**B. Language Enhancement**

2.28 Adopting a competency-based framework, HKBU leveraged the TDLEG to achieve the strategic priority of BSE by developing students’ competencies in 4 core domains: *Academic*, *professional*, *intercultural*, and *creative* communication in the age of AI.

**Developing Academic Communicative Competence**

2.29 Effective academic communication is essential for student success, especially for those from CMI secondary schools. Numerous measures have been introduced to strengthen their academic literacy and help them navigate challenges within and across academic disciplines.

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| **AY2022/23-AY2024/25 Sem 1**  **Credit-Bearing Courses** | **Chinese**  **Courses** | **English**  **Courses** | **Putonghua**  **Courses** | [**Advanced English**](https://lc.hkbu.edu.hk/main/english-course/) **(RPG)** |
| Teaching Effectiveness | 4.65 | 4.50 | 4.67 | 4.86 |
| Reflection on Learning | 4.50 | 4.32 | 4.57 |  |

2.30 Structured learning through credit-bearing courses remained the primary pathway for developing these essential skills. Over the past triennium, the Language Centre (LC) offered core courses in English, Chinese, Putonghua and additional languages, benefiting over 33,500 students. These courses were rated highly (average ratings of 4.58/5 for teaching and 4.4/5 for learning), underscoring their quality and relevance to student needs.

Pre- and post-course assessments demonstrated significant improvements in students’ language proficiency.  Personalised enhancement services in English, Chinese, and Putonghua benefited 1,334 students, leading to notable gains in speaking and writing abilities.

A close-up of a graph

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2.31 To empower students to successfully navigate in disciplinary and transdisciplinary contexts, in collaboration with 21 departments, English in the Disciplines (EID) provided 127 workshops (4.20/5), 398 consultations (4.60/5), benefiting 5,590 students and 283 international students in AY2022-25.

2.32 Understanding that some students require additional support, targeted initiatives were implemented. The *Nurturing Global Citizenship through English* course (n=2,400, AY2022-25), steadily improved their English skills through theme-based learning.  Coh-Metrix analysis of students’ pre- and post-speaking (n=148) demonstrated significant improvement (p=<.001) in *lexical density*, *syntactic structure*, *textual sophistication.*

2.33 To promote *independent learning*, opportunities were created for peer-assisted learning, benefiting voluntary students—1,483 in English, 365 in Cantonese (including non-Chinese speakers), and 127 in Putonghua in AY 2022-25 (average rating 4.66/5). A paired sample *t*-test for the English peer-tutoring programme in AY2024/25 revealed better academic performance of the tutees (*p=*<.001) in 3 assignments in University English I (UEI) (A1, A2, A3).

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2.34 LC SALL webpages also recorded 252,895 visits, though in-person visits to the language labs had a significant decline. Our commitment to inclusivity must evolve to accommodate changing learning styles.

**Fostering Professional Communicative Competence through Experiential Learning**

2.35 Aligning with HKBU’s priority of nurturing professional adaptability through experiential learning (EL), LC empowered students to apply their linguistic abilities in contexts. A highlight is courses incorporating EL components. For example, 233 students enrolled in *Taking a Stand: Turning Research Insights into Policy Recommendations*, engaging in public discourse by writing letters to the editor of the South China Morning Post. 49 letters were published. The Sponsorship Scheme in AY2022/23-25 supported HKBU students to organise the HKDSE English Mock Oral Exam for students at Holy Trinity College and St. Louis School, with 194 students acting as examiners for 449 secondary school students (4.25/5). 9 students were engaged as partners to develop 13 audios/videos for independent learning in UEI and UEII.

2.36 Joint workshops with the Career Centre on the Common Recruitment Examination (CRE) and Joint Recruitment Examination (JRE) of HKSAR benefited 376 students preparing for civil service careers (4.41/5).  729 students from the Faculty of Social Sciences joined workshops on job search skills. Mock internship interviews assisted 80% of students in obtaining internship placements (n=228).

2.37 IELTS and PSC examination preparation courses were offered (n=706 & n=129 respectively). 525 reporting students achieved an average overall score of 7.31 in IELTS (290 entered HKBU with a HKDSE Level 3 or 4 in English). In Putonghua, 91.3% of the 292 reporting students attained 3A or above in PSC.

2.38 In reflection, LC needs to extend experiential learning beyond HK, strengthening students’ professional communication competencies and preparing them for future career challenges in a globalised context.

**Cultivating Intercultural Communicative Competence**

2.39 To amplify intercultural competence as a key graduate attribute, LC implemented many initiatives focusing on foreign language education, cultural immersion, and language exchange.

A graph of numbers and a number of foreign languages

AI-generated content may be incorrect.2.40 To cultivate multilingual competence, LC provided courses in French, German, Japanese, and Spanish, totalling 6,041 enrolments in AY2022-25. The courses consistently received high CFQ scores, averaging 4.59/5, demonstrating strong teaching effectiveness and student satisfaction. 424 students achieved a minor in a foreign language.

2.41 Established in 2024, theIntercultural Immersive Exchange (IIE) programme supported 88 students’ overseas exchanges in **18** countries. Results of pre- and post-programme surveys revealed students’ improvements in *intercultural awareness (cohen’s d: .373), language proficiency (d=.324)*, *whole person development (d=.282),* and *understanding of SDGs (d=.243).*

2.42 The Language Exchange Programme (LEx), pairing local and international students for language and cultural exchange, provided them with opportunities to engage in cross-cultural communication and develop global perspectives.

2.43 The Culture Exchange Course expanded from an enrolment of 21 students in AY2022/23 to 387 (including incoming) students in AY2024/25. An overall rating of 4.73/5 reflected the course’s effectiveness in promoting cross-cultural understanding. The Social Learning Space project featured workshops on culture exchange for 1,083 students.

2.44 The [Global Dialogues series](https://global-citizenship.hkbu.edu.hk/globaldialogues-2425/), featuring 10 Zoom discussions led by experts and academics (AY2022-24) allowed local students to interact with their international peers. Topics included *fast fashion*, *gender inequality*, and *marginalisation in education*. **379** international students from **10** **countries** exchanged views on global challenges with 818 local students.

A group of people in a video conference

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2.45 The Cultural Carnival held in February 2025 further enriched students’ intercultural experiences. 300+ students attended interactive activities and talks, including the ones by Spanish Consul General and German Vice Consul General, fostering a multicultural campus environment.

2.46 Tailored courses were offered to facilitate non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students’ integration into the University and local community. Putonghua and Cantonese courses benefited 204 NCS students (4.78/5), equipping them with essential language skills and cultural adaptability. The plan to offer higher-level Cantonese courses for NCS students was not carried out due to low enrollment.

2.47 Seven field trips were organised for non-local students (n=162). To promote Chinese culture, virtual field trips featuring Chinese cultural landmarks were incorporated into courses for international students. Looking forward, foreign language education will include more language options to promote diversity and enrich students’ intercultural competence.

**Nurturing Creative Communicative Competence**

2.48 In line with the University’s mission to foster creativity, LC emphasised nurturing students’ creative communication skills through different initiatives such as competitions.

2.49 21 competitions/awards in English, Chinese (including an inaugural Cantonese Recitation Competition themed “Warfare and Conflicts” (干戈竟未休)), and Putonghua were organised in AY2022/23-25, attracting 1,876 contestants. Signature events included Hung Leung Hau Ling Young Writer Award (HK wide) and the [13th Intervarsity Chinese Creative Writing Competition](http://lchklpp.hkbu.edu.hk/), territory-wide large-scale literary events.

2.50 As evidence of impact, 73 HKBU students and graduates won external literary awards in AY2022/23-25. Students’ creative outputs were also published in the English newsletter *Buzz* and the Chinese journal *Tributaries*. Future endeavours will include multimodal creative output.

**From Virtual T&L and Innovative Technologies to AI: Digital Competence for better communication**

2.51 To support integration of VTL and innovative technologies into language education, 14 e-learning workshops and seminars were organised during AY2022/23-25 on utilisation of digital tools and strategies to enhance proficiency through technology. All LC courses integrated digital tools and AI (e.g., Padlet, Mentimeter, ChatGPT) to enhance T&L.

2.52 A notable initiative was Bytewise, a Generative AI chatbot customisation platform, co-created by LC and the Department of Computer Science in 2024. Bytewise enabled teachers and students to develop customised chatbots using natural language prompts, facilitating personalised teaching and learning. Bytewise had registered 1,885 student/teacher users, growing from 134/63 in July 2024 to 1666/219 users in April 2025. In addition, surveys (n=1,185) indicated high levels of AI usage among LC students, with 97.3% of students in Chinese, 96.3% in English, and 87.9% in Putonghua courses to assist their learning (e.g. ideation, summarizing, editing or feedback). 85.3% of Foreign Languages students reported using mobile apps for personalised learning.

2.53 A corpus-based approach was adopted in *Advanced English* for RPG students, who built their own specialist corpus for discipline specific language learning and research writing. This approach was also adopted in *Gender, Language, and Creativity* for UG students, earning Dr. Meilin Chen, the instructor, two prestigious honours: the GE Award and the President’s Award for Outstanding Performance in Teaching.

2.54 Computerised Versant Tests were used for English speaking assessment (n=239). GRE and TOEFL online SALL software benefited 65 students. 14 interactive Putonghua learning videos were produced for flipped learning. The Chinese T/L Support Platform was set up to support self-learning. Some adjustments were made after critical reviews. For example, multilingual Virtual Speech was discontinued due to poor feedback. MyAccess was halted owing to the significant advantages of AI technologies. With the emergence of advanced Cantonese Learning APPs on the market, the development of a Cantonese learning APP was not pursued.

2.55 *Engagement in the Digital Age: International Conference on Language Teaching and Learning* (18-19 June 2024) organised by LC attracted over 200 language teaching practitioners and researchers. Overall, the integration of innovative technologies, including AI, led to greater student engagement and improved learning outcomes.

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AI-generated content may be incorrect.**Reflection and Looking Ahead**

2.56 LC’s achievements in nurturing active learners, aligned with HKBU’s mission of cultivating a learner-centred education, have contributed to the development of communicative competencies and their readiness for an AI-driven future. Student feedback on 43 LC courses in AY2022/23-25 in *meeting learning needs* and *achieving intended learning outcomes* was very positive (4.44/5, n=5,187).

2.57 Scholarship informs teaching design and practices. Over the triennium, LC scholarly activities included 58 Scholarship Bulletins, 74 conference presentations, 53 publications, 42 seminars, and 5 symposia/conferences. Looking ahead, key challenges include balancing AI use with critical reasoning, and articulation skills and promoting consistent independent learning. Efforts will be made to assess AI communication skills in various courses. Addressing these challenges will support continued innovation and ensure students are well-prepared to lead and shape the future.

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| 1. **Title of Initiative under LE Portion (No. 1 of 5 )** |
| Promoting Diversity of Language Learning and Intercultural Communicative Competence |
| 1. **Brief Description of Project Implementation and Deliverables** |
| The foreign language courses and cultural experience activities provided under the Foreign Language section are considered a gateway to intercultural learning for students. At present, French, German, Spanish, Japanese, and Korean are offered as foreign languages. The arrival of four full-time foreign languages lecturers has strengthened this KPI’s delivery.  The LC’s goal of fostering ‘internationalisation-at-home’ could be evidenced in the following activities/courses:   1. The Social Learning Space provides an interactive hub for local and international students to engage in language practice and cultural exchange through workshops and one-on-one sessions. 2. The Culture Exchange course offers workshops and online modules with cultural sharing to deepen cross-cultural awareness among students going for overseas exchanges. 3. Within the Nurturing Global Citizenship Course, Global Dialogue sessions facilitated virtual discussions on global issues like sustainability and building intercultural empathy. 4. The Language Exchange (LE) programme pairs up students to enable them to gain knowledge of another culture and broaden their global outlook.   In addition to at-home programmes, the Intercultural Immersive Exchange (IIE) programme supports students in studying abroad, enhancing their foreign language proficiency and cultural immersion through structured summer exchanges. |
| 1. **Outcome and Achievements** |
| In AY2022-25, 424 students achieved a minor in a foreign language, with an average satisfaction rating of 4.59/5 across all foreign language courses. 6,041 students enrolled in foreign language courses and 1,448 participated in a range of cultural activities, including the Cultural Carnival, talks and workshops on topics about different cultures and traditions. Additionally, two students received scholarships from the French Consulate in Hong Kong and Macau and the Legion d’Honneur.  Social Learning Space engaged 1083 students in workshops and 212 in one-on-one speaking practice, with over 85% providing highly positive ratings. The Culture Exchange course (483 participants, AY2022-2024) significantly boosted cross-cultural awareness, earning a 4.73/5 rating. Additionally, the Global Dialogues series facilitated intercultural exchange among 818 local and 379 international students from 10 countries, addressing critical global challenges including fast fashion, gender inequality, and educational marginalisation. The Global Citizenship through English course benefited 1,642 students.  The Culture Exchange Course aims to increase students’ cross-cultural awareness. The International Research Advisor, Prof. Jack Richards, commented that:  *“This is a very novel and original course design that provides for a high degree of student participation and engagement. The party format is an excellent way of putting theory into practice.”*  As for the LE programme, 432 students from 33 countries participated in it. LE fostered language and cultural exchange (4.31/5). 182 students participated in local cultural field trips organised by the Chinese and Putonghua sections. The IIE supported 88 students in pursuing summer exchange opportunities. Post-trip assessment indicates notable improvements in intercultural awareness (4.57/5), whole-person development (4.47/5), and perceived language proficiency (4.28/5) when compared with pre-trip data. |
| 1. **Evaluation against Reflective KPIs** |
| The initiative strongly aligns with KPIs for promoting diversity in language learning and intercultural communicative competence. Reflective KPIs, such as enhanced cross-cultural awareness and global outlook, were met through high student engagement in the Culture Exchange Course and Language Exchange programme, facilitating meaningful intercultural dialogue. The Intercultural Immersive Exchange programme significantly advanced participants’ whole-person development and language proficiency, aligning with HKBU’s globalised learning goals. |

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| 1. **Title of Initiative under LE Portion (No. 2 of 5 )** |
| Benchmarking HKBU Students’ English Language Proficiency Gauged through IELTS against their HKDSE English Language Results |
| 1. **Brief Description of Project Implementation and Deliverables** |
| A variety of IELTS preparation courses and workshops focusing on different skills were offered to students. 783 students participated in these courses and workshops in AY2022-25 (average satisfaction rating: 4.56/5). Students with an overall band score of 7 or above could apply for the IELTS sponsorship scheme, under which they were reimbursed for the IELTS test. In total, 611 students applied for this scheme. |
| 1. **Outcome and Achievements** |
| Students attained an overall average band score of 7.31/9 in the IELTS test during AY2022-25 (N=611). Of these 611 students, 375 had taken the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE). Among them, 38 students obtained Level 3 in English Language, 247 earned Level 4, and 66 obtained Level 5.  The Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority conducted a benchmarking study to compare the standards between the IELTS test and the 2019, 2021 and 2023 HKDSE English Language Examination. The study found that Level 4 in HKDSE is equivalent to an overall band score of 7.09 in IELTS and Level 3 is equivalent to 6.35 in IELTS. Thus, the above IELTS scores of students, who obtained an average of 7.31, demonstrate notable gains in students’ English language proficiency, particularly for those obtaining Level 3 or 4 in HKDSE.  In response to this, IELTS will be employed as a KPI to evaluate students’ English proficiency starting in AY2025-26, though it will not be mandated as a graduation requirement.  IELTS course development and students’ performance in the IELTS test were commended by the International Research Advisor, Prof. Jack Richards in 2023:  *“The HKBU IELTS preparation course is an outstanding example of how such a course should be designed and delivered, and the impact of the course on students’ performance on the IELTS test reflects the attention that has been given to every aspect of the course.”* |
| 1. **Evaluation against Reflective KPIs** |
| In keeping with the strategic priority of BSE, one of the KPIs is enhancing students’ English language competence, as an IELTS score of 6.5 or above is often required for students to go on exchange programmes. The above score of 7.31 obtained by over 600 students indicates that this KPI has been met. Moving forward, greater promotion of IELTS courses would be undertaken, and as indicated, IELTS will be a KPI to assess students’ proficiency in English from AY2025-26. |

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| 1. **Title of Initiative under LE Portion (No. 3 of 5 )** |
| Innovative Pedagogy at the Centre: Peer-Assisted Learning |
| 1. **Brief Description of Project Implementation and Deliverables** |
| Peer-Assisted Learning (PAL) fosters collaborative learning and enhances communication skills. It is integrated into the Student-Tutor Communication Consultation Programme (SCCP) and Putonghua and Cantonese Peer Tutoring Programmes. These programmes provide a mutually beneficial learning environment, where tutees with weaker English writing skills or Putonghua/Cantonese are supported by more competent tutors. |
| 1. **Outcome and Achievements** |
| **English Peer Tutoring Programme**  The Student-Tutor Writing Communication Programme (SWCP) supported 1483 students in enhancing their writing skills, rated at 4.66/5 for usefulness. Tutees outperformed non-tutees in University English I and II, with significantly higher mean scores (p<0.01). In AY2024-25, 296 tutees achieved better performance than non-tutees (p<.001) on three University English I assignments: academic summary, argumentative essay first version, and final version.  A new Student-Tutor Communication Consultation Programme (SCCP) in AY2024-25 involved 11 tutors supporting 76 tutees in improving speaking skills. Tutees rated the service at 4.78/5 (N=23), reflecting high satisfaction and effective skill development.  **Cantonese Peer Tutoring Programme**  The Cantonese Peer Tutoring Programme is designed to strengthen the Cantonese proficiency and interest of Mainland Chinese students in learning Cantonese. Since AY2022-23, the Cantonese Peer Tutoring Programme paired 27 local student tutors with 365 Mainland Chinese tutees to enhance Cantonese proficiency, earning overwhelmingly positive feedback. Participants rated its usefulness at 4.72/5, with satisfaction averaging 4.6–4.8/5 across all aspects. The programme excelled in language acquisition. The Cantonese Phonetics Workshop (4.55–4.66/5) and 4-week courses (4.66–4.84/5) were commended for clear instruction and practical content, supporting effective learning. Beyond language, it facilitated meaningful cross-cultural connections, with peer interactions highly valued (4.75/5).  Participants showed strong intent to maintain contact post-programme (4.69–4.8/5), reflecting lasting bonds. Sustainability was evident, with 96% of attendees completing core sessions. An overwhelming majority supported continuation of involvement (4.72/5).  **Putonghua Peer Tutoring Programme**  The Putonghua Peer Tutoring Programme provides structured one-on-one peer support to help students improve their Putonghua proficiency. Over the past two academic years (AY2023-24–AY2024-25), the programme successfully paired 127 tutees with 62 trained peer tutors, delivering a total of 243 tutorial hours.  Feedback from participants has been consistently positive. For example, in Semester 1, AY2023-24, tutees (N=11) expressed high satisfaction, with average ratings between 4.8 and 5.0 (on a 5-point scale). Key strengths included the usefulness of tutor feedback (5.0) and the programme’s overall effectiveness (4.9). Peer tutors (N=9) also rated their experience highly (4.6–4.8), with 87% expressing interest in rejoining (4.8). |
| 1. **Evaluation against Reflective KPIs** |
| Peer-tutors are increasingly utilised to promote collaborative education and cultivate student-leadership competencies in peer-to-peer settings. SWCP and SCCP enhanced English writing and speaking through peer support, strengthening academic skills. The Cantonese and Putonghua Programmes improved language proficiency and cross-cultural ties, enriching global perspectives. These efforts closely align with KPIs for leveraging peer-assisted learning as a pedagogy, promoting student engagement and autonomy. However, challenges remain in establishing standardised assessment mechanisms that capture qualitative learning outcomes in such interactions, which are highly individualised. |

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| 1. **Title of Initiative under LE Portion (No. 4 of 5 )** |
| English in the Disciplines (EID) that develops students’ discipline-specific English skills |
| 1. **Brief Description of Project Implementation and Deliverables** |
| English in the Disciplines (EID) is a vital service offered to students, featuring discipline-specific writing workshops and one-on-one tutorials that address the lack of disciplinary writing support in general English courses. Since its inception in 2017, EID has served 9,365 students across 23 departments. Over the past three years, annual participation has averaged 2,301 students. A recent focus has been the delivery of AI-writing workshops to various departments. |
| 1. **Outcome and Achievements** |
| The number of students supported by EID services has increased year by year. 83% of the students found the EID service effective.  A blue bar graph with white text  AI-generated content may be incorrect.  Achievements include testimonies and commendations from various colleagues and reports:  Dr. Brandon Ng, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Management, Marketing and Information Systems (2024): ‘*The sessions provided by EID proved highly beneficial for students. This hands-on approach helped students develop critical skills for effective teamwork and interpersonal communication. EID's contributions significantly enriched the students' learning experience and bolstered their communication capabilities.’*  Dr. Rainbow Ng, Lecturer in the Department of Geography (2024): *‘Instructors’ workshops are highly effective and useful, teaching my students how to construct cohesive and coherent topic sentences, rationales, and robust transition vocabularies for their research essays.’*  Departmental Academic Advisor (DAA) report (2025): *‘Also worth mentioning is the “English in the Discipline” service. This initiative strives to provide cutting-edge interdisciplinary knowledge and skills that today’s students need to possess to succeed in their future careers.’*  Academic Consultation Panel (ACP) report (2022): *“The Panel commended LC for its EAC initiative and its efforts in developing more discipline-specific language learning activities/courses.”* [Note: EAC was renamed EID in 2023] |
| 1. **Evaluation against Reflective KPIs** |
| The English in the Disciplines (EID) initiative effectively enhances discipline-specific English skills, earning commendations from faculty and academic panel visits. Despite its larger scale, EID’s current on-demand model limits proactive engagement, relying mainly on departmental requests. Scaling EID to support Capstone projects and transdisciplinary education is currently in progress to make the service more curriculum-embedded and student-relevant, enhancing broader institutional reach and measurable impact outcomes. |

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| 1. **Title of Initiative under LE Portion (No. 5 of 5 )** |
| Promoting Chinese Creative Writing through Hong Kong Literature Promotion Platform |
| 1. **Brief Description of Project Implementation and Deliverables** |
| The Hong Kong Literature Promotion Platform aims to accomplish two missions: promoting Chinese literature city-wide by hosting awards and nurturing student creativity through mentoring students for internal and external literary contests and publications. During AY2022-25, the platform hosted a number of events, including the (a) Hung Leung Hau Ling Young Writer Award, (b) the Intervarsity Creative Writing Competition, (c) the Outstanding Young Creative Writer Award, (d) the Chinese Playwriting Award, and (e) the publication of Tributaries, serving as a creative outlet for students. The platform also partners with the Hong Kong Public Library to co-organise public talks on Hong Kong literature. These activities attracted 3,097 participants. |
| 1. **Outcome and Achievements** |
| Colleagues working on the Hong Kong Literature Promotion Platform regularly mentored students. Students received external and internal literary awards and had their literary works published in a variety of literary journals.  Number of HKBU students receiving external awards:   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Intervarsity Chinese Competition 2022-2023 | 17 students | | Intervarsity Chinese Competition 2024-2025 | 32 students | | The 48th Youth Literary Awards | 1 student | | The 49th Youth Literary Awards | 1 student | | The 50th Youth Literary Awards | 3 students | | The Hang Seng University Literary Awards 2022 | 2 students | | The Hang Seng University Literary Awards 2023 | 2 students | | City Literary Awards 2022 | 3 students | | City Literary Awards 2024 | 10 students | | Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC)’s Arts Criticism Group "Arts Criticism Recognition Programme 2024 - Tertiary Students | 1 student  1 student | | King Car New Poetry Prize (Taiwan) 2024 | 1 student | | Example publications  鄭淑榕〈壬寅，馬鞍山礦場遺址〉，發表於《字花》《別字》第六十期 (2023)  譚嘉琪〈第一千八百二十六天〉，發表於《大頭菜文藝月刊》 (2022) | 7 students | |
| 1. **Evaluation against Reflective KPIs** |
| The Hong Kong Literature Promotion Platform is tasked with two missions, and the KPI that best captures this is 'capacity building' of young writers' creative expression in Chinese as opposed to conventional classroom-based Chinese learning. Student publications and external recognitions and awards reflect enhanced writing skills and alignment with this KPI. In the future, expanding mentorship and integrating creative writing into curricula could further deepen impact, ensuring consistent skill development and broader reach. |