

Student Activities Support Grant Frequently Asked Questions

| Subsidy rate, target beneficiary and ambit of the Student Activities Support Grant (SAS Grant) | |
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| Q1: | What is the purpose of disbursing the SAS Grant? |
| A1: | The SAS Grant is provided to support primary and secondary school students with financial needs to participate in life-wide learning activities organised or recognised by schools, enabling students to benefit from experiential learning for their whole-person development. The ambit and principles on the use of the SAS Grant are in line with those of the Life-wide Learning and Sister School Grant (LWLSSG). Please refer to Education Bureau Circular No. 9/2025 for details. |
| Q2: | How should schools apply for the SAS Grant? |
| A2: | Schools are required to, on a school year basis, submit their e-Application Forms to the Education Bureau (EDB) according to the procedures set out in EDB Circular No. 10/2025 , which provides details of the SAS Grant. <i>Guidelines on Completion of the e-Application Form</i> and <i>FAQs on Completion of the e-Application Form</i> have been provided to facilitate completion of the forms by schools. The EDB will invite schools through the Fast Information Transmission System - School Messaging Module (SMM) every year to apply for the SAS Grant for the next school year. |
| Q3: | On what basis is the amount of the SAS Grant calculated for each participating school? |
| A3: | <p>The amount of the SAS Grant to be disbursed to each participating school is calculated based on the number of students of the school in receipt of the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) or the full-grant under the School Textbook Assistance Scheme (STAS full-grant).</p> <p>On a regular basis, the Social Welfare Department and the Student Finance Office under the Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency respectively provide the EDB with the number of students in receipt of the CSSA and the STAS full-grant in each school. In calculating the amount of the SAS Grant for a school year, the EDB will first work out the provisional amount based on the number of students in receipt of the CSSA or the STAS full-grant in the preceding school year. The actual amount will be worked out based on the number of students in receipt of the CSSA or the STAS full-grant in December of the respective school year; and adjustment will be made if necessary.</p> |

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| | <p>The grant rate for each eligible student (i.e. those in receipt of the CSSA or the STAS full-grant) for secondary school is \$650 and that for each primary school student is \$350. While the grant rate for each student is adopted for calculating the amount of the SASG for a school, it should not be regarded as the subsidised amount for each student beneficiary. Schools are advised to deploy the SAS Grant in an open, fair and reasonable manner having regard to their contexts.</p> |
| Q4: | What criteria should be met by beneficiaries of the SAS Grant? |
| A4: | <p>Beneficiaries of the SAS Grant are primary and secondary school students in receipt of either the CSSA or the STAS full-grant. In view that some families may lack the means to support their children to participate in life-wide learning activities but for various reasons are not in receipt of the CSSA or STAS full-grant, schools may formulate their own school-based criteria for identifying such students so that they could also benefit from the SAS Grant. However, the subsidy for supporting such students should be capped at 25% of the total provision of the SAS Grant for the school year.</p> |
| Q5: | What school-based criteria should be adopted for identifying financially needy students? Is the SAS Grant also applicable to students receiving the STAS half-grant? |
| A5: | <p>Given students' diverse family backgrounds, schools may formulate their own criteria for identifying financially needy students and deploy up to 25% of the total amount of SASG received for the school year to provide support. The beneficiaries may include students who receive the STAS half-grant, who come from low-income families or who have special needs owing to their family's financial situation.</p> |
| Q6: | How can schools identify CSSA or STAS full-grant recipients? |
| A6: | <p>As a general practice, the Student Finance Office under the Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency regularly provides schools with information on students in receipt of the STAS full-grant. In respect of students receiving the CSSA, schools need to gather pertinent information from parents. In this regard, school-based mechanisms could be formulated in light of school context and culture. To aptly support students in need, schools may, among others, issue a notice inviting parents to provide information on a voluntary basis, or identify the CSSA recipients through teachers or school social workers.</p> |

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| Q7: | As for students who are considered financially needy under the school-based criteria, schools have the discretion to deploy up to 25% of the total amount of the SASG received for the school year to support their participation in life-wide learning activities. Are schools allowed to, in light of their contexts, seek the EDB's approval for raising the cap so as to support more students in need according to school-based criteria? |
| A7: | The SAS Grant serves to support students with financial needs. Whether students are in receipt of the CSSA or STAS full-grant is a rather objective criterion for defining beneficiaries of the SAS Grant. As some families may need support but for various reasons do not apply for the CSSA or STAS full-grant, schools are given flexibility in deploying up to 25% of the total amount of the SASG for the school year to support students considered needy under the school-based criteria. If there is a genuine need to allocate provision exceeding the cap, schools may approach the respective Senior School Development Officers. Consideration will be given on a case-by-case basis. |
| Q8: | What is the ambit of the SAS Grant? |
| A8: | <p>The ambit of SAS Grant is in line with that of the LWLSSG. Schools may deploy the SAS Grant to subsidise students with financial needs to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participate in life-wide learning activities covering different Key Learning Areas (KLAs) and curriculum areas; foster students' whole-person development, nurture their lifelong learning capabilities, proper values and attitudes; • participate in diversified learning activities with a view to enriching the five essential learning experiences (including values education, intellectual development, community service, physical and aesthetic development, and career-related experiences (covering life planning education from upper primary to secondary levels)) for students. For details, please refer to Primary Education Curriculum Guide (2024) (currently in Chinese only), Secondary Education Curriculum Guide (2017) and the curriculum documents of relevant KLAs/ subjects; and • deploy a portion of the SAS Grant to purchase basic and essential learning materials and equipment for participating in life-wide learning activities. <p>Expenses for activities that are not in line with the objectives of life-wide learning, such as expenditures on remedial classes and examination fees, do not fall within the ambit of the SAS Grant.</p> |
| Q9: | Should every eligible student receive the same amount of subsidy under the SAS Grant within a school year? |

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| A9: | As the type and number of life-wide learning activities undertaken by eligible students differ and the amount of subsidy under the SAS Grant varies among the activities, not every eligible student would receive the same amount of SAS Grant within a school year. Schools should lay down fair, impartial and reasonable principles to ensure proper allocation of the grant. |
| Q10: | Is there a cap on the amount of subsidy under the SAS Grant or the number of subsidised activities for each eligible student within a school year? |
| A10: | Schools have the discretion to determine the number of life-wide learning activities to be subsidised and the amount of subsidy for each eligible student. Adhering to the principle of fairness, impartiality and reasonableness, schools should strive to fully utilise the SAS Grant to benefit as many financially needy students as possible. It should be noted that the provision of financial support by the EDB for needy students does not imply forbidding schools to collect activity fees from parents. Schools may, in light of their contexts and students' diverse needs, reasonably define the scope of support and fee-charging criteria, and inform parents and students accordingly. |
| Q11: | Could the SAS Grant be deployed to subsidise eligible students' participation in life-wide learning activities organised by external organisations? |
| A11: | The SAS Grant could be deployed to subsidise eligible students' participation in activities organised by external organisations (e.g. post-secondary institutions, sports associations, programmes/ activities/ competitions organised by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department), on the condition that the school is confident that the activities are in line with the learning objectives of life-wide learning. That said, schools should avoid confining the use of resources to a small number of students. |
| Q12: | Could the SAS Grant be deployed to cover food and beverage expenses for life-wide learning activities? |
| A12: | Social events or celebrations without specific learning goals do not fall within the grant ambit, and the expenditures arising from them should not be met by the SAS Grant. However, food and beverage expenses included in the activity fees (i.e. food and beverage expenses included in the fees of outdoor educational camps, training camps and non-local expeditions and exchange activities) could be covered by the SAS Grant. |
| Q13: | Could the SAS Grant be used for conducting ceremonies or purchasing gifts or souvenirs for activities? |

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| A13: | The SAS Grant should not be used for conducting promotional and publicity activities, social events or celebrations (e.g. graduation dinners and parties), meeting banquet- or courtesy-related expenses (e.g. flower baskets and trophies for guests), or purchasing gifts, souvenirs and prizes for life-wide learning activities or competitions. |
| Q14: | What should be noted by schools in deploying the SAS Grant to subsidise financially needy students' purchase of basic and essential learning materials and equipment for life-wide learning activities? |
| A14: | <p>The SAS Grant could be deployed to purchase basic and essential learning materials and equipment (e.g. musical instruments and sports equipment) for financially needy students to facilitate their participation in life-wide learning activities. As the materials and equipment purchased are school property, a fair mechanism should be set up to ensure that the items are available for needy students to borrow and proper circulation records are maintained.</p> <p>Schools should make effective use of the SAS Grant to ensure that all materials and equipment purchased are essential for students' participation in life-wide learning activities. Moreover, schools should exercise financial prudence and avoid extravagance.</p> |
| Q15: | The amount of SAS Grant is limited, compared with the cost of non-local expeditions. How should schools deploy the SAS Grant to help students with financial needs to participate in the related activities? |
| Q15: | <p>The SAS Grant is supplementary in nature. Schools may flexibly use various resources of the EDB (such as the LWLSSG, the Quality Education Fund) in parallel with other applicable resources to organise expeditions and exchange activities outside Hong Kong. Schools can also make good use of government or charitable funding schemes, resources from school sponsoring bodies or community organisations to subsidise the activity expenses of students with financial needs, on condition that the requirements of the related schemes/ resources are met. In addition, it is recommended that schools consider students' relevant learning experience when.</p> <p>Schools are required to aptly allocate the SAS Grant to ensure that all eligible students have equal opportunities to benefit, and set the priority of subsidisation, for example, giving priority to students who have never participated in non-local expeditions and exchange activities. Schools should also refrain from confining the use the grant to a single project/ area or a small number of students. Under exceptional circumstances, if a school, upon careful consideration, deems it</p> |

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| | necessary to deploy the SAS Grant to subsidise needy students to participate in activities/ programmes that incur higher costs, it must obtain the prior approval from its SMC/ IMC. |
| Q16: | Could the SAS Grant be deployed to cover expenses incurred by teachers in leading learning activities? |
| A16: | With supporting financially needy students' participation in life-wide learning activities as the goal, the SAS Grant should be used to directly benefit the disadvantaged students. Schools could make use of other grants available (e.g. the LWLSSG and Expanded Operating Expenses Block Grant) to cover expenses incurred by teachers in leading learning activities. |
| Q17: | For a single learning activity, is it possible for schools to utilise the LWLSSG for non-needy students while deploying the SAS Grant to support needy students? |
| A17: | <p>The LWLSSG aims to support schools to organise more experiential learning activities which are in line with the learning goals and curriculum objectives, and suit the stages of students' cognitive and affective development; and conduct exchange activities with Mainland sister schools at various levels. The beneficiaries include all students of the schools. Schools should, having regard to the needs of school development and student learning, make proper use of the LWLSSG to benefit as many students as possible. As for the SAS Grant, on the other hand, is supplementary in nature. It provides an additional source of support for schools to subsidise only financially needy students to participate in life-wide learning activities. The two grants complement each other.</p> <p>While schools utilise the LWLSSG to organise activities, students/ parents may still need to bear part of the costs. In such a circumstance, schools may deploy the SAS Grant to further support the financially needy students who could not afford the costs.</p> |
| Operation of the SAS Grant | |
| Q18: | How is the SAS Grant disbursed to schools? |
| A18: | The EDB will invite schools through the Fast Information Transmission System - School Messaging Module (SMM) every year to apply for the SAS Grant for the next school year. Schools are required to submit their e-Application Forms signed by their school supervisors by the deadline (usually in early July). The SAS Grant will be disbursed in two instalments in September and March of each school year. Please note that the schools will be informed of the amounts disbursed by fax in due course. |

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| Q19: | Could any unspent balance of the SAS Grant for a school year be carried forward to the next school year? |
| A19: | Schools should fully utilise the SAS Grant provided every school year to benefit students with financial needs of the same school year. For aided schools, caput schools and DSS schools, any unspent balance should be returned to the EDB/ Student Activities Support Fund according to the annual audited accounts for that school year (i.e. from 1 September to 31 August). The EDB will confirm with each school the amount to be returned by fax in a timely manner and, depending on the situation, deduct the unspent balance from the allocation of the coming school year or request the school to return the unspent balance by cheque or other means. For government schools, any unspent balance of the SAS Grant for a school year should be returned to the EDB/ Student Activities Support Fund in one go according to the records of the designated user code/ deposit account. No unspent balance should be carried forward to the following school year. Transfer of funds and/ or unspent balance under the SAS Grant to other accounts is not allowed. |
| Q20: | Could a deficit under the SAS Grant be made up by other school funds? |
| A20: | Schools should exercise financial prudence. Any deficit incurred under the SAS Grant should be met by the schools' own or non-government funds. For government schools, relevant expenditure should be charged to the designated user code/ deposit account under the prevailing financial guidelines and the spending in a school year should not exceed the allocated amount of the SAS Grant. |
| Q21: | Are schools required to submit reports to the EDB on the use of SAS Grant? |
| A21: | <p>Schools should observe the established principles and requirements on the use of public funds as promulgated by the EDB and the Guidelines on the Use of SAS Grant when using the SAS Grant and be held accountable for its proper use. School-based criteria should be formulated to ensure appropriate allocation of the funds and all eligible students have equal opportunities to benefit. Under the principle of school-based management and in accordance with the established practices, schools should timely monitor the utilisation of SAS Grant and submit the Report on the Use of the SAS Grant for endorsement by their SMCs/ IMCs and uploading onto the school website (may be incorporated in the School Report of the school year concerned).</p> <p>Schools should adopt the latest EDB template of the Report on the Use of SAS Grant to provide the required information and upload the report to the school website by the end of November of the subsequent school year to keep stakeholders informed of how the resource is utilised to support students with financial needs to participate in life-wide learning activities.</p> |

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| Q22: | As far as the deployment of SAS Grant is concerned, how should schools manage finances and how does the EDB monitor schools? |
| A22: | <p>On the use of government funds, schools have always been required to establish effective procedures for financial management to ensure that resources are allocated in a cost-effective manner and expenses are properly incurred to serve educational purposes.</p> <p>As far as the SAS Grant is concerned, aided, caput and DSS schools are each required to keep a separate ledger account to record all incomes and expenditures under the SAS Grant for scrutiny by their SMCs/ IMCs. Under the principle of school-based management, schools should follow the relevant guidelines in using the SAS Grant to facilitate student learning, adhere to the EDB's requirements on submission of the annual audited accounts set out in the relevant EDB circular memoranda/ letters, and the annexes therein, in preparing ledger accounts and annual accounts and submit their annual audited accounts to the EDB in accordance with the prevailing requirements to ensure proper use of public funds. For government schools, relevant expenditure chargeable to the SAS Grant should be charged to the designated user code/ deposit account in accordance with the prevailing financial guidelines, and the spending in a school year should not exceed the allocated amount of the SAS Grant for the respective school year. Schools are required to manage their finances in a prudent manner, keep all records of income and expenditure, and make available such records and related receipts / invoices to the EDB for inspection when necessary.</p> <p>The EDB has drawn up the Guidelines on the Use of SAS Grant for schools' compliance when using the SAS Grant. Schools should formulate school-based criteria for appropriate allocation of the SAS Grant and be held accountable for its proper use. Under the principle of school-based management, schools should timely monitor the utilisation of SAS Grant and submit the Report on the Use of the SAS Grant for endorsement by their SMCs/ IMCs and uploading onto the school website. In addition, the EDB will assess the use of SAS Grant by schools by such means as regular communication and school visits, and organise regularly professional development programmes to help schools understand the relevant principles and requirements.</p> |

Life-wide Learning and Mainland Exchange Section
Quality Assurance Division
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