I. GENERAL INFORMATION

About the Instructor

Instructor: Prof. Yuk-fai FONG  
E-mail: yukfaims@hku.hk  
Office: Room 1101, K.K. Leung Building  
Telephone: 3917-0026  
Office Hours: Wednesday 2-4 p.m. or by appointment

About the Teaching Assistant

Teaching Assistant: Wenhui LI (Sophie)  
E-mail: liwenhui@hku.hk  
Telephone: 3917-8118

Unless your email contains sensitive personal information, please include both myself and Wenhui in all email communication.

Prerequisites

ACCT1101 Introduction to Financial Accounting, and  
MKTG2501 Introduction to Marketing, and  
MGMT2401 Principles of Management or MGMT3405 Organizational Behavior, and  
ECON1210 Introduction to Economics I, and  
FINA1310 Corporate Finance

Textbook and Readings:

- Case Studies, lecture notes and supplementary readings will be distributed in class and/or posted on the course’s moodle page.

Last revised: July 2019
The textbook includes an access code to Cengage Mindtap. You can use Mindtap to practice multiple choice and case analysis questions. Some of the questions for the final exam will be taken from the practice questions offered in Mindtap.

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Course Description

The Strategic Management course will focus on formulating and implementing firm strategy. Successful business policies require a detailed understanding of the overall environment of which the firm is a part as well as the ability to create value in order to serve customers in the face of competition. Successful business strategies also require resources and capabilities. The best analysis in the world will not lead to corporate success if it cannot be turned into actionable strategies that can be successfully implemented. Meanwhile, ethical decision-making and leadership are the foundations for sustainable business strategies in the modern world. Similarly, the best administrator in the world will not be able to help a firm with the wrong strategy achieve superior performance.

The course will focus on the analytical and managerial tasks involved in developing strategies that create value by satisfying customer demands and stakeholders’ interests in an ever-changing competitive landscape. It will also attempt to help students improve their strategic thinking and all around business judgment with the leadership mindset.

We approach strategy issues from the perspectives of firms globally, this includes Western firms as well as firms in greater China, both of which are increasingly exposed to international competition. Through the use of mostly Asian business cases in a global context, students take up simulated managerial roles where they can apply the concept of strategy to address real life business opportunities and challenges.

Course Objectives

1. To provide a detailed understanding of the theories of strategic management, firms’ external and internal environments, and business strategy.
2. To provide an understanding of the nature of business competition and sources of competitive advantage.
3. To develop the ability to analyze and understand a firm’s external and internal environments, its strategies and its performance.
4. To provide an understanding of business ethics and the linkage between ethical decision-making and sustainable business development.
5. To prepare students for a career in business with a leadership mindset.
III. LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

CLOS1. Explain the strategic management theories and concepts.
CLOS2. Understand the impact of firms’ internal and external environments on performance.
CLOS3. Apply analytical frameworks to define and analyze strategic problems; and to formulate and implement business strategies.
CLOS4. Explain the complex business opportunities and problems in a global context.
CLOS5. Understand and apply the concept of business ethics in strategic decision-making.
CLOS6. Demonstrate effective communication skills (oral and written).
CLOS7. Demonstrate the ability to work in teams effectively.

IV. ALIGNMENT OF PROGRAM AND COURSE OUTCOMES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Alignment of Faculty Goals and Course Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CLOS1. Explain strategic management theories and concepts.</td>
<td>GOAL1: Acquisition and internalization of knowledge of the program discipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GOAL2: Application and integration of knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLOS2. Understand the impact of firms’ internal and external environments on performance.</td>
<td>GOAL1: Acquisition and internalization of knowledge of the program discipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GOAL2: Application and integration of knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GOAL4: Developing global outlook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLOS3. Apply analytical frameworks to define and analyze strategic problems, and to formulate and implement business strategies.</td>
<td>GOAL2: Application and integration of knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GOAL3: Inculcating professionalism and leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GOAL4: Developing global outlook</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| CLOS4. Explain complex business opportunities and problems in a global context. | GOAL2: Application and integration of knowledge  
GOAL4: Developing global outlook |
| CLOS5 Understand and apply the concept of business ethics in strategic decision-making | GOAL2: Application and integration of knowledge  
GOAL3: Inculcating professionalism and leadership |
| CLOS6. Demonstrate effective communication skills. | GOAL5: Mastering communication skills |
| CLOS7. Demonstrate the ability to lead and work in teams effectively. | GOAL3: Inculcating professionalism and leadership  
GOAL5: Mastering communication skills |

V. TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES

**TLA1. Lectures:**
Instructor will give lectures on major concepts and issues to help students better understand the strategic management issues.

**TLA2. Class Discussions:**
Students will be asked to actively participate in all discussions in class, i.e., during case discussions and the discussion of other practical examples or current affairs.

**TLA3. Homework:**
Students will be asked to submit a PowerPoint deck analysing and recommending business strategies for a firm, and to prepare case discussions.

**TLA4. Presentation:**
Students will be asked to do a presentation on the analysis of the company they choose for the group project.

**TLA5. Consultation:**
Instructor holds weekly consultation hours as well as offers meetings by appointment to address students’ questions and help them achieve a good result in the course.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Teaching &amp; Learning Activities</th>
<th>Expected Contact Hours</th>
<th>Study Load (% of study)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lectures, exercises, and in-class discussions</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group discussions on team assignments</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-study</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>120</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**VI. Assessment**

The assessment is based on class participation, group project and final exam. The weights of the components in determining the final grade are:

**A1. Participation: 20%**

This is a participatory class where we will learn from each other as well as the text and related materials. Therefore, active participation is required and each student must be willing to contribute effectively. 20% of the total grade is based on individuals’ performance in class.

You may be called (at random) at any time during class to contribute to or critique the ongoing discussion. Therefore, you will be expected to come to class well prepared to discuss and answer questions about all assigned chapters and all cases.

- Come to class well prepared. Read the assigned case several times and think about how the concepts from prerequisite courses, concepts from the textbook or those discussed in class can be applied. Make notes that you can refer to during class. Support your comments by using the data provided in the case.
- Contribute ideas and analysis to the class discussion. Given the complexities of the real world, there is no single right answer. What is more important is how you use strategic concepts and tools to analyse a situation and support your analysis.
- Listen carefully to your classmates and suggest supporting or alternative views.

Quality and relevance of participation are more important than quantity, though quantity does matter as well. Not participating or only participating actively in a single session will affect your final grade significantly. Effective class participation is based on relevant, insightful and appropriately timed comments. Facts in the case are tools: don’t just restate them, but try to use them in analytical ways that explore relevant ideas. Every student is a co-producer of class discussion, so please listen carefully to one another and attempt to build on or constructively critique prior comments.

Except for the group presentation sessions, class attendance is not compulsory. But if you choose to attend it is expected you behave professionally. After all, you are only a year away from entering the workforce. Inappropriate and disturbing behaviour in the class room such as
arriving late or distracting other students or myself might negatively affect your participation grade.

Each session, at least three students will be picked at random to grade the participation of their peers using a template specifically designed for this purpose. I too, will be grading participation. Every three weeks, participation grades will be made available. These grades are for information only. Participation grades are at my discretion and are not subject to debate, bargaining or appeal.

A2. Group Project: 40%

Students are required to form teams of exactly five students (details will be provided at the start of the course). Each team is required to perform an in-depth analysis of an Asian company of their choice and the industry in which it operates, identify a current key strategic challenge or opportunity faced by this company, and develop a strategy and accompanying implementation plan that will provide this company with a competitive advantage.

Presentation (40%): Each team is required to present their analysis, their recommended strategy and a brief implementation to the class. The presentation cannot exceed 20 minutes and will be timed. Immediately after finishing the presentation, each team will host a Q&A session of 10 minutes. Every member of the team has to present. Teams should prepare for their presentations as though they will be addressing their respective company’s board of directors. Also, note that interesting presentations offer a good balance between analysis, recommendation and implementation. You are expected to be able to support your presentation by quoting relevant facts and figures. You will have to use PowerPoint for your presentation. Your PowerPoint deck should contain presentation slides as well as a set of supporting slides you can use to support our presentation in the Q&A session. **You need to submit your presentation deck through Moodle on or before 9:00am the day before your presentation.**

Students are free to put together their own groups. **The team composition needs to be finalized by 17 September and submitted by email.** Any student without a group at that time will be assigned one by the instructor. Upon confirmation of all groups they will be assigned a presentation slot by the instructor. Students have to attend all presentation sessions.

**All groups need to submit a choice of company by 11 October. When choosing the company the group also needs to identify a key strategic opportunity/challenge for the company to address and why the group thinks it is important for the company to do so.** In case multiple groups choose the same company, the first to indicate their choice by email will be allowed to proceed with the chosen company, and the other group will have to find an alternative. Any combination of a company/opportunity/challenge that is featured in a (published) case study or has already been (publicly) addressed by the company will most likely be rejected by me.

All team members are expected to meaningfully contribute to the group project. At the end of the presentation, individual group members will be required to complete an evaluation form
for their group. I can choose to adjust an individual’s group project grade based on the results of the peer evaluation.

A3. Final Exam: 40%

The final exam may cover all of the materials from the course, including readings, lectures, cases, classroom discussions, student presentations and any other materials used. It will mainly assess students’ understanding of key concepts and theories introduced in this course; and the student’s ability to employ the analytical tools they have learned from this course. Multiple choice questions and case analysis will be the major components of the final exam.

The alignment of the outcomes, teaching and learning activities and assessment is shown in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Teaching and Learning Activity</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. CLOS1</td>
<td>TLA 1, 2, 3, 4</td>
<td>A1, A2, A3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. CLOS2</td>
<td>TLA 1, 2, 3, 4</td>
<td>A1, A2, A3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. CLOS3</td>
<td>TLA 1, 2, 3, 4</td>
<td>A1, A2, A3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. CLOS4</td>
<td>TLA 1, 2, 3, 4</td>
<td>A1, A2, A3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. CLOS5</td>
<td>TLA 1, 2, 3, 4</td>
<td>A1, A2, A3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. CLOS6</td>
<td>TLA 1, 2, 3, 4</td>
<td>A1, A2, A3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. CLOS7</td>
<td>TLA 1, 2, 3, 4</td>
<td>A2, A3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VII. STANDARDS FOR ASSESSMENT

Course Grade Descriptors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Standards for Assessments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+, A, A-</td>
<td>Consistently exhibits strong analytical skills and the ability to define, analyze and solve strategic problems by means of the relevant theoretical frameworks and consistently shows original thinking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+, B, B-</td>
<td>Frequently exhibits strong analytical skills and the ability to define, analyze and solve strategic problems by means of the relevant theoretical frameworks and shows some original thinking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+, C, C-</td>
<td>Only occasionally exhibits strong analytical skills and the ability to define, analyze and solve strategic problems by means of the relevant theoretical framework, showing little evidence of original thinking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+, D</td>
<td>Only occasionally exhibits basic analytical skills and the ability to define, analyze and solve strategic problems by means of the relevant theoretical frameworks and lacks original thinking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Unable to define, analyze and solve strategic problems through the relevant theoretical frameworks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assessment Rubrics for Each Assessment

A1: Class Participation (20%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Assessment criteria:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Voluntary and consistent participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Quality of comments (accuracy, clarity, relevance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Analytical ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Link to theory and concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outstanding</td>
<td>▪ Consistently participated voluntarily in case discussions and other class discussions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85-100%</td>
<td>▪ All or almost all contributions to the discussion are relevant, clear, well-articulated and insightful and consist of relevant and helpful examples and analyses, creative and insightful solutions, thereby appropriately challenging assumptions and perspectives, showing outstanding ability to apply theory and concepts to practical examples.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>▪ Consistently participated voluntarily in case discussions and other class discussions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-84%</td>
<td>▪ Most contributions to the discussion are relevant, clear, well-articulated and insightful and consist of relevant and helpful examples and analyses, creative and insightful solutions, thereby appropriately challenging assumptions and perspectives, showing strong ability to apply theory and concepts to practical examples.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competent</td>
<td>▪ Occasionally participated voluntarily in case discussions and other class discussions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69%</td>
<td>▪ Some contributions to the discussion are relevant, clear, well-articulated and insightful and consist of relevant and helpful examples and analyses, showing some creative and insightful solutions, thereby showing moderate ability to apply theory and concepts to practical examples.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient</td>
<td>▪ Occasionally participated voluntarily in case discussions and other class discussions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59%</td>
<td>▪ Few contributions to the discussion are relevant, clear, well-articulated and insightful and consist of limited relevant and helpful examples and analyses, showing very limited creative and insightful solutions, thereby showing very limited ability to apply theory and concepts to practical examples.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>▪ Failed to participate voluntarily or simply recited comments made by others.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## A2: Group Project (40%)

- **Presentation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Criteria:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Understanding and correct application of theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Articulation of arguments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Relevance, logic and creativity of recommendations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Language and style (grammar and spelling)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Outstanding
85-100%

- **Analysis and application of theory (50%):**
  - Demonstrates an outstanding understanding of, and the ability to apply theory and concepts to the case company chosen.
  - All relevant aspects about the case company were addressed and researched in sufficient depth.
  - Draws widely from relevant sources and cites sources correctly.

- **Recommendations (30%):**
  - Outstanding ability to adopt a critical perspective and provide adequate, feasible and creative strategy formulation and execution.
  - Recommendation(s) follow logically from analysis.

- **Writing and Structure (20%):**
  - Logical structure of presentation deck as a whole.
  - Excellent development of arguments and offers a logically consistent and well-articulated analysis and insight into the subject.
  - No spelling or grammar mistakes.

### Good
70-84%

- **Analysis and application of theory (50%):**
  - Demonstrates a good understanding of, and the ability to apply theory and concepts to the case company chosen.
  - Most relevant aspects about the case company were addressed and researched in sufficient depth.
  - Draws widely from relevant sources and cites sources correctly.

- **Recommendations (30%):**
  - Mediocre ability to adopt a critical perspective and provide adequate, feasible and creative strategy formulation and execution.
  - Recommendation(s) follow logically from analysis.

- **Writing and Structure (20%):**
  - Logical structure of presentation deck as a whole.
  - Good development of arguments and offers a logically consistent and well-articulated analysis and insight into the subject.
  - No spelling or grammar mistakes.
Sufficient
50-59%

Analysis and application of theory (50%):
- Demonstrates limited understanding of, and the ability to apply theory and concepts to the case company chosen.
- Some relevant aspects about the case company were addressed and researched in depth.
- Limited use of sources of information but correct citation of sources.

Recommendations (30%):
- Good ability to adopt a critical perspective and provide adequate, feasible and creative strategy formulation and execution.
- Recommendation(s) follow logically from analysis.

Writing and Structure (20%):
- Flaws in the logic of the structure of presentation deck as a whole.
- Mediocre development of arguments offering limited insight into the subject.
- No spelling or grammar mistakes.

Fail
<50%

Analysis and application of theory (50%):
- Demonstrates lack of understanding of, and the ability to apply theory and concepts to the case company chosen.
- Relevant aspects about the case company were not addressed.

Recommendations (30%):
- Inability to adopt a critical perspective and provide adequate, feasible and creative strategy formulation and execution.
- Recommendation(s) do not follow logically from the analysis.

Writing and Structure (20%):
- Flaws in the logic of the arguments and the structure of the presentation deck.
- Failure to use available software for grammar and spelling checks, resulting in poor writing, typos and grammatical errors.

A3: Final Exam (40%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Criteria:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outstanding</td>
<td>- Ability to think analytically (conduct case analysis)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85-100%</td>
<td>- Ability to apply concepts and theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Ability to clearly articulate a point of view and answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- All or almost all of the questions are clearly and accurately answered showing outstanding insights into the theoretical material and an</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
outstanding ability to conduct case analysis and apply concepts and theory.
- All or almost all of the responses are well organized, clear, fluent, and with sufficient elaboration.

### Good
**70-84%**
- Most of the questions are clearly and accurately answered showing good insights into the theoretical material and a strong ability to conduct case analysis and apply concepts and theory.
- Most of the responses are well organized, clear, fluent, and with sufficient elaboration.

### Competent
**60-69%**
- Some of the questions are clearly and accurately answered showing good insights into the theoretical material and a strong ability to conduct case analysis and apply concepts and theory.
- Some of the responses are well organized, clear, fluent, and with sufficient elaboration.

### Sufficient
**50-59%**
- Few of the questions are clearly and accurately answered showing good insights into the theoretical material and a strong ability to conduct case analysis and apply concepts and theory.
- Few of the responses are well organized, clear, fluent, and with sufficient elaboration.

### Fail
**<50%**
- Very few or none of the questions are clearly and accurately answered showing good insights into the theoretical material and a strong ability to conduct case analysis and apply concepts and theory.
- Very few or none of the responses are well organized, clear, fluent, and with sufficient elaboration.

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**Course Final Grade:**

The final grade for the course will be based on the scores for all the assessment tasks as follows:

Final grade = Attendance and Class participation (20%) + Group project (40%) + Final Exam (40%)

The conversion of the score to the course final grade is summarized below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+, A, A-</td>
<td>85%-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+, B, B-</td>
<td>70% – 84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+, C, C-</td>
<td>60% – 69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+, D</td>
<td>50% – 59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt; 50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**VIII. ACADEMIC AND CLASS CONDUCT**
The University Regulations on academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. You are encouraged to review the University Statement on plagiarism at http://www.hku.hk/plagiarism/.

When attending, students should be in class on time. Arriving late or leaving early or walking in/out during class without permission might negatively affect your class participation grade. The same goes for disturbing me or your fellow students in other ways. Students are required to put their mobile phones on silent mode.

IX. MEANS/PROCESSES FOR STUDENT FEEDBACK ON COURSE

The SETL questionnaire is one of the ways HKU courses and teaching are evaluated. HKU places significant importance on student learning and on the continuous enhancement of teaching and learning outcomes. Students are asked to complete this evaluation of their learning experiences at the conclusion of the course. Questionnaire items relate to the overall evaluation of the course as well as an evaluation of teaching.

I will provide time for you to see me personally to help you achieve a good result in class. You can come to my office on Monday between 4:00pm and 6:00pm, or email/call to make an appointment. Student feedback by phone or email, or during office hours is always welcomed throughout the semester.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK 1</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Sept 2 & Sept 5 | Class Focus: Introduction  
Textbook: Chapter 1  
Case: Luckin Coffee  |
| WEEK 2  |  |  |
| Sept 9 & Sept 12 | Class Focus: External Analysis  
Textbook: Chapter 2  
Case: TBC  |
| WEEK 3  |  |  |
| Sept 16 & Sept 19 | Class Focus: Internal Analysis  
Textbook: Chapter 3  
Case: TBC  |
| WEEK 4  |  |  |
| Sept 23 & Sept 26 | Class Focus: Business Strategy  
Textbook: Chapter 4  
Case: TBC  |
| WEEK 5  |  |  |
| Sept 30 & Oct 3 | Class Focus: Competitive Dynamics  
Textbook: Chapter 5  
Case: TBC  |
| WEEK 6  |  |  |
| Oct 10 | Class Focus: Corporate Strategy  
Textbook: Chapter 6  
Case: TBC  |
| Oct 14 & Oct 19 | No Class – Reading Week  |
| WEEK 7  |  |  |
| Oct 24 | NO CLASS ON MONDAY  
Class Focus: Merger & Acquisition  
Textbook: Chapter 7  
Case: TBC  |
| WEEK 8  |  |  |
| Oct 28 & Oct 31 | Class Focus: Cooperative Strategy  
Textbook: Chapter 9  
Case: TBC  |
| WEEK 9  |  |  |
| Nov 4 & Nov 7 | Class Focus: Ethics and leadership  
Textbook: Chapter 12  
Case: TBC  |
| WEEK 10 |  |  |
| Nov 11 & Nov 14 | Nov 11: Extra class on Merger & Acquisition  
Nov 14: Group Presentations  |
| WEEK 11 |  |  |
| Nov 18 & Nov 21 | Nov 18: Course Wrap-up  
Nov 21: Group Presentations (special 3 hour class)  |
| WEEK 12 |  |  |
| Nov 28 | NO CLASS ON MONDAY  
Nov 28: Group Presentations (special 3 hour class)  |
The course will use a mix of published and unpublished cases. Cases will be made available no less than 7 days before the start of the class in which they will be discussed.

The Monday sessions will focus on theory, and the Thursday sessions will be mostly dedicated to case discussion. Thursday 14 November, 21 November and 28 November are reserved for the group presentations. *The sessions on 21 and 28 November will start one hour earlier for a total of three hours. If this creates any conflict with your other classes please inform Wenhui and me by email as soon as possible but no later than 17 September.*