

Quality Education Fund
Application with Grant Sought Not Exceeding \$200,000
Part B: Project Proposal

Project Title Strategy for catering diverse learning needs: e-learning with school-based skill-focused resources	Project Number 2021/0080 (Revised)
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Basic Information

Name of School: Yuen Long Catholic Secondary School

Beneficiaries

- (a) Sector: Secondary
- (b) Students: 210 (S3 to S4)
- (c) Teachers: 12
- (d) Parents: 210

Proposal

(I) Project Needs

(a)	<p>Please state the aims of the project in clear and concise terms and elaborate on how the proposed project could impact on school development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To cater for learner diversity through developing 32 sets of school-based skill-focused learning and teaching e-resources for S3 and S4 students in English reading • To raise learning and teaching efficiency through incorporating the e-learning in teaching English reading • To keep track of students' progress through the use of data-supported analysis of reading strengths and weaknesses • To diversify teachers' professional capacity and pedagogical practices through the introduction of e-learning and skill-focused teaching 												
(b)	<p>(i) What are the areas of the needs and priorities of the school?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance learning and teaching to facilitate Ss' knowledge on subjects / learning areas / generic skills development • Enhance school management / leadership and teachers' professional development / wellness • Others (please specify): Enhance Ss' confidence in English reading <p>(ii) Please give background information to justify the demonstrated needs as mentioned in (b)(i).</p> <p>School Development Plan: Our school has long attached great importance to raising the effectiveness and efficiency of learning and teaching. In our school development plans, the top two issues in learning and teaching are to (1) cater for learner diversity and (2) strengthen e-learning to promote reading. Our school has very diverse groups of students. A one-size-fits-all approach in pedagogy and material design is not effective in stretching the potential of the high achievers while assisting the weaker ones to catch up. We therefore need to develop school-based resources with different levels of difficulty and specific skill focus, to allow teaching to be done strategically and effectively. Ever since the pandemic, our panel has been more and more equipped for the learning and teaching effectiveness brought by e-learning, in terms of knowledge and readiness to implement. With the use of technology, we see the benefits of using an online learning platform to systemically documenting students' work. We hope to not only develop school-based resources, but launch these resources on a school-based e-learning platform and use the e-resources for learning and teaching in class and outside class. Online learning tools can better allow teachers to keep track of students' progress, support more evidence-based analysis and identify students' strengths and weaknesses with data support. This project therefore is aligned with our school needs by developing school-based e-resources and promote use of e-learning to cater for learner diversity and enhance learning and teaching efficiency.</p> <p>Survey Finding & Panel Development Plan: According to our internal Examination Evaluation Reports (20-21), students' reading strengths and weaknesses were identified as below, based on teachers' general impression upon marking. Our teachers made concrete suggestions for learning and teaching improvements in the following school year.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 20%;"></th> <th style="width: 30%;">S.3 students</th> <th style="width: 50%;">S.4 students</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Strength(s)</td> <td>Vocabulary</td> <td>Factual information question, T/F/NG questions, Matching</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Weakness(es)</td> <td>Reported Speech</td> <td>Reference, Summary cloze</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Suggestion(s)</td> <td>More focused practices</td> <td>Skill-focused practices to deepen strengths and enhance weaknesses</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		S.3 students	S.4 students	Strength(s)	Vocabulary	Factual information question, T/F/NG questions, Matching	Weakness(es)	Reported Speech	Reference, Summary cloze	Suggestion(s)	More focused practices	Skill-focused practices to deepen strengths and enhance weaknesses
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Suggestion(s)	More focused practices	Skill-focused practices to deepen strengths and enhance weaknesses											

The project is designed based on the needs our panel observed among our students. Skill-focused practices are needed to be developed in this project to build on students' strengths and assist them with their weaknesses. This at the same time expands teachers' professional capacity in pedagogy, adopting skill-focused teaching and e-learning.

Literature Review Summary:

From "Learning Progression Framework for English Language" endorsed by the Curriculum Development Council (2017), it was suggested how data about students' ability and performance can be collected to explore how constructive feedback could be given to motivate students and to enhance learning and teaching. Learning outcome is separated into different levels so growth of students can be seen as a continuum, working towards different learning targets. As seen from the example given on reading skills framework, reading strategies can be separated into different focused tasks. There is thus a need to develop resources that are skill-focused and make use of data to continuously monitor students' progress.

(iii) Please elaborate on the innovative ideas or new practices to enhance, adapt, complement and/or supplement the existing practices that will facilitate the development of the school to address the needs specific to its own context.

The project brings new practices to our school in raising learning and teaching efficiency in several ways:

1) Tailored materials for diverse ability groups (VS one-size-fits-all materials)

Currently, materials are one-size-fits-all. All ability groups use the same set of learning resources. This limits the high achievers and cannot help the weaker ones to progress. The project brings innovation in material design. All school-based reading materials to be developed come in two different levels of difficulty. All reading passages and questions consists of two levels of difficulties, one for higher ability groups and one for the lower ones. This assists our school in reaching our goal of better catering for learners' needs through tailored materials.

2) E-learning: More timely feedback (VS paper-based learning: longer feedback cycle)

With resources launched on an e-learning platform, learning and teaching can be done more flexibly, even outside classroom learning time. Students' learning hours can be maximised and even more self-paced while our teachers will gain more pedagogical insights and confidence in conducting reading activities online.

The use of auto-marking on the e-learning platform contributes to learning and teaching by giving students' instant performance results and saving teachers' manual marking time for timely feedback-giving. In the past, marking reading practices may take weeks, which delay students' chances of improvements from timely feedback. With new e-learning tools, teachers can adjust lesson focus based on immediate results and students can receive timely and more personal assistance.

3) Data-supported performance analysis (vs manual data input and analysis)

In the past, students' data analysis is all based on manual data input of multiple practices throughout the year. Analysis of performance are usually done after each term. This project brings new change to performance analysis. All analysis will be better supported with evidence and data auto-saved on the platform. Comparison and analysis can be made automatically any time during the year by drawing data from the platform instantly. More in-depth analysis such as each question's data analysis will be made possible through this project to specifically identify students' areas in need. For instance, teachers can easily extract all answers of all challenging questions (highest error rate) from the data base to debrief with students.

(II) Project Feasibility

Please describe the design of the project, including:

(i) Approach / Design / Activity

Approach

The school-based reading materials will be co-planned together with the curriculum consultant(s) and be reviewed by all teachers involved in this project. These materials will be launched onto an e-learning platform, supporting students to complete the reading practices online, in class or at home, and receive instant marked results. Both teachers and students can obtain auto-generated reports, showing students' performance, comparison individual/class with the average, and their reading strengths and weaknesses. This helps teachers and students to collect evidence-based analysis on their learning progress.

Structure

The 32 new reading sets will be integrated as school-based materials into the S.3 and S.4 school curriculum. These sets (16 sets for S.3 and 16 sets for S.4) will be used for all ability groups across the whole form and be used in classroom and as self-directed learning tasks. Our teachers will schedule these reading sets into our regular teaching plan, sparing around 2 lessons on each reading set (1 lesson on scaffolding and conducting the reading activity and

1 lesson on debriefing based on instant answer checking and report).

With the auto-marking feature on the platform, answers can be auto-marked and performance can be graded instantly. Teachers can immediately give out feedback right upon students' completion, shorting the marking and feedback cycle. Teachers can also obtain the auto-generated reports which provide detail analysis of students' performance. Based on students' instant data, teachers can make timely adjustments to teaching plans and strategies for the lessons after.

Design

School-based Reading Resources

We plan to develop 32 sets of reading resources in total, 16 sets for S.3 and 16 sets for S.4. The 16 sets for S.3 and S.4 respectively are especially tailored-made for our students according to their diverse ability and our school curriculum needs.

Based on the current teaching curriculum, the 32 sets developed in this project will align with the current teaching themes as closely as possible. However, we are also aware that reading skills are the focus of this project. Mapping newly developed materials with the reading skills will be our first priority, followed by the themes when sourcing suitable resources.

As this project emphasises progressiveness of skills, while we cover as much of the following reading skills, we will rearrange the sequence of teaching the skills, starting with some basic and foundational ones then progress to more advanced ones based on the curriculum consultant's advice.

	Themes (Extracted from current Textbook)	Reading Skills
S.3	Leisure and Entertainment Rights and responsibilities Innovation and Technology Wonderful things and people Nature and environment Study, school life and work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guessing the meaning of unknown words and expressions • Inferring meaning from context • Organizing information • Identifying attitudes • Following the development of a point of view or argument • Using general knowledge and logic to infer meaning • Understanding figurative language • Distinguishing fact from opinion
S.4	Entertainment Across Cultures – Food Nature and Environment Science, Communication and Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinguishing main ideas from supporting details • Guessing the meanings of unfamiliar words • Mapping a text – understanding how a text is organised • Inferring main ideas and facts in a text

i) Diverse topics and text-types

Topics will be chosen based on school-based curriculum and students' maturity and will be co-planned with curriculum consultant(s) before actual development. The reading passages will cover a range of text types, such as article, report, letter to the editor etc., which are frequently seen genres that students have to master as preparation before doing senior form curriculum.

ii) Skill-focused

Unlike the existing reading comprehension with combined skill types, each new school-based reading set has a specific reading skill focus. It is one of our panel strategies to cater for our learners' diversity through splitting reading into more focused learning targets for students to achieve and for teachers to better identify their weaknesses and assist them. We propose developing sets under these skills: factual, reference, inference, paraphrasing, vocabulary and thematic. These skill sets are suggested because on our teaching needs and the weaknesses we identified in previous cohort of students. The finalised skill focuses will be determined after our initial project development meeting and consultation meeting.

iii) Two Levels of Difficulty

Both the 16 sets for S.3 and S.4 cover two levels of difficulties, a challenging set for higher ability groups and an easy set for lower ability groups to choose from. This is our panel's another strategy to cater for learners' diversity. The challenging set will be different from the easy set in several ways: (1) more word count in reading passage; (2)

more complex vocabulary and sentence structures; (3) more diverse type of questions such as long questions; and (4) more questions. This allows different ability groups to choose learning materials that truly satisfy their learning needs. Having multiple practices is important to our students as this allows them to have more chances to practise and consolidate reading skills. This helps build their skills strategically and boost their confidence.

iv) Question Types

The skill-focused reading resources cover question types that will appear in the senior English curriculum assessment. Questions such as multiple-choice, fill in the blanks, short question, long question etc. will be designed.

After completion of all sets, students are expected to have should have better understanding of reading skills, more practices and consolidations should have sufficient exposure to all kinds of question types and mastered different strategies needed for different questions.

School-based E-learning Platform

The e-learning platform is an online learning community for English reading. This platform stores all 32 new reading practices for S.3 and S.4 students to complete in class and at home. The platform supports individual account for students and teachers to access the practices, results, reports and data stored.

This platform supports reading practices to be done online. Reading passages and questions of all forms are clearly displayed. This platform supports auto-marking and recognises students' answers in all forms, such as multiple-choice questions, short responses and long questions. Students can obtain their graded results instantly after submitting their work. Upon answer checking, the programme will provide an explanation to the answer to help students understand.

The school-based e-learning generates performance report in our template, showing students' results and a detailed analysis of students' strengths and weaknesses. Teachers will be able to access and view individual script as well as answers to particular questions, which facilitates the debriefing process. Such reports will be automatically generated for teachers to monitor and follow up with students' self-directed progress and needs. These data will be kept and continued to be accumulated after the project period.

The platform can be accessed on different electronic gadgets and securely saves students' data in all practices for teachers to better monitor their learning progress.

Activity

The Panel Head will first lay out project objectives with panel members to introduce the rationale and concept of the project. Together with S.3 and S.4 form co-ordinators and English teachers, a Project Committee will be elected to assist the design and implementation of project. Once the project framework is finalised, the idea will be shared with students and parents via meetings or emails so they know about the project objectives and their respective roles in this project.

During the preparation stage, co-plan meetings will be held to design the framework of the programme, decide on the reading resources content focus, skills set, question formats and the level of difficulty to address student needs. The Project Committee will seek advice from the hired curriculum consultant(s), who has/have expertise in e-learning resources development, to finalise the project materials. The Project Committee as well as teachers involved will assist in reviewing the resources developed. When the e-learning platform is ready, they will also conduct test run on the e-learning platform to ensure smooth operation. Teachers involved, mainly S.3 and S.4 teachers, will attend trainings on e-learning and skill-focused pedagogy as well as the operation of the use of platform, to know about the learning supporting features on the platform such as auto-marking, auto-generation of performance report etc.

Most of the new reading sets will be used in classroom, with a few of them assigned as holiday homework or self-directed learning use. To support implementation in classroom, throughout the project period, each teacher involved will conduct at least one lesson co-planning, lesson observation or peer-evaluation to gain more insights from one another and share good practices to bring higher teaching efficiency. An internal sharing on use of resources and e-learning pedagogy will be done at the end of the project.

A performance report can be generated from each reading set. The English teacher can make use of individual

reports to monitor each student's progress and give timely and personal assistance. The English panel can also make use of the class and form reports as well to review the school curriculum, forming clearer curriculum goals and directions to address students' developmental needs in the following term or academic year. These reports can be shared with parents as evidence of learning and progress so parents know how to better support their children learning.

(ii) **Key Implementation Details**

Project period: (Apr/2023) to (Mar/2024)

Month/ Year	Content / Activity / Event	Target Participants
Apr 2023	Panel Initial Meeting: English Language Panel Head introduces project and its objectives to all panel members; S.3&4 English Ts co-plan resources (focus, levels of difficulty and skill types); S.3&4 T elect members to form Project Committee	English Panel Head, English Ts & S.3&4 Form Co-ordinators
	Source IT company to develop a school-based e-learning platform; Co-plan Meetings with Curriculum Consultant(s) to develop structure, outline and choice of content of school-based resources	Project Committee, IT company, Consultant(s)
May 2023 - Feb 2024	Co-plan meetings with I.T. and curriculum consultant(s): Develop and review 32 sets of school-based reading; Launch materials onto platform; Program auto-marking and report generation system; Test features and system Teacher Trainings & Meetings: skill-focused teaching pedagogy, e-learning in English reading; online pedagogy; internal lesson observation and evaluation; continuous co-planning; evaluations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 Teacher Training Sessions of 1.5 hours long with our panel members as professional development. Hiring a part-time consultant to co-plan and co-develop for our 32 sets of school-based resources (Estimated Time: 3.5 hrs/set) Student and Parent Meetings/Emails: learn about project objective; introduction of e-learning and skill-focused English reading learning method Project Committee: Evaluate e-learning pedagogy and use of school-based resources; Gather usage analysis and feedback; Document learning reports for curriculum review and panel co-plan meetings	Project Committee, English panel, IT company, curriculum consultant(s), S.3-S.4 students and parents
Mar 2024	Final Evaluation Meeting: Review project outcome, adoption of new e-learning pedagogy and lesson design; co-plan school-based curriculum Teacher Professional Development: Project sharing (pedagogy, practical practices and experience) within panel and with non-English panel teachers	Project Committee, English Panel Head, senior form English Ts, Form Co-ordinators (all forms)

(b) Please explain the extent of Ts' and/or principal's involvement and their roles in the project.

(i) Number of Ts involved and degree of input (time, types, etc.):

Principal	supervise the English panel to implement project, mobilise resources and manpower, communicate with parents
English Panel Head	oversee and lead project, give advice, co-plan school-based resources content, levels, choice, and structure, co-plan implementation plan, implement project, conduct lesson observation and curriculum review
Form Co-ordinator	assist Project Committee, co-plan and review resources, conduct lesson observation and arrange peer-evaluation, document reports, evaluate
English Ts	assist form co-ordinators to co-plan, attend teacher training, implement project and use

	resources developed, conduct lesson observation and arrange peer-evaluation, document class reports, evaluate
IT Head	Provide technical support to class preparation and in-class implementation, give advice on technical resources for the project, communicate with IT company on technical issues

(ii) Roles of Ts in the project:
 Leader Co-ordinator Developer

(c) Please provide the budget of the project and justify the major items involved.

Grant Sought: HK\$194,700

Budget Item	Expenditure Detail (Including the breakdown for the budget items)		Justifications
	Item	Amount (\$)	
i) Service	Hiring a part-time consultant to co-plan and co-develop for our 32 sets of school-based resources Estimated Time: 3.5 hrs/set Rate: \$780/hr (\$780/hr x 3.5 hrs x 32 sets) Qualifications –Over 6 years of curriculum and English Language resources development experience in publishing industry	\$87,360	Hiring a professional consultant to assist us to co-plan and develop the resources that can meet our needs and cater for our learning diversity.
	IT company to purchase the licence and customise the platform, database and store our online lessons Estimated breakdown: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • platform licences & customisation (\$80,000) • develop and store the 32 online lessons (\$20,000) Qualifications – An e-learning company that specialises in courseware development and has a learning management system developed and used by HK schools. Project reference will be checked.	\$100,000	Hiring an e-learning company to customise a stable platform to support concurrent login and to produce reports that we can trace their performance and review the performance timely to help shorten our teaching, learning and feedback cycle so that we can improve teaching and learning quality and efficiency. The customised platform will continue to be used and is compatible with new student and teacher accounts and support the use of online learning of future cohorts. Generation of students' data can continue to be drawn after the project period.
	2 Teacher Training Sessions of 1.5 hours long with our panel members as professional development. (\$780/hr x 1.5 hrs x 2 sessions)	\$2,340	Hiring a professional trainer
ii) General expenses	Audit	\$5,000	Required by QEF.
Total Grand Sought (\$):		\$194,700	

(III) Expected Projects Outcome

(i)	<p>Please describe how to evaluate the effectiveness of the project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation: S.3 & S.4 teachers observe students' motivation and confidence in doing skills-focused practices on e-platform through their participation and eagerness to explain answers; The observation can be confirmed coupled by the results from performance reports to adjusting teaching strategies. • Pre-and post-activity surveys: Surveys before and after project asking students and teachers' feedback: The developed resources better assist students of different abilities; The use of e-learning pedagogy increases learning and teaching efficiency; the use of auto-marking and auto-generated reports assist teachers to give timely feedback to students; the use of data improves learning and teaching efficiency; more than half of the teachers involved have more confidence in e-learning and skill-focused teaching strategy; students find the school-based materials more focused and effective.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' performance change in term assessments: Students have better understanding of their reading strengths and weaknesses and see their own progress (compare exam results in previous year and this year's, compare results change in each term); Teachers and students compare the results of the first set and last set of the same skill set, expecting 20% of students to improve. Others (please specify): More than 80% of English panel members involved in the project attended the teaching training; More than 80% of teachers acknowledge the effectiveness of e-learning and skill-focused teaching in English reading; More than 80% of teachers experience a shorter feedback-giving cycle, give more specific feedback to students; made adjustments in teaching based on students' performance report; implement e-learning to raise learning and teaching efficiency.
(ii)	<p>Please state the project deliverables or outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 32 sets of school-based skill-focused reading resources for S.3-S.4 32 sets of teaching guides (Answer key and explanations) School-based e-learning platform with reading resources and e-learning supporting tools such as auto-marking, auto-generation of report Performance Analysis Reports (Individual, Class & Form) Two teaching trainings
(iii)	<p>Sustainability of the Project</p> <p>Post-Project – Management & Administration: This project is designed to benefit at least the coming 5 cohorts of students. We will set aside budget on sustaining the running of the platform, including opening new accounts for students and teachers so they could continue to access the developed platform after the project year and keep the data collection going. Other recurring expenses such as website maintenance, upgrade and renewal will be borne by other school funding.</p> <p>Post-Project Plans: This skill-focused approach in this project is a new approach that we adopt in our English panel. After the project period and collecting teachers and students' feedback, we will consider extending similar approach and design of materials to other levels, say some weaker S.5-6 students, so the reading skills developed can be further strengthened and deepened with more challenging content.</p>

(IV) School's Commitment

- Our school will ensure that the learning and teaching materials to be developed meet students' learning needs, levels, age and abilities. Moreover, the content and information should be correct, complete, objective and impartial.
- Our school understands that the expenditure items funded by the QEF is one-off. Our school will bear the recurrent expenditure incurred, including maintenance costs, daily operating costs, etc. and the possible consequences that may arise.
- Our school will ensure that all procurement of goods and services is conducted on an open, fair and competitive basis with measures taken to avoid conflict of interests in the procurement.
- Our school acknowledges the acceptance of the QEF Intellectual Property Rights Policy and will ensure that the deliverables shall not infringe any copyright or other intellectual property rights of any third party.
- Our school confirms that the copyrights of the deliverables/materials should be vested with the QEF. Any reproduction, adaptation, distribution, dissemination or making available of the deliverables to the public by the service provider(s) for commercial purposes is strictly prohibited.

(V) Report Submission Schedule

The school commits to submit proper reports in strict accordance with the following schedule:

Project Management (Should be submitted via the "Electronic Project Management System" (EPMS))		Financial Management (Hard copy together with supporting documents should be submitted to the QEF Secretariat by mail or in person)	
Type of report and reporting period	Report due on	Type of report and reporting period	Report due on
Final Report 01/04/2023 - 31/03/2024	30/06/2024	Final Financial Report 01/04/2023 - 31/03/2024	30/06/2024