

A Gateway to the Statistical Profession in Hong Kong
(Press release to be issued on 2nd October 2008)

According to the Hong Kong Statistical Society (HKSS), over 120 candidates have obtained qualifications at various levels of the statistical profession by taking the HKSS examination since 2002.

“The statistical professional examinations conducted by the HKSS provide a route into the statistical profession for those who have not been able to pursue a degree course in statistics or who wish to join the statistical profession after studying or working in another discipline. In the past seven years, we are very pleased to see that many persons have joined the statistical profession by obtaining qualifications at various levels of the HKSS examination. On average, about 60 candidates registered for each round of the examination in the past years. So far, 12 candidates have obtained the Graduate Diploma, 52 candidates the Higher Certificate and 57 candidates the Ordinary Certificate. Almost half of the candidates obtaining Ordinary or Higher Certificates scored credit or distinction,” said Professor W K LI, Chairman of the Professional Affairs Committee of the HKSS. Professor LI is also the Head and a Chair Professor of the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science of the University of Hong Kong.

The structure of the HKSS examination, same as the one offered by the Royal Statistical Society (RSS), consists of three levels, viz the Ordinary Certificate, the Higher Certificate and the Graduate Diploma. They correspond to the Diploma, Higher Diploma and Degree levels in the Hong Kong education system.

“To cope with changes and provide greater flexibility, the syllabus of the Graduate Diploma examination will be changed into one with five modules. The beauty of the modular format is that a candidate can take each module separately, obtain certificate separately for each module, and eventually obtain their Graduate Diploma qualification after completing all modules. This new modular format will be fully phased in from 2009. The existing traditional five-paper format of the Graduate Diploma examination, in which the papers need to be taken in groups, will continue to be available in 2009, but will cease to be offered in 2010.” said Mr. FUNG Hing-Wang, Chairman of the HKSS Examination Board. Mr. Fung is a senior member of the HKSS and a senior staff of the Government Statistical Service.

Details of the new modular format for the Graduate Diploma examination can be found on the website of the HKSS at www.hkss.org.hk.

As regards the Higher Certificate examination, it will fully adopt the modular format with eight modules starting from the 2009 May round of the examination. Candidates who have passed each module will be separately certified; and when they are successful in either (a) modules 1 to 6 or (b) modules 1 to 4, 7 and 8, they will be awarded the Higher Certificate in Statistics. Candidates who wish to proceed to the Graduate Diploma in Statistics should have been successful in modules 1 to 6. The traditional form of the Higher Certificate examination, in which candidates must pass three papers at the same time, will cease to be offered in 2009.

“The new modular format facilitates candidates to prepare for the modules step by step in accordance with their specific situation and pace of progress, so as to obtain relevant qualifications of the statistical profession,” continued Mr. Fung.

“The qualifications awarded by the HKSS are widely recognized and respected, locally and internationally, by employers in the public and private sectors. For instance, the qualifications at different levels awarded by the HKSS have been accepted by the Hong Kong SAR Government as meeting the entry requirements to the statistical officer grade or the statistician grade in the government,” pointed out by Mr. Fung.

Under the Agreement between the HKSS and RSS, bilingual papers have been introduced for the Ordinary Certificate and Higher Certificate examinations since the May 2004 round of examination by the HKSS; in other words, candidates can opt to sit for either the English or the Chinese papers.

“Though the HKSS examination has become completely self-financing starting from the 2005 round of examination, the HKSS has continued to keep various kinds of fees related to the professional examination lower than those charged by the RSS,” said Ms Sharon Ng, Secretary of the HKSS Examination Board.

“With reference to the latest scale of examination fees set by the RSS, the HKSS examination fees for the coming round of examination have been slightly revised. The fees for each level or paper of the 2009 round of the HKSS examination will continue to be around 20% lower than those of the RSS examination in 2009,” Ms. Ng continued.

Before registering for sitting the examination, candidates must register to become Examination Associates first. The deadline for registration as Examination Associates for taking the 2009 round of the examination is end January 2009. The annual subscription fee for enrolment as Examination Associate of the HKSS is HK\$540.

“Also, candidates may apply for exemption for different levels of the HKSS examination, provided they have the relevant academic qualifications from tertiary or vocational institutes. Application for exemption must reach the HKSS Examination Office not later than 31 January 2009”, Ms. Ng added.

The 2009 round of the HKSS examination will take place on 19-21 May 2009. Acceptance for registration has already commenced in October 2008. Details of the fees required, application forms for registration as Examination Associates and for sitting specific examination papers, and past papers and solution for reference are available on the HKSS web page at www.hkss.org.hk.

To enable persons interested to know more about the HKSS examination, the HKSS will organize an examination seminar. All are welcome to attend the seminar. The time and venue of the seminar will be announced in the HKSS website.

If any persons wish to obtain more information concerning the HKSS examination or the above seminar, they are welcome to contact the HKSS at the following address and contact numbers :

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