

# **ELEMENTS OF BUSINESS SKILLS**

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING SYLLABUS**

### **Upper Secondary Normal (Technical) Course**

Implementation starting with  
2020 Secondary Three Cohort



Ministry of Education  
SINGAPORE

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# SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

- Introduction to Normal (Technical) Elements of Business Skills
  - Desired Outcomes of Education

# 1. INTRODUCTION

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## INTRODUCTION TO NORMAL (TECHNICAL) ELEMENTS OF BUSINESS SKILLS

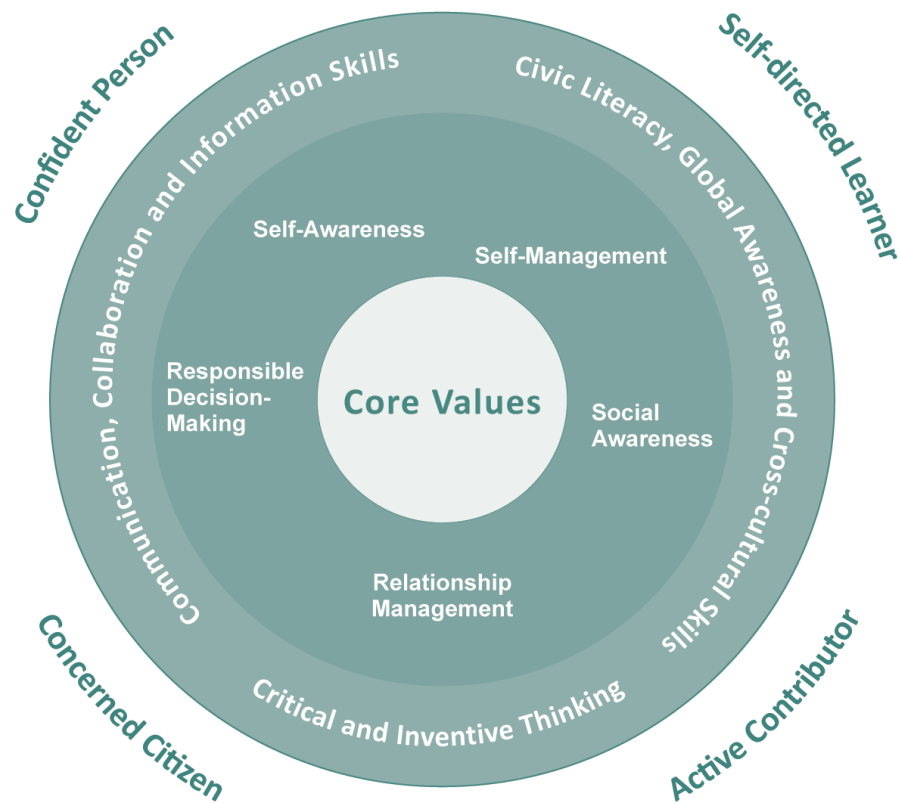
The Elements of Business Skills (EBS) syllabus is designed as an introduction to business concepts by understanding business activities, focusing on basic marketing and customer relations, in Singapore's context. Students will have opportunities to acquire foundational business knowledge and develop transferable employability skills in the service industry, namely the Travel and Tourism, Hospitality and Retail industries. Thus, the study of EBS will provide students with a basic understanding of business concepts and an awareness of the industry for further studies in institutes of higher learning and careers.

The service industry continues to play a significant role in Singapore's economic growth and offers employment opportunities. With globalisation, changing demographics and technological advancement, businesses are innovating and reinventing themselves to stay ahead of the competition. The study of EBS in the selected industries would provide students with opportunities to learn and develop 21st Century Competencies (Figure 1.1) needed to thrive in an increasingly volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous world.

## DESIRED OUTCOMES OF EDUCATION

It is hoped that every student will embody the Desired Outcomes of Education (DOE) attributes by becoming:

- a **confident person** who has a strong sense of right and wrong, is adaptable and resilient, knows himself, is discerning in judgment, thinks independently and critically, and communicates effectively;
- a **self-directed learner** who takes responsibility for his own learning, who questions, reflects and perseveres in the pursuit of learning;
- an **active contributor** who is able to work effectively in teams, exercises initiative, takes calculated risks, is innovative and strives for excellence; and
- a **concerned citizen** rooted in Singapore, with a strong civic consciousness, is informed, and takes an active part in bettering the lives of others around him.



**Figure 1.1** 21st Century Competencies Framework

**Civic Literacy, Global Awareness and Cross-cultural Skills**

In the EBS syllabus, students will learn foundational business knowledge through the study of businesses in the Travel and Tourism, Hospitality and Retail industries in Singapore. As students develop an awareness of the business landscape development in Singapore, its opportunities and challenges, they will also be more reflective of the knowledge and skills they need. The importance to add value at the work place through higher productivity and improving standards will propel them to be an active and effective contributor to society.

With Singapore being a multicultural country and popular tourist destination, students will develop a deeper understanding of the differing needs and wants of people as they observe customers shopping, dining and visiting various attractions. The recognition and appreciation of diversity will enhance their development of cross-cultural skills, facilitating their interaction and work with people from diverse backgrounds, and making them more aware of global influences on Singapore at the same time.

**Critical and Inventive Thinking**

As the world evolves and changes, it is essential for students to develop critical and inventive thinking capabilities to meet new challenges and opportunities. Through EBS, students have an opportunity to demonstrate an enterprising mindset by embarking on a business investigation process recommending improvements to a business. Students learn to evaluate information for its

credibility and relevance in the business investigation process and apply decision-making skills as they consider the options to derive the best recommendation for an authentic business.

### **Communication, Collaboration and Information Skills**

The EBS syllabus provides many opportunities for students to develop their communication, collaboration and information skills. Apart from equipping students with the skills to manage information from online and offline sources, students learn to be responsible users of information by applying media literacy competencies. EBS also reinforces the importance of verbal, non-verbal and written communication skills learnt through exploring communication with customers in authentic settings. Through experiential learning in a constructivist learning environment, students will have the opportunity to exchange ideas and co-construct knowledge and understanding with their peers to maximise their learning. An increased awareness of how businesses use information and communication technologies (ICT) to improve their marketing mix and customer service will help students to understand businesses better.

### **IT Masterplan 4**

In Masterplan 4 (mp4) ICT is used to develop knowledge through subject mastery, skills through 21<sup>st</sup> Century Competencies and attitudes through being responsible digital citizens. The business investigation process in EBS will instill in students the necessary dispositions afforded by mp4.



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# SECTION 2: CONTENT

- Design of Normal (Technical) Elements of Business Skills
  - Syllabus Aims
  - Syllabus Outcomes
  - Syllabus Framework
    - Syllabus Features
  - Syllabus Amplification
- Syllabus and Business Investigation Tasks for Secondary 3 and 4
  - Content Alignment to MOE Initiatives and Financial Literacy

## 2. CONTENT

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### DESIGN OF NORMAL (TECHNICAL) ELEMENTS OF BUSINESS SKILLS

The conceptualising of the EBS syllabus is guided by the following principles:

- To update knowledge, skills and values so that the syllabus remains relevant and reflective of business in the Travel and Tourism, Hospitality and Retail industries.
- To build foundational business knowledge, skills and values undergirded by conceptual understanding that will support students' further studies and work.
- To scope syllabus content and instructional activities such that they are age-appropriate and accessible for the profile of Normal (Technical) stream students.
- To ensure alignment with Desired Outcomes of Education, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Competencies and IT Masterplan 4.

The 2020 EBS syllabus at the upper secondary level is an elective subject offered at Secondary 3 for the Normal (Technical) [N(T)] course. Adhering to the N(T) Step Curriculum Framework, the subject addresses students' motivation and joy of learning by providing a variety of enriched learning experiences and equipping them with foundational business knowledge, transferable employability skills, and values that are, relevant for progression to higher institutes of learning and future employment.

### SYLLABUS AIMS

The syllabus aims to provide students with the opportunity to develop foundational business knowledge, employability skills and values that are transferable over different areas of work, for the future. The Travel and Tourism, Hospitality and Retail industries in the service industry provide the context where application of these knowledge, skills and values can be demonstrated.

## **SYLLABUS OUTCOMES**

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

This syllabus intends for students to develop knowledge and understanding of:

- basic business activities in the Travel and Tourism, Hospitality and Retail industries;
- basic marketing that focuses on understanding the needs and wants of customers and the marketing mix and
- basic customer relations, focusing on communicating with customers and providing quality customer service.

### **Skills**

This syllabus intends for students to develop the ability to:

- apply concepts in marketing and customer relations, including the use of relevant terminology, to different contexts in the Travel and Tourism, Hospitality and Retail industries.
- gather, select, interpret, analyse and evaluate information in the investigation of a business;
- think critically and innovatively to generate solutions and make decisions to improve marketing and customer relations;
- self-manage and direct personal learning to work independently and collaboratively;
- communicate effectively; and
- harness the use of use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) where appropriate.

### **Values and Attitudes**

This syllabus intends for students to develop the values and attitudes of:

- integrity and responsibility in making decisions;
- respect and social awareness in managing relationships with others;
- an enterprising mindset;
- resilience in overcoming challenges; and
- passion to pursue lifelong learning.

## SYLLABUS FRAMEWORK

In the EBS syllabus framework shown in Figure 2.1, the concepts of basic marketing and customer relations are at the core of the EBS syllabus. The middle ring represents the outcomes of syllabus, namely foundational business knowledge, decision-making skills and an enterprising mindset. The outer ring defines the scope of the syllabus to be within the three service industries of Travel and Tourism, Hospitality and Retail.



**Figure 2.1** Elements of Business Skills Syllabus Framework

## THE SYLLABUS FEATURES

### Foundational Business Knowledge

The foundational business knowledge includes the knowledge and understanding of the three units of the syllabus: Understanding Business Activities, Basic Marketing and Customer Relations.

**Unit 1: *Understanding business activities***

This unit helps students to understand the purpose of a business and the various types of businesses in the Travel and Tourism, Hospitality and Retail industries. Impact of competition and trends on the businesses, and careers in these industries, are also examined to develop an understanding of the challenges and opportunities presented.

**Unit 2: *Understanding basic marketing***

This unit helps students to understand the basics of marketing and how businesses meet the needs and wants of customers. This includes the use of market survey to gather information about target customers, and the marketing process to reach out to them.

**Unit 3: *Understanding customer relations***

This unit helps students to understand the need to provide quality service to customers and the importance of effective communication in building customer relations. Students will learn how to provide good customer service in different interactions with customers.

**Unit 4: *Business Investigation***

This unit helps students to understand the process and skills needed to carry out an investigation for a business to improve its marketing mix, so as to enhance its customers' experience. Students will select, interpret, analyse and evaluate information, and apply business knowledge to propose innovative and reasoned recommendations.

**Enterprising Mindset**

The landscape of business is constantly evolving due to economic, demographic and technological changes. Having an enterprising mindset prepares students for an evolving employment landscape, where employees are expected to seek continuous improvement to meet new challenges and demands. The ability to propose better ways of marketing and how to improve customer relations help to add value to a business. The disposition and mindset to contribute and improve oneself help to develop students as active contributors to society.

**Decision-making Skills**

Businesses and their employees have to make decisions on marketing and customer relations to grow the business. The syllabus provides opportunities for students to learn the process of gathering the information necessary to make a reasoned recommendation so as to enhance the customer experience for a real-world business. Sound decision-making skills are transferable and beneficial to students' future area of study and work.

## SYLLABUS AMPLIFICATION

### Unit 1 Understanding Business Activities

This unit introduces students to the concept of a business as an organisation that meets the needs and wants of customers. Resources are used in business activities to provide the desired goods and services. Businesses must innovate to keep up with changes in the business environment and to stay ahead of their competition.

Students will learn about the different types of businesses and their activities in the service industry: Travel and Tourism, Hospitality, and Retail. They will consider the impact of trends in the service industry and discuss ways businesses can innovate to meet the opportunities and overcome the threats presented. Students will also be aware of the career opportunities in the three industries and develop an enterprising mindset to prepare themselves for future study and employment in the service industry.

Content	Students will understand (that)	Learning Outcomes Students will be able to
1.1 Introduction to Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Purpose of business activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>what needs and wants are</li> <li>businesses satisfy the needs and wants of customers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>state the purpose of business</li> <li>state the benefits of businesses to the community</li> <li>identify the characteristics of goods and services</li> <li>state what customers' needs and wants are</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classification of businesses according to output</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the differences between businesses that produce goods and businesses that provide services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identify and describe the characteristics of goods producing businesses and service providing businesses</li> <li>classify businesses in terms of goods producing, service providing, and combinations of both</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resources for business activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>resources are needed for business to carry out its activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identify the resources involved in business activities: capital, land, labour, enterprise</li> </ul>

Content	Students will understand (that)	Learning Outcomes Students will be able to
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competition and trends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• businesses compete with one another for customers</li> <li>• the need for businesses to respond to the changing business landscape</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• state the meaning of direct and indirect competition</li> <li>• describe the impact of competition on businesses in the service industry</li> <li>• describe the impact of trends on businesses in the service industry, e.g.:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- changing customer expectations</li> <li>- technological developments</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>1.2 Businesses in the Singapore service industry</p> <p>1.2.1 Travel and Tourism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel agencies</li> <li>• Tourist attractions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what Travel and Tourism does</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify and describe the types of businesses in the Travel and Tourism industry: travel agencies, attractions: historical and cultural, nature and wildlife, commercial, events</li> </ul>
<p>1.2.2 Hospitality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodation</li> <li>• Food and beverage outlets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what Hospitality does</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify and describe the types of accommodation: hotel, serviced apartment, resort, hostel</li> <li>• identify and describe the types of food and beverage outlets: fine dining, theme, ethnic, family, buffet, coffee house, fast food, food court, hawker centre, catering service</li> </ul>



Content	Students will understand (that)	Learning Outcomes Students will be able to
<p>1.2.3 Retail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Store retailers</li> <li>• Non-store retailers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what Retail does</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify and describe the types of store retailers and non-store retailers               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- store retailers: speciality, convenience, department, supermarket, hypermarket</li> <li>- non-store retailers: e-retail, vending machine, pushcart, pop-up store</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>1.3 Careers and career paths in the Travel and Tourism, Hospitality, and Retail industries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• careers and career paths in the service industry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify and describe some of the jobs available in the Travel and Tourism, Hospitality, and Retail industries</li> <li>• outline possible career paths in the Travel and Tourism, Hospitality, and Retail industries</li> </ul>

## Unit 2 Basic Marketing

This unit focuses on the foundational aspects of marketing for businesses to meet the needs and wants of customers, and to be better than their competitors through their choice of marketing mix. Customers have different needs and wants, and identifying the target market(s) will help businesses to be focused in their marketing efforts. Market survey provides the information for businesses to reach their target market effectively.

Students will consider the different ways businesses can group customers and the survey methods that will help them gain a better understanding of their customers. They will discuss how businesses can innovate by improving their marketing mix to better attract their target customers. Students will also develop decision-making skills as they consider options and make the most suitable marketing recommendation for various business situations.

Content	Students will understand (that)	Learning Outcomes Students will be able to
2.1 Introduction to Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what marketing is the importance of understanding and meeting customers' needs and wants</li> <li>• four aspects of the marketing mix</li> <li>• what the marketing process is</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• state the purpose of marketing</li> <li>• state the importance of knowing customers' needs and wants</li> <li>• state and describe briefly the marketing mix: product, price, place and promotion</li> <li>• outline the marketing process</li> </ul>

Content	Students will understand (that)	Learning Outcomes Students will be able to
2.2 Know Your Customers 2.2.1 Grouping of customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• different customers have different needs and wants</li> <li>• customers can be grouped according to similar needs and wants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify and describe how customers can be grouped according to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- age</li> <li>- gender</li> <li>- income</li> <li>- occupation</li> <li>- geographic location</li> <li>- lifestyle</li> <li>- social group</li> <li>- benefit sought</li> </ul> </li> <li>• examine the possible needs and wants of a given customer group</li> <li>• describe what target market is</li> </ul>

Content	Students will understand (that)	Learning Outcomes Students will be able to
2.2.2 Understanding customer needs and wants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• market survey as a method to obtain information to understand customer needs and wants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• list the types of market surveys: personal survey, online survey, telephone survey and postal survey</li> <li>• conduct a market survey using a simple questionnaire</li> <li>• collate and present data collected using tables</li> <li>• analyse data presented in tables, bar charts and pie charts to make recommendations</li> </ul>
2.3 The Marketing Mix 2.3.1 Product <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aspects of product</li> <li>• Branding</li> <li>• Packaging</li> <li>• Support services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what product is</li> <li>• product can include goods and services</li> <li>• products offered by businesses in the Travel and Tourism, Hospitality, and Retail industries</li> <li>• the importance and use of brands</li> <li>• the importance and function of packaging for products</li> <li>• the importance of providing support services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• describe the different aspects of a product and how they appeal to different customers</li> <li>• identify the requirements of target customers</li> <li>• recommend suitable products, with reason(s), to meet the requirements of target customers</li> <li>• state what a brand is</li> <li>• explain the importance and use of branding for products</li> <li>• explain the importance and functions of packaging for products</li> <li>• explain the importance of providing support services</li> <li>• list examples of support services</li> </ul>

Content	Students will understand (that)	Learning Outcomes Students will be able to
<p>2.3.2 Pricing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Factors to consider when setting price</li> <li>• Pricing techniques</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what pricing is</li> <li>• the factors that influence pricing decisions</li> <li>• how pricing techniques can be used</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• describe the factors to consider when pricing a product</li> <li>• identify and describe the types of pricing techniques and their examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- product-line pricing</li> <li>- optional-product pricing</li> <li>- product-bundle pricing</li> <li>- odd-even pricing</li> <li>- discount pricing</li> </ul> </li> <li>• recommend, with reason(s), suitable pricing technique(s) for a given business scenario</li> </ul>
<p>2.3.3 Place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Factors to consider when deciding on physical location</li> <li>• Online presence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what place is</li> <li>• the use of online presence to reach target customer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify the type of location</li> <li>• explain the factors to consider in determining choice of location</li> <li>• identify the benefits of physical presence and online presence</li> </ul>

Content	Students will understand (that)	Learning Outcomes Students will be able to
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2.3.4 Promotion</li><li>• Promotion techniques</li>          <li>• Advertising<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Advertising media</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• what promotion is</li><li>• the purpose of promotion</li><li>• the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in online promotion and mobile platforms</li>          <li>• the different forms of advertising media</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• state the purpose of promotion</li><li>• identify the different types of promotion techniques:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- personal selling</li><li>- direct marketing</li><li>- advertising</li><li>- public relations</li><li>- sales promotion</li></ul></li><li>• recommend, with reason(s), suitable promotion technique(s) for a given business scenario</li><li>• give examples of various advertising media:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- newspapers</li><li>- magazines</li><li>- direct mail</li><li>- outdoor</li><li>- broadcast</li><li>- electronic</li></ul></li><li>• recommend, with reason(s), suitable advertising medium for a given business scenario</li></ul>

Content	Students will understand (that)	Learning Outcomes Students will be able to
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sales promotion               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sales promotion techniques</li> </ul> </li>   <li>• Public relations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the different forms of sales promotion techniques</li>   <li>• the different ways to create goodwill for business</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• give examples of sales promotion techniques:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- coupons</li> <li>- price deals</li> <li>- contests</li> <li>- gifts</li> <li>- samples</li> <li>- loyalty reward programmes</li> <li>- purchase-with-purchase</li> <li>- point-of-sale display</li> </ul> </li> <li>• recommend, with reason(s), suitable sales promotion techniques for a given business scenario</li> <li>• give examples of public relations activities:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- press releases</li> <li>- special events</li> <li>- corporate identity materials</li> <li>- sponsorship</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>2.3.5 Applying the marketing mix</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the marketing mix interacts to help businesses reach target customers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explain the marketing mix of businesses in the service industry</li> <li>• recommend, with reason(s), improvements to the marketing mix businesses in the service industry</li> </ul>

### Unit 3 Customer Relations

This unit focuses on the importance of effective communication and quality customer service in building positive relations with customers. Customer relations and marketing contribute to the overall customer experience and customer's attraction to a business. Employees represent a business and they can add value to the customer experience with the right knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Students will learn about communication skills, and methods of communication, and apply them to various business scenarios. They will become sensitive to opportunities at different times during customer interactions to provide quality customer service.

Content	Students will understand (that)	Learning Outcomes Students will be able to
3.1 Communicating with the customer 3.1.1 Uses of communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the importance of effective communication with customers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identify and describe the uses of communication</li> <li>identify internal and external communication</li> <li>explain the importance of effective communication with customers</li> </ul>
3.1.2 Communication skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Verbal communication skills               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speaking</li> <li>Listening</li> </ul> </li> <li>Non-verbal communication skills               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Body language</li> </ul> </li> <li>Written communication skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the skills needed for effective communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identify and explain the communication skills customer service personnel should possess to communicate effectively</li> </ul>



Content	Students will understand (that)	Learning Outcomes Students will be able to
3.1.3 Communication methods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face-to-face</li> <li>• Written</li> <li>• Telephone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• businesses use different methods to communicate with customers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• describe different communication methods</li> <li>• recommend, with reason(s), suitable communication method(s) for a given business scenario</li> <li>• interpret and communicate information from tourist maps, brochures, menus, guides and other promotional data to customers</li> <li>• describe how to handle telephone calls</li> <li>• record messages from customers accurately</li> </ul>
3.1.4 Personal grooming <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal hygiene</li> <li>• Appropriate dressing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the importance of personal grooming and hygiene for customer service personnel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explain the importance of personal grooming in relating well to customers</li> <li>• give examples of good personal hygiene practices at the workplace</li> <li>• identify and explain appropriate dressing for customer service personnel</li> </ul>

Content	Students will understand (that)	Learning Outcomes Students will be able to
3.2 Customer service 3.2.1 Quality customer service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the importance of quality customer service in the service industry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>state what customer service is</li> <li>describe what quality customer service is</li> <li>explain the importance of quality customer service</li> <li>identify the skills and qualities that are needed by employees to deliver quality customer service</li> <li>explain the importance of good product knowledge</li> <li>identify aspects of product knowledge that are required by customer service staff working in the service industry</li> </ul>
3.2.2 Providing customer service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approaching customers</li> <li>Presenting product information to customers</li> <li>Closing the customer experience</li> <li>Providing after-sales service</li> <li>Performing service recovery               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service breakdown</li> <li>Service recovery</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ways to provide quality customer service at various points of customer interaction</li> <li>the importance of after-sales service</li> <li>the importance of service recovery to maintain good customer relations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>describe ways of approaching customers</li> <li>describe ways to present product information to customers:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>finding out customers' needs and wants</li> <li>presenting the product</li> <li>handling customers' questions and objections</li> </ul> </li> <li>describe ways to close the customer experience positively</li> <li>explain the importance of after-sales service</li> <li>identify types of after-sales service</li> <li>describe ways of handling after-sales service</li> <li>explain what service breakdown is</li> <li>explain the importance of service recovery</li> <li>describe the procedure for handling service breakdown and for performing service recovery</li> </ul>

### Unit 4 Business Investigation

Business Investigation (BI) simulates the decision-making process undertaken by real-world businesses. It involves the demonstration of skills needed to gather, select, interpret, analyse and evaluate information for decision-making and also the application of business knowledge to propose innovate and reasoned recommendation. Through BI, the syllabus outcomes to apply foundational business knowledge and demonstrating enterprising mindset and decision-making, can be achieved.

Focusing on the marketing mix of an authentic real-world business, students will go through the process of BI by identifying the information needed, planning ways to gather the information, carrying out the plan and analysing the information to report their findings. Based on these findings, the students are to suggest options to improve the marketing mix of the business so as to enhance its customers' experience. Students will analyse the options to recommend an improvement for the business to undertake.

Content	Students will understand (that)	Learning Outcomes Students will be able to
<p>4.1 BI process for decision-making:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the objective of BI</li> <li>• Plan the investigation to gather information</li> <li>• Carry out the investigation</li> <li>• Analyse information and report findings</li> <li>• Suggest options and make decision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the use of BI to identify how improvements might be made for the business</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• perform an investigation of an authentic real-world business to recommend improvement to its marketing mix</li> <li>• understand the objective of BI is to enhance customer experience through improvement to the business' marketing mix</li> <li>• plan and carry out the BI:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- identify sources of information about the business: its marketing mix; its customers; the customer service it provides; its competitors; trend affecting the business</li> <li>- gather information from primary and secondary sources                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ primary sources: survey, observation, interview, etc.</li> <li>◦ secondary sources: internet websites, newspapers, brochures, etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Content	Students will understand (that)	Learning Outcomes Students will be able to
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- present information gathered: survey results, photographs, drawings, observation notes, screenshots, tables, etc.</li> <li>• analyse the information gathered and report findings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- report in own words on the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- nature of the business and its target customers</li> <li>- marketing mix and customer service of the business</li> <li>- impact of competition and trend on the customer experience provided by the business</li> </ul> </li> <li>• suggest options and make decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- suggest options for improvement to the marketing mix of the business</li> <li>- recommend, with reasons, ways to improve the marketing mix of the business</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**SYLLABUS AND BUSINESS INVESTIGATION TASKS FOR SECONDARY 3 AND 4**

Key Content	Business Investigation Tasks	Time frame for BI Task	No. of weeks in revised syllabus
<p><b>Unit 1: Understanding Business Activities</b></p> <p>1.1 Introduction to business</p> <p>1.2 Business in the Singapore service industry</p> <p>1.3 Careers and career paths in the Travel and Tourism, Hospitality and Retail industries</p>	<p><u>Research and report findings on nature of a chosen business</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gather information from primary and secondary sources:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ observations</li> <li>◦ internet research (business websites and social media)</li> <li>◦ print materials, for example, brochures, advertisements, catalogues, mall directory, location map</li> </ul> </li> <li>• analyse information and report findings (in own words):               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ describe the location of the business</li> <li>◦ describe the main category of the products offered by the business</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Sec 3</p> <p>Term 1</p>	<p>9</p>

Key Content	Business Investigation Tasks	Time frame for BI Task	No. of weeks in revised syllabus
<p><b>Unit 2: Basic Marketing</b></p> <p>2.1 Introduction to marketing</p> <p>2.2 Know your customers</p> <p>2.3 The Marketing Mix</p>	<p><u>Research and report findings on the marketing mix of a chosen business and its target customers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gather information from primary and secondary sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ market surveys</li> <li>◦ observations</li> <li>◦ internet research (business website, social media)</li> <li>◦ print materials, for example, brochures, advertisements, catalogues</li> <li>◦ photographs of customers or staff interaction with customer</li> </ul> </li> <li>• analyse information and report findings (in own words): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ describe the type of customers the business attracts.</li> <li>◦ explain the marketing mix of the business.</li> <li>◦ describe the customer service provided by the business.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Sec 3</p> <p>Term 2</p>	<p>10</p>

Key Content	Business Investigation Tasks	Time frame for BI Task	No. of weeks in revised syllabus
<p><b>Unit 3: Customer Relations</b></p> <p>3.1 Communicating with the customer</p> <p>3.2 Customer service</p>	<p><u>Research and report findings on customer service of a chosen business</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gather information from primary and secondary sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ market surveys</li> <li>◦ observations</li> <li>◦ internet research (business website, social media and online reviews)</li> <li>◦ photographs of customers or staff interaction with customers</li> </ul> </li> <li>• analyse information and report findings (in own words): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ describe the customer service provided by the business; include good or poor service demonstrated by the business.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Sec 3</p> <p>Term 3</p>	<p>5</p>

Key Content	Business Investigation Tasks	Time frame for BI Task	No. of weeks in revised syllabus
<p><b>Unit 4: BI (Paper 2)</b></p> <p>4.1 BI process for decision-making:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the objective of BI</li> <li>• Plan the investigation to gather information</li> <li>• Carry out the investigation</li> <li>• Analyse information and report findings</li> <li>• Suggest options and make a decision</li> </ul>	<p><u>Research and report findings on competition and trends faced by the chosen business</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gather information from primary and secondary sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ printed materials and/or online research on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• competitors' marketing mix (focus on certain aspects of 4Ps)</li> <li>• trends e.g., articles on online business, self-service checkout, online presence</li> </ul> </li> <li>◦ Market survey (question to indicate competitors)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• analyse information and report findings (in own words) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ describe the impact of competition and trends on the marketing mix of the chosen business</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><u>Suggest options and decision-making</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make two suggestions to improve the marketing mix of the business</li> <li>• compare the strength and weakness of each suggestion</li> <li>• recommend with justification the most appropriate improvement the business should undertake</li> </ul>	<p>Sec 3 Term 4</p>	<p>5</p>



## CONTENT ALIGNMENT TO MOE INITIATIVES AND FINANCIAL LITERACY

In the EBS Syllabus, students are given opportunities to develop skills and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Competencies through rich and meaningful learning experiences. The National Education narrative and Financial Literacy messages are also woven into what students learn as they discover the business landscape in Singapore. The mapping of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Competencies, National Education and Financial Literacy to EBS is outlined in the following table.

MOE Initiatives		Financial Literacy (FL)	Learning Experiences
21 <sup>st</sup> CC	National Education		
<p><b>1 Civic Literacy, Global Awareness and Cross-cultural Skills</b></p> <p><i>CGC1: Awareness of community and national issues and playing a part in improving the community and nation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are able to consider the influence of trends, customer expectations and technological advancement in the business landscape in Singapore and how they should respond to the challenges and opportunities presented.</li> </ul>	<p><b>1 Students develop a sense of reality when they:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>show awareness and understanding of Singapore's constraints and vulnerabilities; and</li> <li>make connections with the contemporary realities that confront us as a country amidst the backdrop of an unpredictable world.</li> </ul>	<p><b>1 Personal resources are limited and have to be allocated for different purposes.</b></p> <p>One needs to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>make choices on the use of personal resources;</li> <li>understand that an opportunity cost will be incurred when a decision is made;</li> <li>differentiate between a want and a need; and</li> <li>make rational decisions for purchases by considering the costs and benefits.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students consider the impact of trends, customer expectations and technological advancement on the business landscape and on the businesses in the service industry in Singapore.</li> <li>Students understand the type of resources businesses need to carry out its activities.</li> <li>Students are able to apply what they have learned, to plan and organise events such as a bazaar to celebrate <i>International Friendship Day</i>.</li> </ul>

MOE Initiatives		National Education	Financial Literacy (FL)	Learning Experiences
21 <sup>st</sup> CC				
CGC2: Awareness of global issues and trends:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are aware of global trends affecting local businesses such as tourist arrivals and meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibition (MICE) events in Singapore.</li> </ul>		<p>Students learn the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>concept of needs and wants and how different customer groups have different needs and wants;</li> <li>different resources that businesses need to carry out their activities;</li> <li>factors affecting the pricing of a product such as cost, customer's willingness to pay and the price charged by competitors; and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students can learn to apply the concepts learnt by creating products to sell. They would have to determine the target market(s) for their products and how to price their products. The products can then be sold to school-mates to raise funds for special events.</li> </ul>

MOE Initiatives		National Education	Financial Literacy (FL)	Learning Experiences
21 <sup>st</sup> CC				
<p>CGC3: <i>Displays socio-cultural and religious sensitivity and awareness:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are able to consider the needs and wants of different groups of people and are able to build good customer relations with them.</li> <li>Students are able to collaborate with peers from different backgrounds during pair or group work.</li> </ul>	<p><b>2</b> <i>Students develop a <b>sense of belonging</b> when they:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>show awareness of who we are as Singaporeans and a nation, with shared understanding of the common good;</i></li> <li><i>develop an attitude of openness to accept others who are different from them; and</i></li> <li><i>proactively contribute and work on improving their lives and those around them.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>rationale for choice of marketing techniques and communication methods for different scenarios.</li> </ul> <p>Possible FL application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students evaluating their own needs and wants by using the example of mobile phones (smart phone vs normal phone).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students understand the purpose of businesses and the contribution of the service industry namely, Travel and Tourism, Hospitality and Retail industries in Singapore.</li> <li>Students learn that businesses need to innovate to improve their marketing mix and customer service to better satisfy their target customers.</li> </ul>	

MOE Initiatives		National Education	Financial Literacy (FL)	Learning Experiences
21 <sup>st</sup> CC				
<p><b>2 Critical and Inventive Thinking</b></p> <p><i>CIT1: Explores possibilities and generates ideas:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are able to explore and generate options that can improve a business through different business scenarios and BI.</li> </ul> <p><i>CIT2: Exercises sound reasoning, decision-making and metacognition:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are able to consider alternatives presented to derive a reasoned conclusion.</li> <li>Students are able to analyse the information they have gathered from their research, propose options, weigh the</li> </ul>	<p><b>3 Students develop a sense of hope when they:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>display confidence and optimism in Singapore's future, and resilience to face the challenges ahead;</li> <li>embrace the principles we value as Singaporeans (for example, self-determination, multi-racialism); and</li> <li>feel empowered to seek opportunities in challenges, believing that Singapore is their home, regardless of where they may live.</li> </ul>	<p><b>2 Personal expenditure comes from one's current or future income</b></p> <p>One needs to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>spend within one's means;</li> <li>understand that spending beyond one's earning capacity will lead to incurring debts, which have to be repaid by drawing on future income; and</li> <li>understand that falling into a debt trap will have long term negative implications on one's life.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students learn the importance of providing quality customer service and how to provide quality customer service in different customer interaction scenarios.</li> <li>Students have an awareness of the changing employment landscape and career opportunities in the service industry.</li> <li>Students have an awareness of how businesses in Singapore innovate to remain competitive and continue to contribute to Singapore's economy.</li> </ul>	

MOE Initiatives		Learning Experiences	
21 <sup>st</sup> CC	National Education	Financial Literacy (FL)	
<p>pros and cons of each option, and recommend the most suitable option to improve a business.</p> <p><i>CIT3: Manages complexities and ambiguities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are able to identify information they need and devise a plan to obtain this information from various sources.</li> <li>• Students are able to handle information from varied sources, and organise and analyse the information to form a reasoned decision.</li> </ul>	<p><b>4 Students develop a <i>will to act</i> when they:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>show a collective resolve and a sense of shared mission to work towards building a Singapore for all;</i></li> <li>• <i>demonstrate a willingness to support Singapore in whatever ways they can to keep it safe and peaceful; and</i></li> <li>• <i>recognise the need to be active citizens, seeing themselves as playing a role in the flourishing of the nation.</i></li> </ul>	<p>Students learn the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• different resources that businesses need to carry out their activities;</li> <li>• importance of branding to benefit businesses and customers; and</li> <li>• factors affecting pricing such as cost of the products.</li> </ul> <p>Possible FL application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The concept of limited resources to spend within one's means.</li> <li>• Becoming a critical consumer in purchasing choices to manage personal expenses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students investigate authentic businesses to propose reasoned recommendations for the marketing mix of the businesses.</li> <li>• Students learn to make reasoned decisions by considering different options.</li> <li>• Students acquire an enterprising mindset to seek improvement and continual learning to improve themselves in future study and work.</li> </ul>

MOE Initiatives		National Education	Learning Experiences
21 <sup>st</sup> CC	Financial Literacy (FL)		
<p><b>3 Communication, Collaboration and Information Skills</b></p> <p><i>CCIS1: Communicates and collaborates effectively:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are able to communicate and justify their proposed recommendations to address business issues and scenarios.</li> <li>• Students are able to work collaboratively to discuss and share perspectives to construct new understanding and ideas.</li> </ul>	<p><b>3 Personal financial stability is established through adequate personal savings, early financial planning and wise investments</b></p> <p><i>One needs to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cultivate a good saving habits from a young age;</li> <li>• start financial planning early; and</li> <li>• increase one's resources through investments, if possible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students can participate in work experience programmes where they will come into contact with people from all walks of life to appreciate the importance of communication skills.</li> </ul>	

MOE Initiatives		National Education	Financial Literacy (FL)	Learning Experiences
21 <sup>st</sup> CC				
<p>CCIS2: <i>Manages, creates and shares digital information thoughtfully, ethically and responsibly</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are able to search for, organise and manage business information from different sources to support decision-making.</li> <li>• Students are able to use varied media elements to communicate and present their understanding of businesses concepts.</li> <li>• Students are able to share perspectives through online platforms such as Google documents and other online discussion applications.</li> </ul>		<p><i>Students learn the:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>risks and rewards in being an entrepreneur as part of business resources.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Possible FL application:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Consider starting a business, to invest or to save funds in bank accounts.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students become more media literate when they use the Internet to research information.</li> </ul>	

# SECTION 3: PEDAGOGY

- Singapore Curriculum Philosophy
  - Pedagogical Approaches
    - Experiential Learning

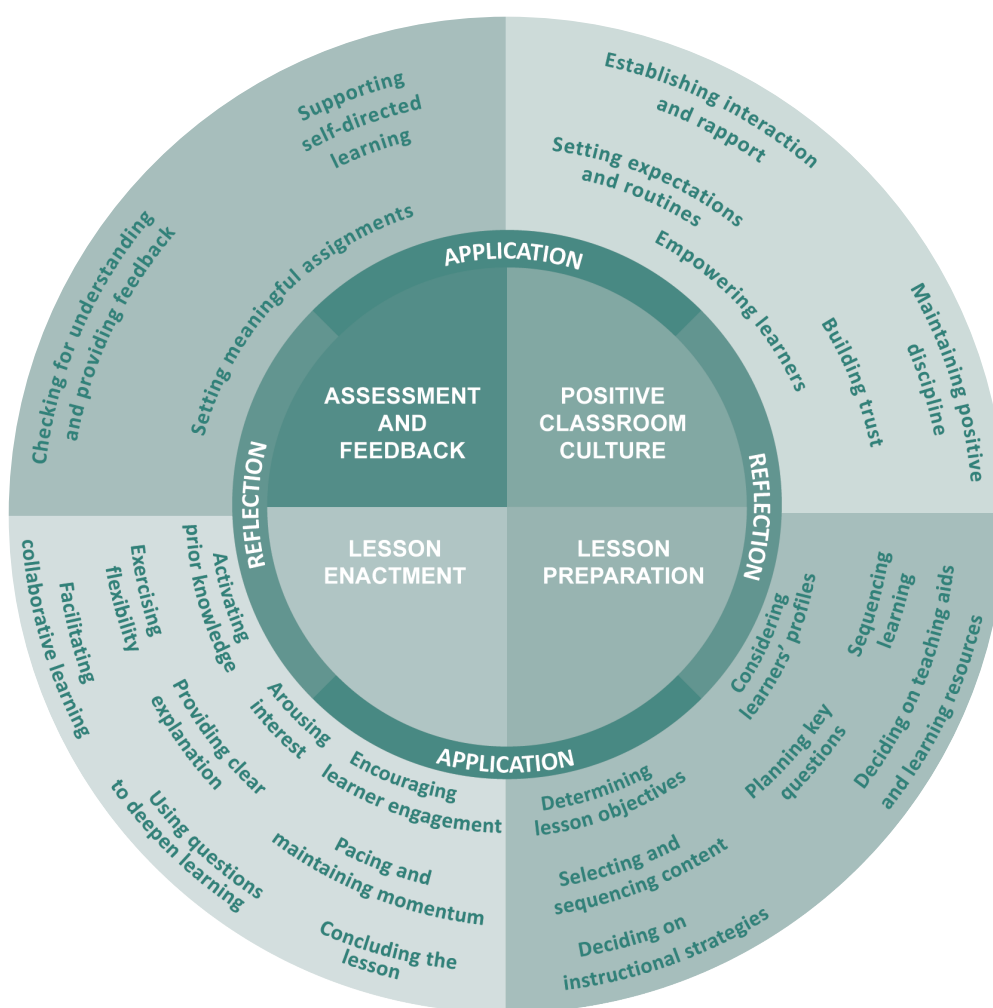


### 3. PEDAGOGY

#### SINGAPORE CURRICULUM PHILOSOPHY

The Singapore Curriculum Philosophy (SCP) presents the core beliefs for teaching, learning and assessment. Teachers should actively draw reference from the SCP and the knowledge bases (KB) related to teaching and learning of EBS, and translate them into a meaningful application of the Pedagogical Practices (PP) as spelt out in the Singapore Teaching Practice (STP).

The STP explicates a set of PP that describes the four fundamental teaching processes and the corresponding 24 Teaching Areas (TA), as presented in Figure 3.1 below.



**Figure 3.1** The PP outlining the four TP and the corresponding 24 TA in the STP

## Pedagogical Approaches

The pedagogical approaches advocated for the teaching of EBS are undergirded by the considerations to:

### Engender the Joy of Learning

Research on students of N(T) profile revealed that they need a greater amount of cognitive, affective and social support. Such support can be provided by fostering students' curiosity, interest and desire to learn through opportunities for enjoyable real-world interaction, authentic and engaging tasks, and activities that allow for personal choice and collaboration with peers (Linnakylä, Väliärvi & Arffman, 2011). The learning of EBS provokes the joy of learning through the design of authentic learning experiences that support active engagement between content knowledge and the real world.

### Align to Syllabus Aims and Outcomes

The EBS syllabus aims for students to demonstrate an enterprising mindset by thinking critically and innovatively, and to make informed decisions as they face challenges in their future studies and careers. The use of experiential learning in EBS supports students in constructing new knowledge based on reflections on the learning experiences, and encourages the application of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Competencies skills such as critical thinking, reasoning and problem solving (Zohar & Dori, 2003; Zohar & Peled, 2008), aligned to the syllabus aims and outcomes.

## EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

The N(T) Step Curriculum focuses on enhancing personal and social learning to address N(T) students' critical need for motivation and purpose of schooling. The Step Curriculum for upper secondary level focuses on building positive work habits and skills for the future study or work. EBS curriculum is designed such that learning is authentic, contextualised and applied.

The awareness of the future economy's uncertainty led to the need to prepare students with technological literacy, creativity, innovation, problem-solving and collaboration skills. This urged the move away from a didactic way of teaching to interactive and collaborative pedagogies where students have the opportunity to be actively involved in the learning process.



*Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience.*

**Kolb, 1984**



Kolb's experiential learning theory presents that learning takes place when students undergo a process designed to create opportunity for them to interact with their environment, to encounter dissonance of what is new and what is known. The process involves reflection on the dissonance to derive and test the new knowledge.

The adapted Experiential Learning Cycle (ELC) framework for EBS articulates four stages of students' engagement in effective learning of knowledge and skills (Experiential Learning Cycle, David Kolb 1984). The experiential learning paradigm requires teachers to enable students to be actively involved in the experiences. This requires teachers to define relevant activities and to create on a positive classroom culture, conducive for reflection and experimentation of new knowledge.

Figure 3.2 shows the stages of students' engagement in ELC and an example of how ELC can be implemented in a lesson on *Good Customer Service*.



**Figure 3.2** The Experiential Learning Cycle for EBS Lessons

### *Stage 1: Concrete Experience*

This stage is when students engage in an activity that enables interaction with the real world. These activities involve the use of their senses such as sight, hearing and touch. They could range from indoor activities such as role play, group discussions, viewing a video or presentation, to outdoor experiences such as learning journeys or hands-on work experience.

### *Stage 2: Reflective Observation*

This stage involves review on the part of the students to make sense of the ideas that arise from the experience. This can be achieved through questioning by teachers or steps that provide scaffolding, in journals or worksheets. Reflective questions could include simple questions such as “What did you do?” to higher-level questions such as “What problems did you encounter?” or “What was done correctly or incorrectly?”.



*Experiential learning takes place when a person involved in an activity looks back and evaluates it, determines what was useful or important to remember, and uses this information to perform another activity.*

**John Dewey**



### *Stage 3: Abstract Conceptualisation*

This is the thinking stage where students draw conclusions of their reflections and consider how they can be translated into practice. The conceptualisations can take the form of scripting, creating or discussion to relate how the reflections transform into new knowledge.

### *Stage 4: Active Experimentation*

This stage is when students use their newly acquired knowledge and test them in a new scenario. This could involve a revised role play or activity like answering questions from a worksheet. Learning is a continuous process; the experimentation then creates a new experience for students to further reflect, conceptualise and experiment to create another new learning.

Table 3.1 shows some examples of how ELC can be implemented in EBS lessons.

**Table 3.1** Examples of how ELC can be implemented in EBS lessons

Topic/Learning Outcome	Stages of Experiential Learning Cycle			
	Concrete Experience	Reflective Observation	Abstract Conceptualisation	
<p>1.2.3 Retail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Store retailers</li> </ul> <p>Learning outcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Identify and describe the types of store retailers: speciality, convenience, department supermarket and hypermarket</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a learning journey at a neighbourhood shopping mall.</li> <li>• Students are to identify one example of each type of retail stores. Collect photographs, information about the store, for example what it sells, whether it provides personalised service or self-service, how big the store is (many floors, small shop space, and so on).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible reflective questions (after students consolidate the information from the learning journey):               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) What differentiates a speciality store from a department store?</li> <li>ii) What differentiates a hypermarket from a supermarket?</li> <li>iii) What kinds of services do the different stores provide?</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students to compile a table showing the features of the different types of stores.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students to complete a worksheet. In the worksheet:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ to provide reasons where they would choose to buy a specific product (for example, sports shoes, fresh fruits) ; and</li> <li>◦ give possible reasons for the different services, prices they expect from the store, range of products they can choose from, and so on.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Topic/Learning Outcome	Stages of Experiential Learning Cycle			
	Concrete Experience	Reflective Observation	Abstract Conceptualisation	Active Experimentation
<p>2.3.1 Product</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Branding</li> </ul> <p>Learning outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ State what a brand is.</li> <li>◦ Explain the importance and use of brands for products.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students to cut out brands that they can identify from magazines or newspapers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible reflective questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Why do you like the brand or brands?</li> <li>ii) How do you recognise the brands?</li> <li>iii) Do you think these brands are well-recognised? Why?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In groups, students to choose one of the brands and list down points to the following discussion questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) What makes a good brand?</li> <li>ii) How does a good brand benefit the business or its customers?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show a well-known brand (a different one from students' example) on thinking routine function in SLS.</li> <li>• In groups, students to research the brand (if they are unfamiliar with it), and list the reasons, based on their findings, why this is a well-received brand.</li> <li>• Share information about the brand and provide feedback on the points the students have made.</li> </ul>

Topic/Learning Outcome	Stages of Experiential Learning Cycle		
	Concrete Experience	Reflective Observation	Abstract Conceptualisation
<p>3.1 Communicating with the customer</p> <p>3.1.1 Uses of communication</p> <p>Learning outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Explain the importance of effective communication with customers.</li> <li>o Identify and explain the communication skills that customer service personnel should possess to communicate effectively.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play the telephone-line communication game. Pass a message (in the form of prose or uncommon song lyrics) from the start of the line to the last student at the end of the line.</li> <li>• Rules of the game: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sender can only tell the message once.</li> <li>- Receiver is not allowed to ask any question.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible reflective questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Was it easy to listen to and pass the message? Why?</li> <li>ii) What are some factors that can cause the message to be misheard?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In groups, students to list down the factors that could enhance the outcome of the game.</li> </ul> <p>Likely recommendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Allow sender to repeat the message and receiver to ask questions.</li> <li>- Other students are not allowed to help.</li> </ul>
			<p>Active Experimentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replay the telephone-line game with a new message and obtain the required results of effective communication. For example, students are allowed to write notes.</li> </ul>

# SECTION 4: ASSESSMENT

- The MOE Assessment Philosophy
- Formative and Summative Assessment
- The Normal Technical Level Elements of Business Skills National Examination
  - Advice on Coursework



## 4. ASSESSMENT

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### THE MOE ASSESSMENT PHILOSOPHY

Assessment is an integral part of the learning process and should be closely aligned with curricular objectives, content and pedagogy. In order for the assessment to lead to meaningful learning, the “what” and “how” of assessment should be firmly anchored in the clarity of purpose – that is, the “why”. Assessment should be designed and implemented to provide information on intended student learning outcomes. This involves the purposeful and regular collection of quantitative and qualitative information about students’ progress and development. The information is then used to assess students’ attainment of intended learning outcomes and to design future teaching and learning activities.

The three key messages of the MOE Assessment Philosophy are:

- Assessment is integral to the learning process.
- Assessment begins with clarity of purpose.
- Assessment should collect information that informs future practices.

Both school assessment and national examinations play important, albeit different roles. A balanced assessment system should have both formative and summative assessments. Formative assessment provides information on the effectiveness of teachers’ instructional activities, while summative assessment serves to inform on students’ mastery of content knowledge and skills.

### FORMATIVE AND SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Assessment require teachers to have a good understanding of the students’ profiles and the learning outcomes delineated in the EBS syllabus. The demands of the assessment in terms of the knowledge and understanding, skills and values, and attitudes needed must be diligently planned, taught and developed in students with the appropriate instructional strategies. A well-designed assessment has the ability to increase student engagement and motivation, and empower them to become self-directed learners.

**Formative assessment** tasks in EBS should be varied to engage different types of learners. They should also be bite-sized to allow students to understand at a more manageable pace and apply the concepts, receive feedback, reflect, conceptualise and experiment again to acquire the competence and confidence to progress the next milestone. Formative assessment can be integrated into lessons in the form of individual assignments or group activities such as a project or discussion. Resources on **Student Learning Space** (SLS) also provide opportunities for students to become more self-directed in managing and monitoring their learning.

Complementing the **experiential learning cycle**, formative assessment allows students to practise skills by demonstrating their knowledge and be evaluated based on their performance and not their ability to memorise information. The iterative process in formative assessment and experiential learning identifies skills and learning targets clearly, and feedback is given to students on how to improve.

**Summative assessment** requires teachers to decide what to assess, the question items, how to allocate the marks and what to infer from assessment results. The design of an assessment task must consider assessment principles of fairness, validity and reliability. While summative assessment for EBS should include timed written tests and examinations to provide information on students' achievement, provision could also be made to include assessment on BI skills.

Table 4.1 shows suggested school assessment for BI skills at Secondary 3. Reference should be made to the Specimen Paper and National Examinations for designing of assessment.

**Table 4.1** Suggested school assessment for BI Skills at Secondary 3

Time frame	Assessment	Business Investigation Skills
Sec 3 Term 1 or 2	<p>Report findings after research on a business in the selected industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the nature of the business and main categories of products in the context of the sector.</li> <li>• Describe the types of customers the business attracts and their needs and wants.</li> </ul> <p>Format: 2–3 hours curriculum time in examination environment</p> <p>Mark scheme: Rubric (reference from coursework mark scheme)</p> <p>Marks: 20–25 marks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify sources of research information on the business and its customers.</li> <li>• Gather information using suitable methods:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Primary source: observations, etc.</li> <li>◦ Secondary sources: Internet websites, newspaper, brochures, etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Analyse the information and report findings in own words.</li> </ul>
Sec 3 Term 3 or 4	<p>Report findings after research on a business in the selected industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain the marketing mix used by the business.</li> <li>• Explain how the business has provided customer service.</li> </ul> <p>Format: 4–5 hours curriculum time in examination environment</p> <p>Mark scheme: Rubric (reference from coursework mark scheme)</p> <p>Marks: 20–25 marks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify sources of research information on the marketing mix and customer service.</li> <li>• Gather information using suitable methods:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Primary source: observations, surveys, interviews, etc.</li> <li>◦ Secondary sources: Internet websites, newspaper, brochures, etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Analyse the information and report findings.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Present quantitative research information in formats such as tables and charts.</li> <li>◦ Report findings and analysis in own words.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## THE NORMAL TECHNICAL LEVEL ELEMENTS OF BUSINESS SKILLS NATIONAL EXAMINATION

### ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES (AO)

#### **AO1: Knowledge and Understanding**

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of business activities and concepts, techniques and skills in marketing and customer relations in the context of the Travel and Tourism, Hospitality, and Retail industries.

#### **AO2: Application**

- Apply knowledge and understanding of marketing and customer relations to a variety of business scenarios.
- Gather, select and interpret different sources of information in conducting an investigation of a chosen business.

#### **AO3: Analysis and Evaluation**

- Analyse and evaluate information in a variety of business scenarios in order to make reasoned judgements, recommendations and decisions.

### SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT

#### 1 ASSESSMENT MODE

The assessment comprises two compulsory papers. Paper 1 is a written paper and Paper 2 takes the form of a coursework.

## 2 SPECIFICATION GRID

Paper	Description	Marks	Overall Weighting	Duration
1 Written	There will be 4 compulsory questions from Units 1 to 3 of the syllabus, comprising short response and structured questions: (i) with helping words; (ii) requiring short answers, not necessarily in complete sentences.	100	60%	1 hour 30 mins
2 Coursework	The coursework requires candidates to conduct a business investigation, making use of content and skills acquired from Units 1 to 4 of the syllabus.  Candidates in a class are required to choose different businesses in the selected service industry.  A total of 20 hours must be assigned during curriculum time to facilitate the completion of the coursework.	80	40%	20 hours of curriculum time over 10 to 14 weeks

The following weighting of the assessment objectives gives an indication of their relative importance. They are not intended to provide a precise statement of the number of marks allocated to each assessment objective.

	AO1 Knowledge and Understanding	AO2 Application	AO3 Analysis and Evaluation	Total
Paper 1	18%	30%	12%	60%
Paper 2	12%	20%	8%	40%
Overall	30%	50%	20%	100%

## DESCRIPTION OF COMPONENTS

### **PAPER 1 WRITTEN**

The question paper will comprise 4 compulsory questions from Units 1 to 3, comprising structured and short response questions. Each question provides a business context that frames the subsequent part questions. Candidates may be required to select a response to true/false items, match/sequence items, complete items from a choice of options, etc. or to compose a response to a given context.

### **PAPER 2 COURSEWORK**

The question paper will specify one service industry (Travel and Tourism *or* Hospitality *or* Retail) for business investigation. Candidates are required to choose one business within the specified industry with a physical location in Singapore that customers can go to. They will gather information on the business and its customers, its marketing mix and customer service, and how competition and trend within the service industry affect the business. Candidates will use their findings in order to make decisions and a recommendation on how the marketing mix of the business could be improved to provide a better customer experience.

A total of 20 hours in the computer laboratory will be assigned during curriculum time to facilitate the completion of candidates' coursework. These 20 hours provide candidates with the opportunity to gather information from secondary sources such as websites, brochures, newspapers, etc.; to organise their findings for submission; to respond to the coursework tasks; and to have individual review sessions with their coursework supervisors. Outside of these 20 hours, candidates are expected to gather information from primary sources about their chosen business by undertaking surveys, observations, interviews, etc.

<b>Candidates will be assessed on:</b>	<b>AO1</b>	<b>AO2</b>	<b>AO3</b>	<b>Marks</b>
Information gathering		16		16
Nature of business and its customers	16			16
Marketing mix and customer service of the business		16		16
Competition and trend in the service industry	8	8		16
Decision-making and recommendation			16	16
Total marks	24	40	16	80
% weighting	12%	20%	8%	40%

The assessment criteria and level descriptors are provided in [Pages 52 to 56](#).

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR PAPER 2

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<b>Task 1: Information Gathering</b>	Candidate provides generic information from primary sources. Materials are not related to the business or tasks.	Candidate provides relevant information on the business and task from one primary source.	Candidate provides relevant information on the business and tasks from two primary sources.	Candidate provides relevant and comprehensive information on the business and tasks from two primary sources.
	Candidate provides generic information from secondary sources. Materials are not related to the business or tasks.	Candidate provides relevant information on the business and task(s) from two secondary sources.	Candidate provides relevant information on the business and tasks from a variety of secondary sources.	Candidate provides relevant and comprehensive information on the business and tasks from a variety of secondary sources.

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<b>Task 2:</b> Nature of the Business and its Customers	Candidate gives limited, or no, description of the nature of the business.	Candidate describes two aspects of the nature of the business.	Candidate describes two aspects of the nature of the business, based on information gathered.	Candidate describes in detail the nature of the business, based on information gathered.
	Candidate gives limited, or no, description of the type(s) of customer(s) the business attracts and/or of the needs and wants of customers.	Candidate describes one type of customer the business attracts and/or one of the needs and wants of customers.	Candidate describes more than one type of customer the business attracts and at least one of the needs and wants of these customers, based on information gathered.	Candidate describes in detail the types of customers the business attracts and the needs and wants of these customers, based on information gathered.

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<b>Task 3: Marketing Mix and Customer Service of the Business</b>	Candidate identifies the four Ps and gives limited, or no, explanation of the marketing mix.	Candidate describes how the marketing mix is used by the business. (At least two Ps described.)	Candidate explains how the marketing mix is used by the business, based on information gathered.	Candidate explains how the marketing mix is used by the business to meet its customers' needs and wants, based on information gathered.
	Responses are generic.	Candidate describes, with example(s), how the business has provided good and/or poor customer service.	Candidate explains, with examples, how the business has provided good and/or poor customer service, based on information gathered.	Candidate explains in detail, with examples, how the business has provided good and/or poor customer service, based on information gathered.
	Candidate identifies features of customer service, or gives limited example(s) of good and/or poor customer service.			
	Responses are generic.			



	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<b>Task 4: Competition and Trend in the Service Industry</b>	Candidate gives limited, or no, description of competition and/or trend.  Responses are generic.	Candidate describes one competitor and/or one trend that the business might need to be aware of.	Candidate describes one competitor and one trend the business might need to be aware of, based on information gathered.	Candidate describes in detail one competitor and one trend that the business might need to be aware of, based on information gathered.
	Candidate identifies how one competitor and/or one trend affect the business.  Responses may not relate to the customer experience provided by the business.	Candidate describes how one competitor and/or one trend affect the customer experience provided by the business.	Candidate explains how one competitor or one trend affect the customer experience provided by the business, based on information gathered.	Candidate explains how one competitor and one trend affect the customer experience provided by the business, based on information gathered.

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<p><b>Task 5: Decision-making and recommendation</b></p>	<p>Candidate identifies generic suggestion(s) to improve the marketing mix.</p>	<p>Candidate identifies two suggestions to improve the marketing mix of the business.</p>	<p>Candidate describes two suggestions to improve the marketing mix of the business.</p>	<p>Candidate describes two suggestions to improve the marketing mix of the business.</p>
	<p>Candidate gives limited or no reasons for suggestion(s).</p> <p>Reasons are not linked to findings in Tasks 1 to 4.</p>	<p>Candidate gives at least one reason for each suggestion.</p> <p>Reasons may not be linked to findings in Tasks 1 to 4.</p>	<p>Candidate gives one reason for each suggestion, using findings in Tasks 1 to 4.</p>	<p>Candidate gives two reasons for each suggestion, using findings in Tasks 1 to 4.</p>
	<p>Candidate makes a recommendation with limited or no reasoning on generic impact of change.</p>	<p>Candidate makes a recommendation with reasoning that relates to generic impact of change.</p>	<p>Candidate makes a recommendation with reasoning that relates to the impact on the business or its customers.</p>	<p>Candidate makes a recommendation with reasoning that relates to the impact on the business and its customers.</p>

## **USE OF CALCULATOR**

An approved calculator may be used in Paper 1 and Paper 2.

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