities, and expand their networks.
7. **Encounters with further and higher education.** All students should understand the full range of learning opportunities that are available to them. This includes both academic and vocational routes and learning in schools, colleges, universities and in the workplace.
8. **Personal guidance.** Every student should have opportunities for guidance interviews with a career adviser, who could be internal (a member of school staff) or external, provided they are trained to an appropriate level. These should be available whenever significant study or career choices are being made.

Implementing the Gatsby Benchmarks

Following publication, the eight benchmarks were tested in a pilot in 2015-2017, in 16 schools and colleges in North East England, under the auspices of the North East Local Enterprise Partnership and led by National Facilitator Ryan Gibson. This highly successful pilot (Hanson et al., 2019) provided strong evidence of impact. As a result, in 2018 the English government adopted the Gatsby benchmarks as the basis of the government strategy for careers guidance for all schools in England (Department for Education, 2017). At about the same time, the government created the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) to lead national implementation of the benchmarks, and this has been critical to the success of the benchmarks. Funded by the government, the CEC has a network of Enterprise Advisers, volunteers from business, and Enterprise Co-ordinators, who help schools to make the important links to employers required by Benchmarks 5 and 6.

The CEC has a programme of research and innovation designed to support the implementation of the Gatsby Benchmarks. The CEC provides training for Careers Leaders and is creating a growing network of Careers Hubs to support schools at the regional level. Leadership in Careers Guidance, at both school level and regional level, has proved to be crucial to the success of the Gatsby Benchmarks.

A critical feature of the Benchmarks is that they are measurable: each Benchmark is broken down into a number of measurable criteria, making it possible for schools to find out how they measure up against the Benchmarks. This is important, because the Benchmarks are essentially a self-improvement tool, which schools use to measure their own progress towards good career guidance against these world-class standards.

Early in the process of implementing the benchmarks, Gatsby and the CEC collaborated to create Compass, an online audit tool which schools use to measure their own progress in implementing the Benchmarks. Although the results are confidential to the school, they can be aggregated together at the national level, giving a rich source of data for monitoring the success of the national Careers policy.

The Gatsby benchmarks for Good Career Guidance define the inputs that schools need to make in order to ensure a successful school-to-work transition for their students. Gatsby's international research showed that there is no single panacea for good career guidance: it is a matter of doing a number of things, captured in the eight Benchmarks, and doing them well. Although the Benchmarks embrace actions across schools, community groups, businesses and parents, it is for the schools to monitor their delivery, co-ordinated by the Careers Leader, with the full support of the school leaders.

Early wins of Gatsby Benchmark in the UK and adaptation in other territories

The eight Gatsby Benchmarks are each defined in terms of a number of criteria. In order to reach the full benchmark, the school must meet each of the criteria within it. This makes meeting all eight of the Benchmarks in full very challenging, but it is important to bear in mind that these benchmarks define world-class career guidance.

There is still a long way to go towards fully achieving these world class standards in England. Only about 100 out of nearly 4,000 schools and colleges have fully achieved all eight Gatsby benchmarks since the government made them a requirement from September 2018.

What is looked for is steady progress in the number of Benchmarks achieved in each

school, year on year. Steady progress of this kind was observed in the pilot in 2015-2017, and it is what is being seen in schools across England. The Careers and Enterprise Company publishes an annual report, based on data from Compass, and this shows schools are making steady progress in the number of benchmarks they are reaching:

Year	Average number of benchmarks reached, across all schools
2017	1.87
2018	2.13
2019	3.00
2020 (March)	3.75

These figures show the average numbers of benchmarks fully achieved, but the data shows that where schools do not fully achieve the benchmarks, they usually achieve them partially, and often go on later to full achievement.

This steady growth continues across England. Furthermore, there is evidence that schools and colleges which participate in the CEC's Careers Hubs reach more benchmarks (4.8 for those in hubs, compared with 2.3 for those not in a network).

The Gatsby benchmarks have now been adopted in over 3,200 secondary schools and colleges in England, and monitoring data (Careers and Enterprise Company, 2019) shows the schools making steady progress, measured against the Benchmarks. What is more, there is evidence, from the 2015-2017 pilot (Hanson et al., 2019), that reaching the benchmarks correlates with improved careers readiness on the part of students, as measured by a specially designed psychometric scale of careers readiness. So, while the Gatsby Benchmarks measure inputs, there is evidence that they lead to the kind of outcomes that the government is seeking in its careers guidance strategy.

Meanwhile, the Gatsby approach has attracted attention from other territories. In 2019/2020, the Gatsby Foundation has hosted visits by stakeholders from Italy, Hong Kong, India, Australia, Norway, China and Spain, wanting to find out more about the Gatsby Benchmarks approach. In Spain, the Bertelsmann Foundation has funded an extensive adaptation and translation of the Gatsby Benchmarks, with the advice and support of the Gatsby Foundation and Sir John Holman. Coincidentally with Hong Kong, this Spanish adaptation has increased the number of benchmarks from eight to ten. They have developed a version of Compass, called *Xcelence* in Spanish, which will be used in a pilot in 2020 with 150 schools in three regions, with 45 of these schools

receiving special training for the Careers Leaders. Leaders of this Spanish project made a second study visit to England in early February 2020, to learn more details of the success in England.

Benchmarks for Career and Life Development: A Case for Hong Kong?

The Hong Kong (HK) Contexts

Like many systems in the world, school, community and employers are the three major points of contact for Hong Kong young people in the school-to-work transition journey while school is the primary and most important touchpoint. Although most HK students prefer to choose a pathway towards higher and further education, limited government-funded university places are only available for 24% of top candidates in the public exam per year (Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority, 2019). Students with less outstanding academic performance will need to seek other education or career pathways after the public exam. The fierce competition for university places also creates huge pressure on students. On the other hand, it is worth noting that ever since the implementation of the New Academic Structure (NAS), only 8% of school graduates directly entered into work or part-time work each year (EDB, 2018a); in other words, the majority of the S6 school leavers (91%) is admitted into different kinds of full-time programmes for further study, including those for studying abroad. Under such a relatively academic-laden system and culture, many schools do not often see ‘transition from school to work’ as a burning issue in the school agenda and the CLD provisions are often confined as *information-giving* services on how to enter desirable future study courses, in the name of post-secondary multiple pathways (See Appendix). At teacher level, CLD is often seen as a marginalized task that belongs to a small career guidance team led by the Career Master and as being generally seen as a non-mainstream development in schools, most students are lacking motivation and sense of agency in participating school-based CLD activities.

A Need of Adopting a Systematic Whole School Approach

Under the NAS, schools have been receiving some policy and resource back-ups from the government such as the establishment of the recurrent grant, Career and Life Planning Grant (CLPG) and new curriculum components (e.g. Career-related Experiences, Applied Learning courses) to enhance CLD provisions in schools. It is estimated that approximately \$250 million per year is spent on school-based CLD since 2014. Despite such support, schools are in need of a common holistic approach with a reliable framework that can help:

- *positioning* CLD among top items in the whole school agenda;

- *joining up* and synergizing different initiatives/ provisions;
- *self-evaluating* and hence identifying any gaps and issues of concerns for *sustaining* ongoing self-improvement impetus;
- *broadening* professional capacity building coverage within school organizations.

Positioning of CLD as part of the top School Agenda

Once CLD is explicitly positioned as part of the top school agenda, the collaboration and co-ordination with relevant subject/activity committees in school will be easy. Hence, the role of CLD education (or careers guidance) for students will gradually become more ‘important’ and ‘indispensable’ in the school as a whole, according to the Education Bureau (EDB, 2014, p. 7). Research reveals that HK teachers need a broader system mindset shifting towards a whole-school systematic approach that emphasizes the *enhanced* role of Career Guidance team as ‘career coordinators’ in whole school organization, an enhanced role as ‘career facilitators’ for subject teachers and class teachers, as well as the role of ‘career counsellors’ for role-modelling to all teaching staff (Lee & Chun, 2016; Task Force on Review of School Curriculum, 2020). However, Wong (2017) points out that the absence of a whole-school mindset in some HK schools is prominent and can be explained by the overarching school leadership styles that are influenced by Confucian Heritage Culture (CHC) (cf Lam & Hui, 2010). These traditional leadership styles are characterized by a ‘high power distance’ between principal, career leaders and teachers, as well as a highly ‘fragmented and easily disjointed’ school curriculum. In terms of ‘high power distance’, distributed leadership which has been advocating by the EDB (Hong Kong Curriculum Development Council, 2017) are often seen as the remedy solution which often involves mobilizing school leaders, teachers and social workers in supporting CLD through task and responsibility dispersion as formal, pragmatic, strategic, incremental, opportunistic and cultural processes under the big notion of whole school approach. According to research, this solution often yields effective improvement when the leadership density lessened from the ‘power centre’ or core team (MacBeath, 2005; Spillane, 2006). Therefore, CLD tasks and sense of duty ownership should be diffused appropriately across all related functional units and eventually to individual teachers while rightly positioned in the school organisation.

Inter-connectedness across CLD provisions

Recent study conducted by the Education University of Hong Kong and commissioned by the EDB shows that *silo mentality* is prominent as major weakness in schools (EDB, 2019) and makes the overall school-based CLD strategy more difficult in terms of

synergy and coordination. An inter-connected school-based CLD strategy that can join up different key existing functional units, such as conventional Careers Guidance service, Other Learning Experiences, subject curriculum development, Life education/Class teacher lessons, and parent-teacher partnership, is proposed by various professional bodies to enable effective systems-approach for CLD (Ho, 2016; Hong Kong Association of Careers Masters and Guidance Masters, 2008; Tsui et al., 2019). According to Donohoo, Hattie and Eells (2018), such coordinated/ collaborative approach, irrespective to its content, could arguably yield the highest effect size on overall school effectiveness among other educational interventions because it involves enhancement of collective teacher efficacy.

A systematic self-evaluation process for improvement

One of the key success factors for the Gatsby Benchmarks in the UK is the fact that they are measurable. Using the Compass online audit tool, schools are able to measure their own performance against the benchmarks, and then decide on the areas most in need of improvement in their practice. This self-improvement model has been consistently shown, in business as well as in education, to be a powerful enabler.

Building on the foundation of CLD-related initiatives in Hong Kong, evidence shows that there is a priority need to introduce a well-tested systematic framework of good practice for school leaders and career teams to self-evaluate, plan and improve the CLD education for the school (with reference to internal evaluation reports) (EDB, 2019). From an accountability perspective, such a self-improvement framework or a series of quality benchmarks has to be in tune with the existing policy of Life Planning and Career Guidance (EDB, 2014; Yip, 2020) and the Plan-Implement-Evaluate (PIE) process (cycle) under the existing School Development and Accountability (SDA) Framework⁵ (EDB, 2020). Beyond accountability purpose, the benchmark-oriented approach helps schools carry a much deeper formative purpose in enabling CLD leaders to feel ‘secure and confident enough to be self-critical when they have tools and expertise to evaluate themselves’ (MacBeath, 1997). In sum, a systematic self-evaluation process with a benchmark-oriented framework seems to be the key for unleashing a sustainable self-improvement impetus from professionals for school-based CLD.

⁵ In particular, the benchmark self-evaluation/ audit process could be part of the School Self-evaluation (SSE) to prepare for future external school reviews or focused inspections or in policy terms, within the ‘School Development Planning Process’.

Broadening Capacity building coverage within school organisation

At government policy level, unlike subject teaching and pastoral care, little explicit reference to CLD can be found in the recent T-standard Plus framework, in which the professional roles of teachers are described as their major dimensions: (1) Caring Cultivators for all-round growth, (2) Inspirational Co-constructors of knowledge, (3) Committed Role Model of Professionalism (EDB, 2018b). Under such a definitive framework, CLD is generally interpreted as an implicit part of service for students' all-round growth, subsumed under the pastoral care / all-round growth dimension. At the level of individual teacher experience, most of them have never changed their job type after graduation, not to mention empowering students to search for multiple pathways with updated knowledge and skill sharing. To a large extent, the traditional Chinese mindset of civil service-driven examinations is still ruling among teachers and of course among parents. In light of bridging the knowledge and belief gaps, subject teachers and class teachers should be provided with training opportunities in both convincing them of the need for and equipping them with the skills for infusing CLD elements into everyday teaching and school life. Shared assumptions and principles of career-related teacher support are to be discussed and aligned during all relevant professional development processes (Leung, 2005; Wong et al., 2020). Resources and activities can be appropriately demonstrated, selected or designed to enable students to understand the existing world of work and its requirements as well as work ethics and manners, through school-based or panel-based curriculum development and individual practices. Such change cannot possibly happen naturally but only through both school strategic leadership and school-wide training in order to gain a critical mass for paradigm shift. The capacity-building framework should therefore be developed under the following levels in schools:

- School-School Hub learning level
- School senior management level (for Appreciation)
- In-school Career core team level (for Actions)
- Whole school teacher/ personnel level (for Awareness).

According to a recent Legislative Council paper, only two teachers on average are reported to receive systematic training in CLD per school (Legislative Council Secretariat, 2016). In terms of widening participation, short-span training opportunities are needed for all in-service teaching professionals, e.g. individual counselling, curriculum planning/ adaptation and fostering business-school partnerships, which are believed to address recent concerns from the sector (Yuen, et al., 2018). In addition, learning from UK experience, capacity building through school hubs is important to

facilitate the paradigm shift in the school communities. School hubs provide a network through which schools can learn from one another (Department for Education, 2017; Hargreaves, 2003).

In summary, the CLD or broad-based careers guidance in Hong Kong needs to enhance its role in secondary education for above-mentioned reasons. A benchmark-oriented framework that depicts holistically all important aspects in a quality CLD practice with measurable inputs to enable teachers to engage in their daily work, is the crucial tool for introducing the systematic whole school approach.

Hong Kong Benchmarks for CLD (HKBM)

The experience and the framework of Gatsby Benchmarks in UK have provided valuable references to Hong Kong schools. The Benchmarks have succinctly shown ‘what good looks like’ and have illustrated with related measurable and qualitative descriptors across its eight guiding principles (Holman, 2014). Adopting such benchmarks model seems to be appropriate to address the current concerns, in terms of promoting a whole school, systematic approach for CLD or careers guidance. However, in order to ensure its framework fitting well with Hong Kong school cultures, the Hong Kong Jockey Club has launched a pilot project in late 2019 with seven⁶ secondary schools. In parallel, The Global Advisor of the project, Sir John Holman, other local scholars (e.g. Professor Alvin Leung⁷, Dr. Stephen Yip⁸) and other local CLD practitioners contextualized the Gatsby Benchmarks and produced the Hong Kong version, HKBM with ten benchmarks, so as to ensure world-class standards and to address local needs (See Figure 1). The reasons for inserting a specific benchmark on parental engagement are catering the local CHC culture in the society and in schools. Research literature has shown that parental influences are profound in students’ career and life planning processes in Hong Kong (MingPao, 2020; Tsui et al., 2019; Xing & Rojewski, 2018). Therefore, various parental engagement measures should be coordinated via the school’s PTA coordinator and career team to receive up-to-date multiple pathways information and to convey the concept and importance of CLD on assisting their children in transiting from school to work. On the other side of the coin, another benchmark is introduced to enhance *sense of agency* among students via

⁶ Within the seven schools, one joined in 2020.

⁷ Dean of Education, Faculty of Education, The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Chief Principal Investigator of “CLAP for Youth@JC” Phase 1.

⁸ Director (Schools), “CLAP for Youth@JC” Phase 2. Former Senior Lecturer, Department of Curriculum & Instruction, the Education University of Hong Kong.

actively engaging them in various CLD activities under the pedagogical concept of co-creation (Zou et al., 2015).

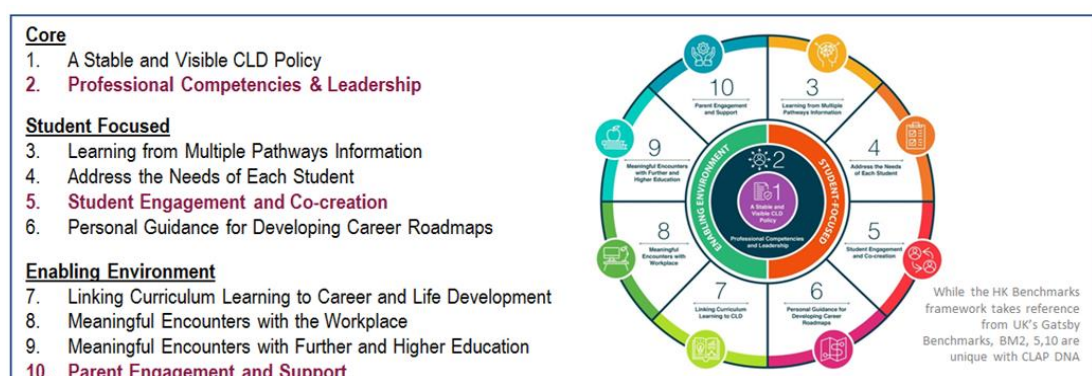


Figure 1. CLAP Benchmarks (HKBM)

The 10 Benchmarks in Hong Kong are:

1. A Stable and Visible Career and Life Development Policy

Every school should have a stable policy on career and life development to guide its action plan and programme development. The policy and programme should be regularly evaluated and should be known and understood by students, teachers, parents, employers and relevant stakeholders.

2. Professional Competencies and Leadership

Career masters are equipped with core competences in leadership, management, coordination and networking to lead a career team of trained staff to implement the full spectrum of career education and guidance programmes.

3. Learning from Multiple Pathways Information

Students should have access to the latest information about multiple pathways to inform their career and life decisions and act accordingly.

4. Address the Needs of Each Student

Career and life development programmes should be tailored based on the needs of each and every student, addressing diversity and equality considerations throughout.

5. Student Engagement and Co-creation

Students should be the owner of his/her career and life development. School should engage and facilitate them to be active participants in co-creating their Career and Life Development programmes.

6. Personal Guidance for Developing Career Roadmaps

Every student should receive personal guidance for identifying life goals and making their career roadmaps whenever significant education or career choices are being made.

7. Linking Curriculum Learning to Career and Life Development

All teachers should link curriculum learning with career and life development. Subject teachers should highlight the relevance of the subjects for a wide range of future career pathways.

8. Meaningful Encounters with the Workplace

Students should have multiple opportunities to learn from employers and employees about work, employment, and the Values, Attitudes, Skills & Knowledge (VASK) that are valued in the workplace. Students should also have first-hand experiences of the workplace so as to help their exploration of career opportunities, and expand their networks.

9. Meaningful Encounters with Further and Higher Education

Students should understand the full range of progression opportunities available to them, including both local and overseas academic and vocational pathways, in higher education, Vocational and Professional Education and Training (VPET) institutes, and further education opportunities.

10. Parent Engagement and Support

Schools should engage parents through various forms of formal and informal interaction, so that parents have access to good quality multiple pathways information and become positive agents and collaborative partners in providing support for their children's career and life development.

Pilot of HKBM and its initial findings

The HKBM has been piloted in seven schools with diverse backgrounds since September 2019. According to the pilot audit results, no school fully achieved any of the ten benchmarks, which is similar to the UK pilot's baseline results. School challenges in general are: lacking a whole-school approach; inadequate cross-sector networking competence; too much inclination to academic pathways; limited exposure to the workplace. From the try-out experience, it is concluded that the Benchmarks mechanism is an ideal platform for a school in Hong Kong as an organization/community to review and enhance the quality of own CLD strategies (CLAP for

Youth@JC, 2020a). According to stakeholders, the HKBM process will become an integral part of school development machinery that connects the school, community and workplace for responding to any ‘eco-system change’. In addition, three observations are worth bringing up in planning the next phase of the project in terms of promoting the adoption of HKBM in Hong Kong schools. *First*, teacher perceptions on *what good looks like* are sometimes need more facilitation. At the beginning of the self-evaluation process, career teachers in the pilot project were asked to record their perceived judgment against the ten benchmarks and then they were requested to make judgment against each benchmark again with active provision of evidence. Several big gaps between teacher judgment and evidence-based evaluation are observed in areas such as CLD policy in school, multiple pathways information, student engagement and co-creation, as well as linking school curriculum with CLD. This supports the introduction of a robust, evidence-based framework in schools since we need to have a more objective method to self-assess teachers’ own quality of CLD provisions. The *second* issue is the huge diversity in terms of school practices and benchmark achievements across schools. This finding also verifies the need of a *common* framework among different school types to align the standard practices of CLD in Hong Kong. *Third*, there is a strong need to step up the support in helping schools to build school-business partnerships due to the lacking of networking competence and mandatory ‘work experience’ tradition. According to recent research, student activities related to business collaboration raise students’ ‘goals of life’ and motivation significantly and the effect is double among students with low socio-economic background (Yip & Fung, 2019).

Based on the pilot study, future scale-up strategies of the Jockey Club project are (CLAP for Youth@JC, 2020b):

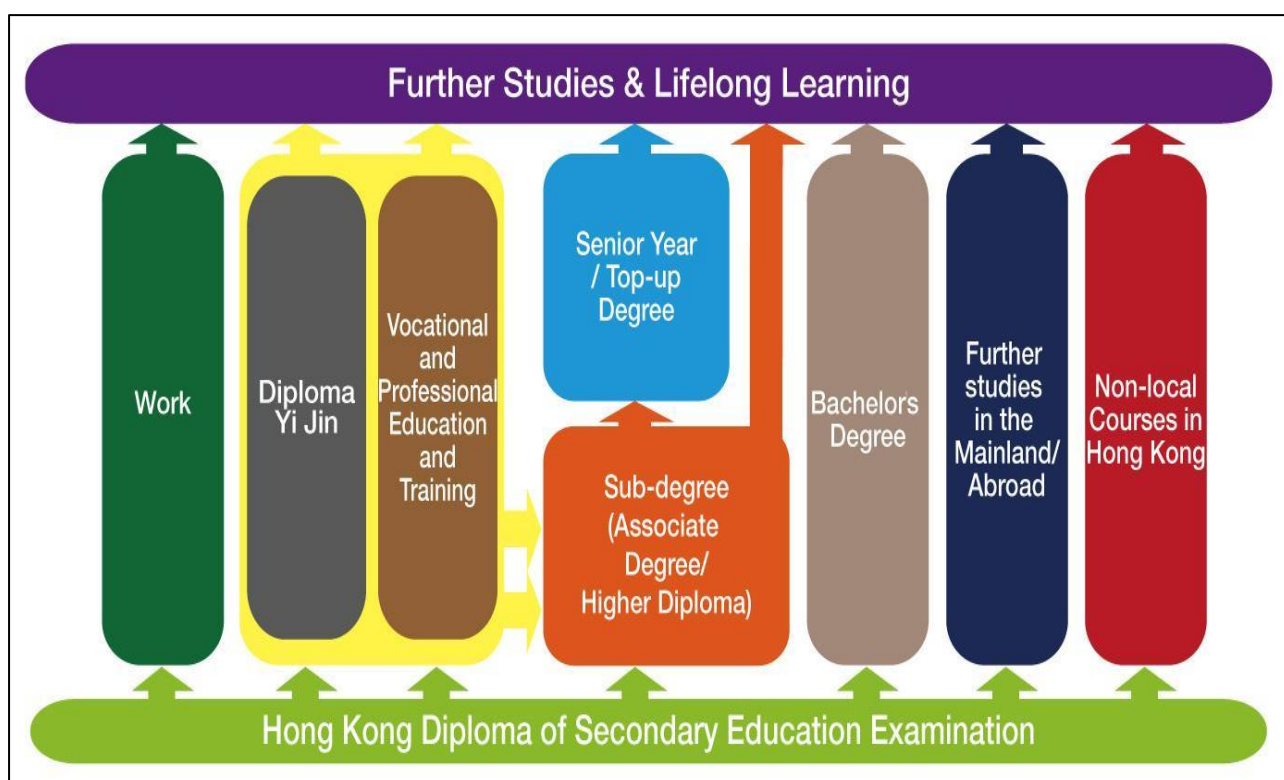
- Critical friend support in self-evaluation and action planning
- School hubs for good practice exchange and knowledge creation
- Student engagement and co-creation measures
- Enterprise Adviser in each school to help building business partnerships & innovations
- Support to students with special needs in CLD.

Conclusion: *World-Class Standards, Local Strengths and Needs*

The essence of Gatsby Benchmarks, and its adapted Hong Kong version, HKBM, provide a comprehensive, well-tested ‘map’ and reference for those who wish to

improve their school-based careers guidance/ CLD provisions from strengths to strengths, in terms of the requirements on *quality, quantity, scope* and *diversity*. Future studies will include the impacts of adopting HKBM in Hong Kong school contexts, as UK and other countries are also progressing such approach for helping young people to transit smoothly from schools to work.

Appendix



Multiple Pathways under the New Academic Structure, which is also known as ‘334’ reform – in replacement of the British academic system. HK students are now having six years of secondary education and four years of undergraduate education as the main academic path route. The first cohort of HK Diploma of Secondary Education Examination was in 2012.

References

- Careers and Enterprise Company. (2019). *State of the nation*.
https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/sites/default/files/uploaded/state_of_the_nation_2019_digital.pdf
- CLAP for Youth@JC. (2020a). *CLAP Hong Kong Benchmarks for career & life development case studies* (Chinese only). Hong Kong: Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust & The Education University of Hong Kong.
- CLAP for Youth@JC. (2020b). *CLAP Hong Kong Benchmarks for career & life development toolkits*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust & The Education University of Hong Kong.
- Department for Education. (2017). *Careers strategy: Making the most of everyone's skills and talents*.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/664319/Careers_strategy.pdf
- Donohoo, J., Hattie, J., & Eells, R. (2018). The power of collective efficacy. *Educational Leadership*, 75(6), 40-44.
- Hanson, J., Katy, V., Nicki, M., Julia, E., & Clark, L. (2019). *Gatsby careers benchmark north east implementation pilot: Interim evaluation (2015-2017)*. The International Centre for Guidance Studies, University of Derby.
<https://derby.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10545/623538/Interim%20exec%20summary%20FINAL.pdf?sequence=4>
- Hargreaves, D. (2003). *Education epidemic: Transforming secondary schools through innovation networks*. London: DEMOS.
- Hirschi, A. (2008). Increasing the career choice readiness of young adolescents: An evaluation study. *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance*, 8(2), 95-110. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10775-008-9139-7>
- Ho, S. C. (2016). Qing shao nian de sheng ya gui hua: Jia ting, xue xiao yu she qu xie zuo [Teenagers' career planning: Collaboration among family, school and community]. *Hong Kong Teachers' Centre Journal*, 15, 1-16.
- Holman, J. (2014). *Good careers guidance*. London: Gatsby Charitable Foundation.
<http://www.gatsby.org.uk/uploads/education/reports/pdf/gatsby-sir-john-holman-good-career-guidance-2014.pdf>
- Hong Kong Association of Careers Masters and Guidance Masters. (2008). *Finding your colours of life: NSS subject choices and the development of career aspirations*.
https://cd1.edb.hkedcitynet/cd/lwl/ole/article/career_aspirations_student_eng.pdf

- Hong Kong Curriculum Development Council. (2017). *Secondary education curriculum guide*. https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/renewal/guides_SECG.html
- Hong Kong Education Bureau. (2014). *Guide on life planning education and career guidance for secondary schools*. https://lifeplanning.edb.gov.hk/uploads/page/attachments/CLP-Guide_E_r3.pdf
- Hong Kong Education Bureau. (2018a). *2018 nian zhong liu xue sheng chu lu tong ji diao cha (jie zhi 2018nian 11yue de chu bu fen xi) [The statistic survey on the way out for secondary six students in 2018 (preliminary analysis as of November 2018)]*. https://334.edb.hkedcity.net/new/doc/chi/20190305/parents_seminar_session1.pdf
- Hong Kong Education Bureau. (2018b). *T-standard+: Information sheet*. https://www.cotap.hk/images/T-standard/T-standard_Info-sheet_EN.pdf
- Hong Kong Education Bureau (2019). *Review on effectiveness of the implementation of life planning education in secondary schools in Hong Kong*. https://lifeplanning.edb.gov.hk/uploads/page/attachments/_Final-version_12-Apr-19-Summary.pdf
- Hong Kong Education Bureau. (2020). *Guidelines on the compilation of school development plan, annual school plan and school report – To promote school development and accountability through strategic planning*. https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/sch-admin/sch-quality-assurance/sse/Guidelines_on_the_Compilation_of_SDP_ASP_SR_en_2020.pdf
- Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority. (2019). *2019 HKDSE statistics overview*. https://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/DocLibrary/HKDSE/Exam_Report/Examination_Statistics/dseexamstat19_1.pdf
- Hong Kong Legislative Council. (2017). *Progress report on implementation of career and life planning education and issues related to the multiple pathways of secondary school leavers* (LC Paper No. CB(4)662/16-17(01)). <https://www.legco.gov.hk/yr16-17/english/panels/ed/papers/ed20170313cb4-662-1-e.pdf>
- Hooley, T., & Dodd, V. (2015). *The economic benefits of career guidance*. Careers England. <https://cica.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Careers-England-Research-Paper-The-Economic-Benefits-of-Career-Guidance-July-2015.pdf>
- Hughes, D., Mann, A., Barnes, S. A., Baldauf, B., & McKeown, R. (2016). *Careers education: International literature review*. London: Education Endowment Foundation.

- https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/ier/publications/2016/hughes_et_al_2016_eef_lit_review.pdf
- Lam, S. K. Y., & Hui, E. K. P. (2010). Factors affecting the involvement of teachers in guidance and counselling as a whole-school approach. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 38(2), 219-234.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03069881003674962>
- Lee, C. K. J & Chun, W. S. (2016). Xiang Gang jiao shi kan sheng ya gui jiao yu lao shi de jiao se ji qi qi shi [Teachers' perspective on the role of career and life planning teachers: Implications for career and life planning education in Hong Kong]. *Hong Kong Teachers' Centre Journal*, 15, 27-43.
- Legislative Council Secretariat. (2016). *Legislative council question 13: Life planning education in Hong Kong* (LC Paper No. IN15/14-15).
<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201605/18/P201605180339.htm>
- Leung, S. A. (2005). Career and life planning: Trans-theoretical assumptions and strategies. *Asian Journal of Counselling*, 12, 79-93. (In Chinese).
- MacBeath, J. (1997, June 29). Hands up all those who think schools get better when threatened by a big stick?. *Scotland on Sunday*.
- MacBeath, J. (2005). Leadership as distributed: A matter of practice. *School Leadership & Management*, 25(4), 349-366.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13634230500197165>
- Mann, A. (2015). *It's who you meet: Why employer contact at schools make a difference to the employment prospect of young adults*. Education and Employers Taskforce. https://www.educationandemployers.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/its_who_you_meet_final_26_06_12.pdf
- MingPao. (2020, December 3). *Zhong da yanjiu: Gaozhong sheng shengxue zui ting mama hua si chengren shou fumu yingxiang pao li shengya guihua jiaoshi [Research from CUHK: Study plan of 40% of senior secondary school students were affected by parents]*. <https://bit.ly/3reT8AO>
- PwC for the Gatsby Foundation. (2014). *Assessing benefits of good practice in school career guidance*. London: Gatsby Charitable Foundation.
<https://www.gatsby.org.uk/uploads/education/reports/pdf/pwc-assessing-benchmarks-of-good-practice-in-school-career-guidance.pdf>
- Spillane, J. P. (2006) *Distributed leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Task Force on Review of School Curriculum. (2020). *Optimise the curriculum for the future: Foster whole-person development and diverse talents*. Hong Kong: Author.
- Tsui, K. T., Lee, C. K. J., Hui, K. F. S., Chun, W. S. D., & Chan, N. C. K. (2019). Academic and career aspiration and destinations: A Hong Kong perspective on

- adolescent transition. *Education research international*, 2019.
<https://doi.org/10.1155/2019/3421953>.
- Watts, A. G. (2014). Cross-national reviews of career guidance systems: Overview and reflections. *Journal of the National Institute for Career Education and Counselling*, 32, 4-15.
- Wong, P.W. L. (2017). Career and life planning education in Hong Kong: Challenges and opportunities on the theoretical and empirical fronts. *Hong Kong Teachers' Centre Journal*, 16, 125-149.
- Wong, P.W. L., Yuen, M., & Chen, G. (2020). Career-related teacher support: A review of roles that teachers play in supporting students' career planning. *Journal of Psychologists and Counsellors in School*, 1-12.
<http://doi:10.1017/jgc.2020.30>
- Xing, X., & Rojewski, J. W. (2018). Family influences on career decision-making self-efficacy of Chinese secondary vocational students. *New Waves Educational Research & Development*, 21(1), 48-67.
- Yip, S. Y. W. (2020). *How compatible are the Hong Kong Benchmarks for Career and Life Development (HKBM) and the education bureau's guide on life planning education and career guidance?*. Retrieved from CLAP for Youth@JC ("CLAP") Phase II: Hong Kong Benchmarks for Career and Life Development website: <https://hkbm.clapforyouth.org.hk/main/articles/>
- Yip, S. Y. W., & Fung, J. C. C. (2019). "*Ti yan shi xue xi*" *huo dong cheng xiao yan jiu: Di yi jie duan bao gao [Research on the effectiveness of "experiential learning" activities: Phase one report]*. Hong Kong: Education Policy Research Centre, Hong Kong Policy Research Institute Ltd.
- Yuen, M. T., Yau, F. S.Y., Tsui, J. Y. C., Shao, S.Y. S., Tsang, J. C. T., & Lee, B. S. F. (2018). Career education and vocational training in Hong Kong: Implication for school-based career counseling. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counseling*, 41, 449-467. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10447-018-9361-z>
- Zou, T. X., Mickleborough, N., Ho, S. S., & Yip, S. Y. W. (2015). Students as learning experience designers: The effect of student-driven approaches in a Hong Kong study. *International Journal of Pedagogies and Learning*, 10, 179 - 193.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/22040552.2015.1135497>