

Letter to Audiences (2025-01)

From Personal Project to Group Project

Dear students, teachers, visitors and fans,

Thanks for your continued support for [Ken's Study Journey](#)!

As 2025 has started, I would like to share [my history, achievements, reflections and plans](#) for 2025.

My Achievements

First, I would like to share [my achievements](#) so far in recent years.

High School

- IGCSE: 6A* 1A
- AS Level: 4a
- A Level: 4A* (EPQ A*; 27/28)
- Offers from many Dream Universities

University

- USThing App Position (one of heads of app development)
- ITSC Student Helper Position
- Computer Science (COMP) + AI Extended Major

History of Ken's Study Journey

From a [personal blog](#) to a [research project](#), [Ken's Study Journey](#) will soon be [6 years old](#) since 2019.

- **2019:** Personal Blog
- **2020:** Study Tips Sharing Website
- **2021:** Study Planning System (Ken's Study Planner)
- **2022:** Research Project

Thanks for my [Personal Blog initiative in 2019](#) back to my middle school and my [continuous development](#) moving towards [my Life Goal](#):

"Invent/Develop more modern technologies and [make people's life more convenient](#) in the future."

Negative Impacts in 2022

Starting my university Year 2 journey, I would like to take this opportunity to **reveal a fact** in 2022 **concealed** in the last few years (from 2022 to 2024).

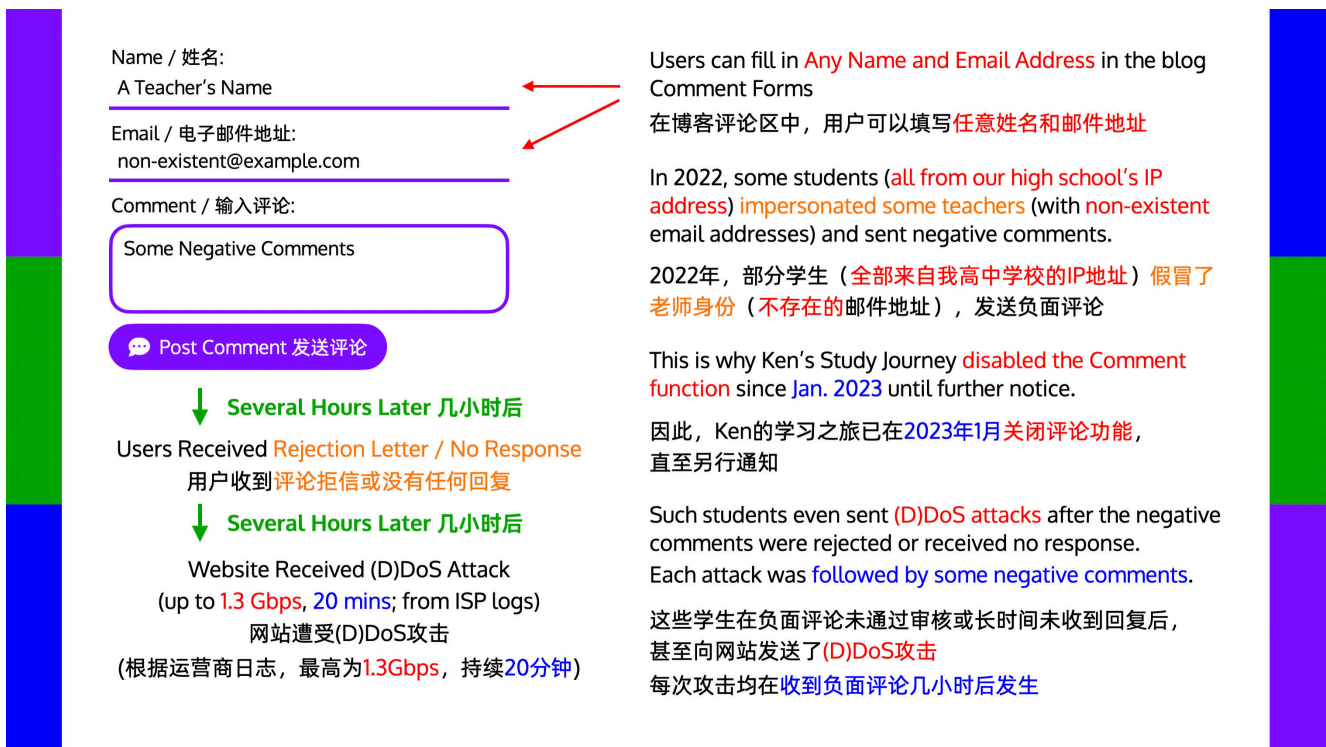
As shown in my university TVs, I **partially agree** with a quote:
"You only need **one success**."

In 2022, however, Ken's Study Journey website **received and rejected** (and hence not displayed publicly) several comments by **negative students** in my high school. Such students **negatively commented on other's weaknesses**, regardless of their achievements.

For example, despite **not being in Physics major**:

"Do you know *** is the rate change of acceleration? I can teach you!!!"

For this reason, Ken's Study Journey decided to **disable the Comment Function** since **January 2023**.



More seriously, Ken's Study Journey website and services underwent **(D)DoS ((Distributed) Denial of Service) Attacks** followed by some negative comments.

Negative Comments can totally be rejected and ignored, but (D)DoS Attacks can't as it **prevents the use of services**.

This (Negative Comments + Attack) happened **twice** in 2022, including:

- January 2022 (before finals)
- September 2022 (after semester started)

Based on the logs from the Internet Service Providers (ISPs), each attack was around **20 mins** at **midnight**, **1.3 Gbps** using **UDP Flood**.

Technical Working Principles of the Attack 攻击背后的技术原理

In 2022, followed by some negative comments, the website received (D)DoS attack from negative students in high school.

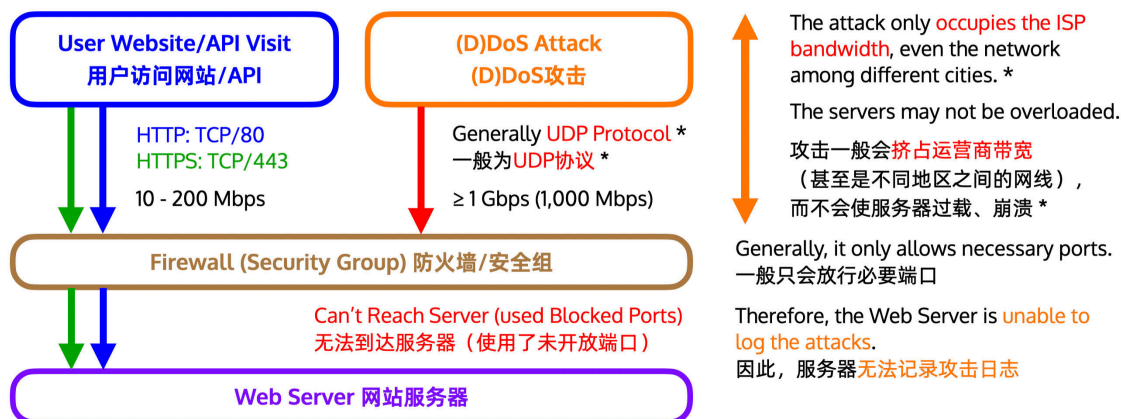
After a careful investigation, the following diagram was created.

Reminder: (D)DoS Attack is a serious offence and is liable to prosecution.

2022年, 在收到、忽略负面评论后, 网站遭受高中负面学生的(D)DoS攻击

在充分调查后, 制作了以下原理图

提醒: (D)DoS攻击是违法的, 可能会被追究法律责任哦!



* From the ISP logs. 来自网络运营商日志

Some other study-related websites, including Past Papers and Study Tips Sharing, were also affected by the (D)DoS attack.

For this reason, our high school's IP address was restricted, by ISP, for accessing websites outside Mainland, especially those using third-party CDNs (Akamai, CloudFlare, Fastly, Amazon CloudFront, etc), possibly to protect them against attacks.

This means a proxy was necessary even for websites like UCAS (the UK university application system), Quizlet, Notion, etc. using CloudFlare.

From my Predictions 从个人推断得出 (2022)

Our high school's IP address was restricted from accessing websites outside Mainland by the ISP due to (D)DoS attacks (to servers outside) from other students.

In particular, the websites with CDNs (e.g., CloudFlare).

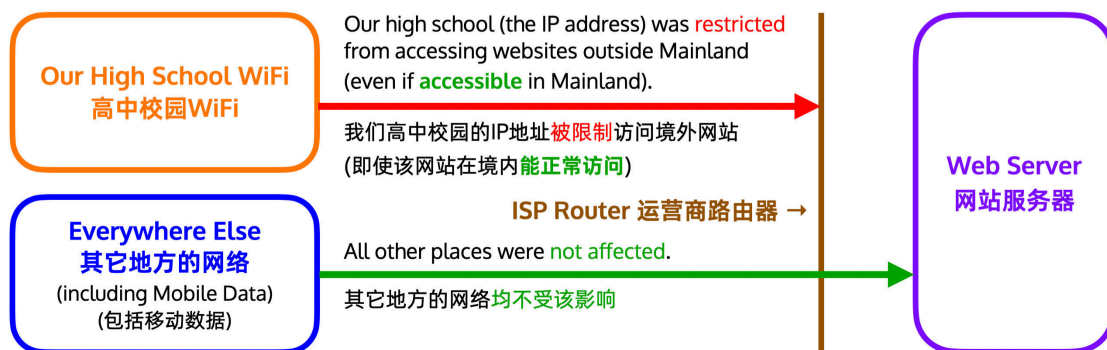
This even includes UCAS (the UK university application system).

由于有同学对外发送(D)DoS攻击, 高中校园网络的IP地址被运营商(ISP)限制访问境外网站

特别是使用CloudFlare等CDN的网站, 包括英国大学申请系统UCAS

Traceroute Result from our High School 高中校园WiFi路由追踪(traceroute)结果

1	1 ms	1 ms	1 ms	10.*.*.*
2	1 ms	1 ms	1 ms	10.*.*.*
3	5 ms	5 ms	5 ms	183.237.**.*
4	6 ms	6 ms	6 ms	183.233.**.*
5	6 ms	6 ms	6 ms	211.136.**.*
6	10 ms	10 ms	10 ms	111.24.**.*
7	11 ms	11 ms	11 ms	111.24.**.*
8	11 ms	11 ms	11 ms	221.176.**.*
9	*	*	*	Request Timed Out
10	*	*	*	Request Timed Out



Several weeks later, our high school changed the IP address (183.**.**.55) suffix (from .55 to .56, and finally .54). Despite this change, the new IP addresses were **still restricted**.

For more information, including [examples of negative comments](#), you may refer to the [notice](#) published in Sep. 2022.

Ken's Study Journey Reminder:

- (D)DoS Attack is a **serious offence** and is **liable to prosecution**.
- Cheating (including preventing others from studying/working) is **not useful** for future technology development.
Only with your **hard work** can you **improve modern technologies**.

<h3>Ken's Study Journey Reminder</h3> <p>Technology isn't Easy, Development is Busy</p> <p>(D)DoS Attack is a serious offence and is liable to prosecution. Cheating is not useful for future technology development. Only with your hard work can you improve modern technologies. It's not helpful to make achievements by cheating, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cheating Exams• Improving your grade by preventing others from studying (e.g., sending (D)DoS attacks to study websites)• Making/Using Fraudulent documents/materials in applications	<h3>Ken的学习之旅提醒你</h3> <p>科技来之不易，研发来自努力</p> <p>(D)DoS攻击是违法的，可能会被追究法律责任 作弊、学术不端并不能为科技发展做出贡献 科技的发展都是靠真实努力、水平换来的 切不可通过非正常手段获取成就:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 考试作弊或代考• 妨碍其他同学正常学习，以提高自己成绩 (例如，向学习资源网站发送(D)DoS攻击)• 在申请中使用伪造(假)文件/材料

Losing Communication Skills with "Personal Lockdown"

On the following Sunday night after the (D)DoS attack on September 2022, a student **approached and spoke to me** in my **high school Hall (dormitory)**:
"Hi! I heard that your website was attacked by DDoS"

For this reason, I **refused to make friends** with over 99% of other students (filtered out), also known as **"Personal Lockdown"**.

Despite giving up communication and social skills, in particular, negative impacts from others, I **fully focused on academics** with outstanding achievements.

Fortunately, due to my "Personal Lockdown", my academics **wasn't negatively impacted** by the negative students.

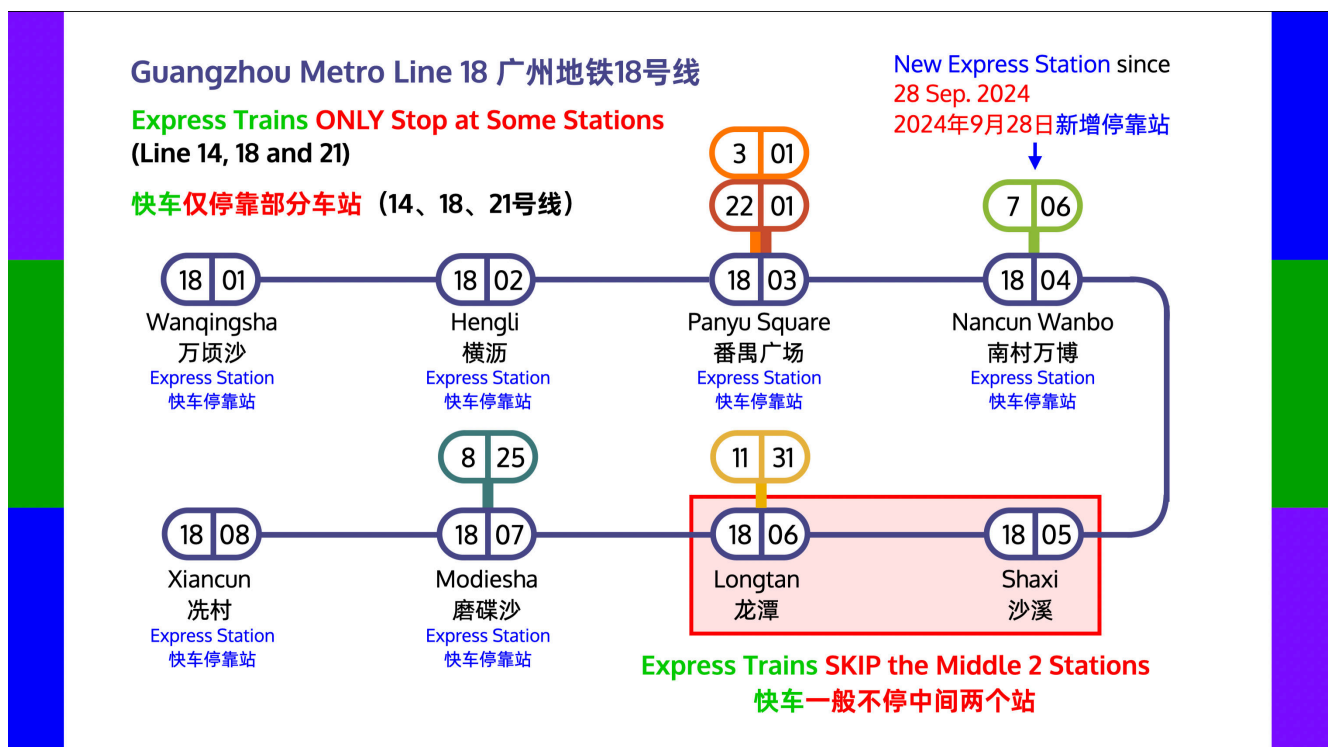
My Unique Personality

After **removing "Personal Lockdown"** upon high school graduation (mid-2023), I noticed my unique personality **different from over 99% of other students**.

1. Games and Entertainment (including ice-breaking games) are the **WASTE of my Time!**
2. I like **being rigorous** and **explaining everything into detail** like researchers.
3. I can **focus on one thing** (like a project) for a long time.
4. Researching **my own topics** can **bring me achievement and happiness**.
5. Regardless of whether acceptable or not (usually by teachers, judges, etc.), I **always want to apply my idea in real life**.
6. Regardless of my location (including trains, planes or other transportation) and public holidays, I **always think about and focus on my work**.

For the ease of understanding, I would like to share some **examples** of **explaining everything into detail**.

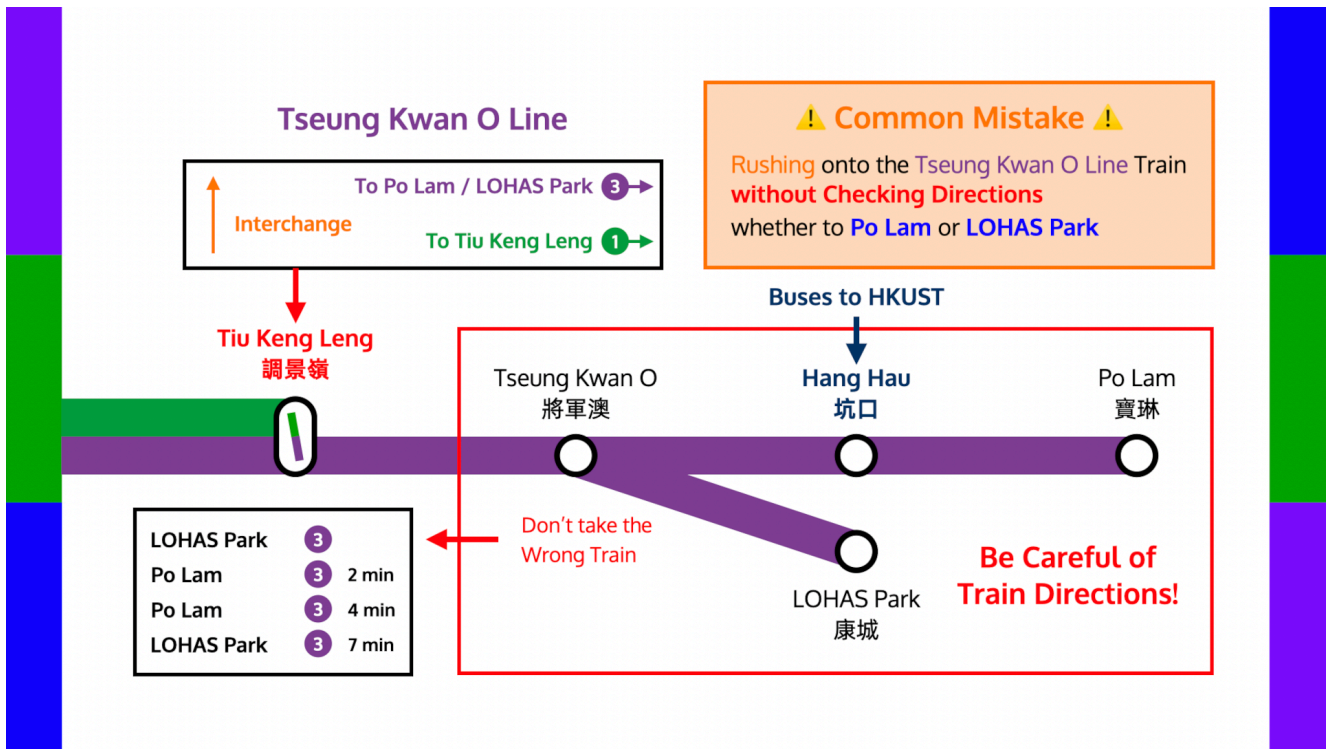
In my Guangzhou City Tour article, I emphasised the **Short Trains** and **Express Trains** in Guangzhou Metro (in particular, **Express Trains** for Line 18).



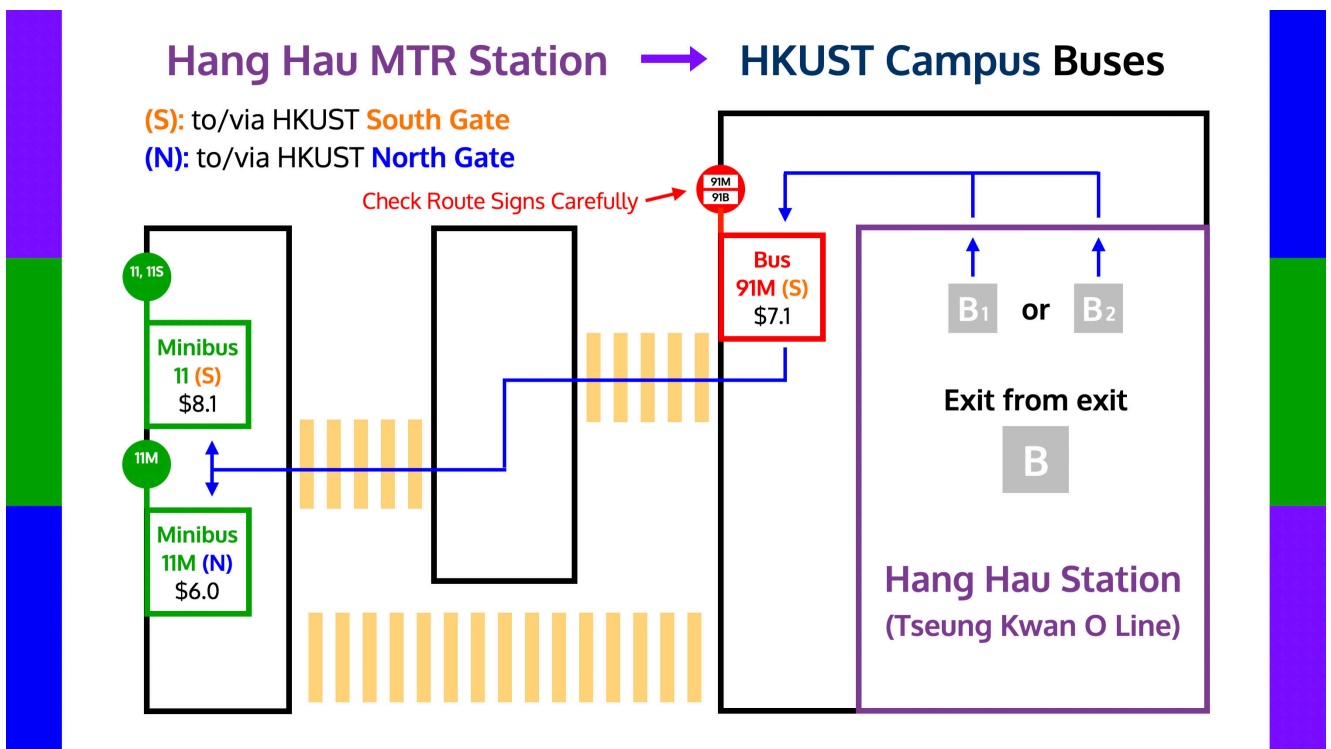
I even wrote an article titled "HKUST FAQs" comprehensively explaining our university in detail and emphasising a **Common Mistake**:

Rushing onto the MTR Tseung Kwan O Line (將軍澳綫) train **without checking directions** when travelling back to HKUST campus, whether to:

- **Po Lam (寶琳) (correct)**
- **LOHAS Park (康城) (wrong)**



Additionally, I used a diagram explaining the directions from Hang Hau MTR Station to the Bus Stop to our HKUST Campus.



There are a number of showcase opportunities along with some competitions welcoming ideas. However, all ideas can be selected by judges, public voting, etc. "Thanks for applying to After a careful consideration (e.g., by our judging panel), we regret to inform you that:

- your application is not successful
- your project/idea is not shortlisted in Top 5/10/etc.

- your project is not selected for display/showcase
- (etc.)

due to the **large number of applications**, making the selection process very competitive."

Utilising my **Ken's Study Journey** personal project, I **always have the opportunity and platform** to **express my ideas** and **apply it in my real life**, regardless of the rankings, quality and other applications.

That means, it's **fully managed, regulated and led on my own** and no one else can oversee, regulate, manage or disallow it.

Addicted to Personal Project

Due to my "2022 Personal Lockdown" without any friends, I **always worked on and developed my personal project** in my free time.

My **addiction to personal project** indicates my **hardship** for teamwork, collaboration and group projects.

Whether in my personal or group projects, I always tend to **uphold all my opinions and ideas**, making my situation **worse** whenever hearing the following from other students or team members:

- "Don't think too much."
- "We need your understanding please."
- "It's mutual respect. To get respect, you must give it first."
- "So, why are you keep asking understanding from others but do not even want to understand others?"

I **always need understanding by others** and am seeking for **Medical Advice and Counselling** from my university, including **Special Education Needs (SEN) support**, and confirmed to have **Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)**, according to Medical Proof.

Like my unique personality, **Ken's Study Journey** also has a **completely different personality** from over 95% of other Internet services.

From my experience or according to news, some Internet services may:

- **Force users to log in and/or download app(s)** to unlock full content
- **Force users to enter email addresses** to download resources (i.e., Subscribe to Download) (common on many other personal websites)
- **Limit the number of views** per day per account or IP address (even for followers)
- **Not allow users to leave any contacts, links or account names** of other services in **posts and/or private messages**
- **Ban specific robots or search engines** in **"/robots.txt"** file

- Restrict or ban user accounts (permanently) **without stating any reason** (possibly by mistake; and sometimes **delete all previous user content**)
- (etc.)

On **20 Dec. 2024**, inspired by a news report that a social media service banned over 1,000,000 (1 million) accounts **on 19 Dec. at 10:00 pm** with **large number of complaints (being banned by mistake)**, I further **enhanced my interest** developing my personal project.

Policies and Personality on different services may change at any time. Something legal in one day **may be "outlawed" on this service** after a specific time.

For this reason, I **refrained myself from using third-party Internet services**, in particular, social media.

Regardless of whether posting my content on third party platforms (e.g., YouTube and Instagram), I **always keep a backup** on the **Ken's Study Journey Website** since **March 2023**, including:

- Photos (kenstudyjourney.cn/photos)
- Vlogs (kenstudyjourney.cn/vlogs)

Like tech companies, I imagine some offices (headquarters or branches) for **Ken's Study Journey** in different cities:

- Guangzhou Office (CN-CAN) (my home city) (**headquarters**)
- Hong Kong Office (CN-HKG) (my university city) (**outside** HKUST campus)

Unleashing my Creativity

Without my creativity, **Ken's Study Journey & Planner** projects would not have been possible.

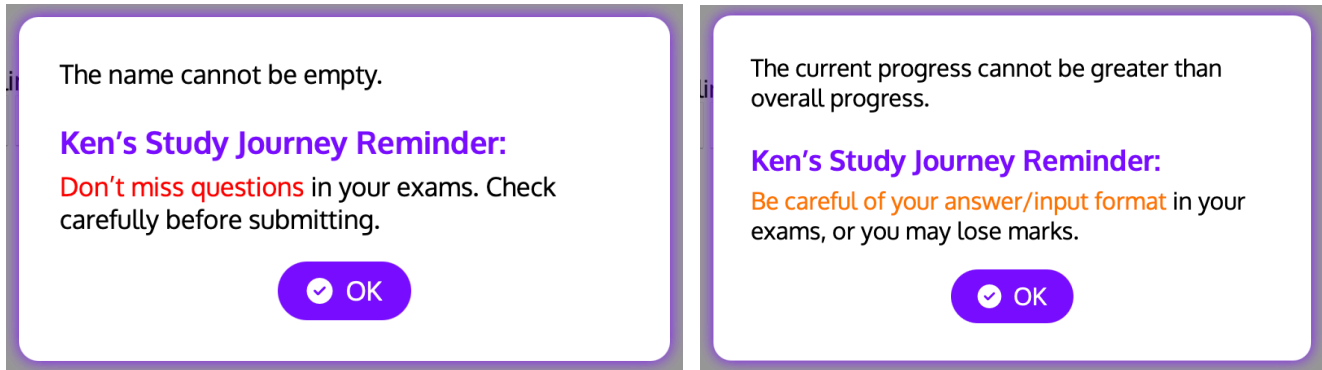
According to my article "My Biggest Personal Project", I **developed a range of skills** from **one project**, including:

- Content Sharing & Storytelling
- Programming & Software Development
- Daily Server Maintenance
- Incident (Server Down) Handling
- Technical Research
- UI/UX, Poster & Logo Design

Apart from the skills developed, I implemented **a number of inventions** on the **Ken's Study Journey & Planner** projects:

- Friendly Error Messages (**Feb. 2024**)
- Article Reading Questions (**Mar. 2024**)
- Hiding Details behind "Learn More" buttons (**Jan. 2025**)

In **February 2024**, I invented **Friendly Error Messages** especially for students. Instead of just a **red error message**, I added some **extra words**. For example: **“Don’t miss questions** in your exams. Check carefully before submitting.”



In **March 2024**, I invented **Article Reading Questions** giving an opportunity for students to **briefly test their reading skills** with my articles.

2. Test Question 2

✗ **Incorrect** [Find Content Location >](#)

A. I am the Correct Answer

B. Option B

C. Option C

D. D

✔ **Submit**

Another new invention, which will be implemented since **January 2025**, would be hiding details behind “Learn More” buttons **enhancing the article readability** for **different audiences**.

While technical people or those who would like to learn more want to **expand details**, most general readers **only rely on the brief information**.

Content Shown

Is Sports Class Compulsory at your University?

✓ **Yes**, but it's **only compulsory in Year 1** usually for **one semester**.

Apart from that, we can **join sport societies** if interested.

Learn More ▾



← **Click to Expand**

Content Hidden Behind the "Learn More" Button

At our university, we have a **compulsory course HMAW1905** (Habits Mindsets & Wellness) for Year 1 students which includes Sports Skill Class.

We only need to **satisfy the time requirements**, like 9 hours in my school (1.5 hours per session with 6 sessions; one session per week).

We can **choose any sport type we enjoy**, from Table Tennis, Badminton to Swimming, on the system.

Apart from the feature inventions, I also invented and/or used a number of **study tips**, in [this article](#), helping me **overtake others** for **A* grades**, including:

1. Discover & Share Knowledge in Real Life
2. Daily Goals Checklist
3. Days Left Board
4. Study Habits Posters
5. Knowledge Boards
6. Ideal Study Environment Assumptions
7. "4BST" Study Tips
8. (etc.)

However, the first invention (1), in 2019, will **no longer be applicable** to university professional courses in **Year 3 or above** making it **a valuable history**. Nevertheless, it is still recommended for middle and high school students.

Developing Technology Behind

Ken's Study Journey serves as not only a **content-sharing platform and service** but, more importantly, my **research project**.

Apart from my creativity, the **technology development** also plays a vital role.

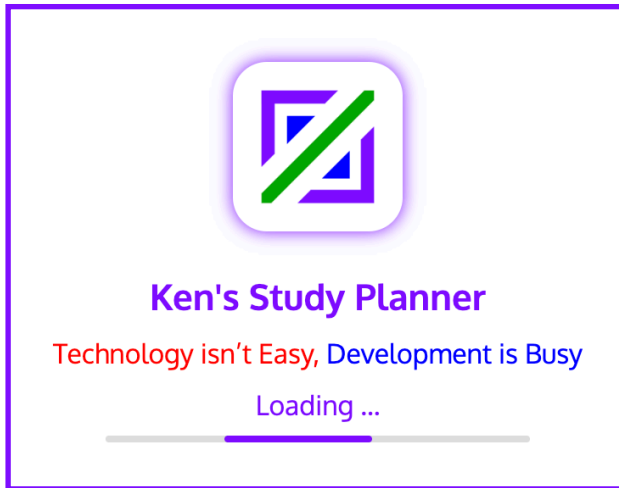
Like some other small websites, you could sometimes see the **Maintenance Page**.

Back to **18 August 2021** from 8 am (08:00) to 2 pm (14:00) (GMT+8, CST), **Ken's Study Journey** website **went offline for 6 hours** for a major upgrade.

"503 Service Unavailable - This website is under maintenance. Please check back later."

Since 2022, however, **you would never see this page**. This indicates the potential of **Ken's Study Journey** for upgrading the systems **without interrupting the services** (i.e., smooth upgrades).

Around April 2024, **Ken's Study Planner** experienced **degraded performance** requiring 5 to 12 seconds to load data. This was the **first major incident** in 2024.



I spent 1 to 2 months to come up with the solutions with **hash algorithms** - one of the key technologies for **a large amount of data**.

I would like to reiterate some of my slogans/words:

- **Technology isn't Easy, Development is Busy**
- **Patience is important in problem-solving**. Only with patience can you develop your problem-solving skills.

Embracing Teamwork with Plandline Project

Back to my middle and high school journey, **no one else, except me, was interested** in web and server development. This is why everything was **developed by me alone**.

To overcome this problem, the **Ken's Study Journey** (Hong Kong Office; CN-HKG) proposed "**Collaboration for Beginners**" Scheme in mid-2023 welcoming everyone **regardless of their past experiences** without any technical background checks, admission tests, interviews, etc.

However, the name **Ken's Study Journey** is **too personal** for a group project, impeding its development for teamwork and leading to **failure** of this Scheme.

Until mid-2024, I came up with a new name, **Plandline (学路划)**, as a **sub-brand** of **Ken's Study Journey**, in order **not to interrupt the operations** of **Ken's Study Journey and Planner** services.

While **Ken's Study Journey and Planner** will still be my **personal project**, **Plandline** will become my first self-led **group project**.

This is my first step **trying to turn a personal project into a group project**.

After my careful consideration, **Ken's Study Journey** gives a **high autonomy** and trusts the potential for this **Plandline project** allowing the Hong Kong Office (CN-HKG) to manage it alone and **restarting** my "**Collaboration for Beginners**" **Scheme**.

The Guangzhou Office (CN-CAN) only:

- oversees the development for the project
- provides necessary technical support and resources

Different from the **Ken's Study Journey** project, the **Plandline project** will be administrated under the laws of **Hong Kong (SAR), China** for the better use of the university resources and students.



Inherited and copied from **Ken's Study Planner** as a **starting point**, we can even make **Plandline** **beyond just a study planning system** with **more features**.

Unfortunately, this is **under trial** and hence currently **only eligible** for Hong Kong university students.

However, you are welcome to email ken@kenstudyjourney.cn (**no need** to attach CVs) if interested. This may change our future development plans.

* Note:

Ken's Study Journey Terms of Service (ToS) and Privacy Policy are **NOT applicable** to this project.

The **Plandline** logo is still under our group discussion and is **NOT final** (i.e., may change later).

Slow Thinking Problem

Apart from ASD, it was my major problem to **think very slowly**.

For this reason, I am not suitable for some interviews and competitions requiring **quick learning or thinking**. However, this may be common for researchers.

From **overtaking others**, **getting A* grades** (IGCSE and A Level) and **taking IELTS exams** in high school to **driving exams** before/at university, I **kept myself very busy** throughout the holidays.

Hopefully, I will **resolve this issue** before **February 2025**.

Conclusion & Final Notes

It was the **modern UI/UX design**, **technology applications**, **study tips** and **my feature inventions** on the **Ken's Study Journey** project, acting as a "starter kit" towards my future goals, that witnessed **my strong potential**.

Utilising the **Ken's Study Journey** and **Plandline** projects, I will continue my development for the future technologies.

Thanks again for your continued support for [Ken's Study Journey](#) and wish you a [pleasant study journey](#) in 2025.

Ken Deng ([Ken's Study Journey](#))

16 January 2025

Guangzhou, China (CN-CAN)

www.kenstudyjourney.cn, ken@kenstudyjourney.cn

FAQs ([Learn More](#))

[Why didn't you use CloudFlare \(an anti-DDoS and CDN service\) after the \(D\)DoS attack?](#)

As stated in the letter above, our high school's IP address was **restricted from accessing websites outside Mainland**, especially those using third-party CDNs, including CloudFlare.

That means, on our high school campus:

- **CDNs:** **Request Timed Out**
- **Other Servers:** **Mostly Normal**

Moreover, if the websites were not accessible in my high school, they may have the **misunderstanding** that they were **not accessible in Mainland** as well.

[Why didn't you ban your high school's IP address?](#)

From my predictions, if our high school's IP address was banned by:

- Web Application Firewall (WAF) (displaying **403 Forbidden**)
- System Firewall (dropping requests, resulting in **Too Long to Respond**)

the students may have **negative reactions** and may send further (D)DoS attacks.

Additionally, our school WiFi **blocks game and entertainment websites** (against our school rules) and, as stated in the letter above, was **restricted** from accessing some websites by the ISP.

The negative students may use proxies to **circumvent (bypass) such restrictions** which changes the user's IP address.

Apart from the negative students, **there may be positive audiences** who may send positive comments.

[Why did you conceal the negative fact in 2022 until now?](#)

This is to **prevent further negative comments or impacts** from other people protecting myself against further attacks.

Will you re-enable comment function on your website?

It's still under my consideration.

I have generated many alternative ideas which were all **not feasible**.

1. **Verify email address before sending comments.**

From my prediction, such students may enter false email addresses and get the verification code **abusing email servers**.

2. **Add a CAPTCHA in the comment form.**

Such students were humans, not robots.

Ken's Study Journey **already added security measures** like CAPTCHA in the Submit buttons.

Why do you use a brand name "Ken's Study Journey" that is too personal?

While **Ken's Study Journey used to be a personal study blog** since 2019, it has been **developing rapidly** with a study planning tool and several technologies behind in later years.

Until mid-2024, I **realised that this name is too personal** making it hard for collaboration.

Email Template for Plandline "Collaboration for Beginners" Scheme Request (for **Ineligible** Applicants)

For reference only. Your email does not need to satisfy with this template.

To: ken@kenstudyjourney.cn

Subject: Plandline "Collaboration for Beginners" Scheme Request

Content:

Dear **Ken's Study Journey**,

I am a (student/teacher/etc.) from (your city, country/region). I am interested in the Plandline Project and would like to join its "Collaboration for Beginners" Scheme.

(Optional) I have been using your Ken's Study Planner for a long time and I would like to explore the working principles, technologies and development behind through this project.

I understand that this scheme is currently under trial stage and I sincerely request for the opening of the scheme to me in the near future.

Regards,

(Your Name)