



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部教育局

Education Bureau

Government Secretariat, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
The People's Republic of China

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3 September 2019

To: Supervisors/ Principals of government, aided and caput secondary schools

Dear Supervisors/ Principals,

**School-based Medium of Instruction Plan for Junior Secondary Levels
(Arrangements for Secondary 1 Students Admitted in the 2020/21 School Year)**

This circular letter requests schools to complete the “School-based Medium of Instruction Plan for Junior Secondary Levels (Arrangements for Secondary 1 Students Admitted in the 2020/21 School Year)” at the Annex and return it to the respective Senior School Development Officers on or before **17 September 2019 (Tuesday)** for vetting by the Education Bureau (EDB).

Details

2. Pursuant to EDB Circular No. 6/2009 “Fine-tuning the Medium of Instruction (MOI) for Secondary Schools”, schools are required to devise an appropriate MOI arrangement in accordance with the prescribed criteria (i.e. “student ability”, “teacher capability” and “school-based support”)¹ and by making reference to the school-based circumstances in a professional manner. In tandem, according to the letter of the EDB dated 22 July 2015 on “Fine-tuning the MOI for Secondary Schools - Arrangements for the Second Cycle (2016/17 to 2021/22 School Years)”, the EDB has decided to maintain the policy goal and overall arrangement of MOI fine-tuning for the second cycle². Schools may extend their school-based MOI arrangements of the first cycle to the second cycle.

¹ The fine-tuned MOI framework maintains the prescribed criteria of the MOI policy for the junior secondary levels, including ‘student ability’ (i.e. the average proportion of Secondary 1 (S1) intake of a school admitted to a class belonging to the ‘top 40%’ group (territory) in the ‘Secondary School Places Allocation’ of the previous two years under a six-year cycle reaches 85% of the size of a class (based on the number of students allocated per S1 class)); ‘teacher capability’ (i.e. teachers adopting English as the MOI should have Level 3 or above in English Language of the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (or a Grade C or above in English Language (Syllabus B) of the defunct Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination, or other recognised equivalent qualifications (e.g. Band 6 or above in International English Language Testing System (IELTS) (academic domain)); and ‘school-based support’ (i.e. support measures provided by schools for students in adopting English as the MOI).

² Upon examination, the EDB considers that the MOI arrangements of schools (including schools which have started to adopt English as the MOI fully or partially in the first cycle) have begun to take root with students in general benefitting from the teaching experience of teachers and the effectiveness of school-based support measures. A stable language environment is crucial for teachers to develop learning and teaching strategies of non-language subjects (including the support measures related to learning the English language across the curriculum). Besides, schools have to consolidate and integrate their whole-school language policy to tie in with the school-based curriculum. Should schools be required to change their MOI arrangements in a haste for the second cycle (i.e. from the 2016/17 school year onwards) merely on the basis of the ‘student ability’ criterion, the needs of schools and teachers cannot be well catered for and the effectiveness of the school-based MOI arrangements will be affected.

3. Under the above-mentioned framework for fine-tuning MOI at junior secondary levels, all schools may have the discretion to adopt Chinese as the MOI for all non-language subjects. For schools meeting the “student ability” criterion, they may, having regard to their own circumstances and the needs of their students, exercise professional discretion to put in place the most appropriate MOI arrangements, such as adopting English as the MOI for all non-language subjects or adopting Chinese as the MOI for some non-language subjects. For schools not meeting the “student ability” criterion, they may, for each class/group of students, only dedicate up to 25% of the total lesson time (excluding the lesson time for the English Language) to extended learning activities in English, or dedicate all 25% or a smaller percentage to English teaching of up to two non-language subjects (i.e. “allocation of time to subjects”). If schools implement both arrangements of extended learning activities in English and “allocation of time to subjects”, the lesson time involved together must not exceed 25% of the total lesson time (excluding the lesson time for the English Language).

4. Schools are required, as usual, to devise professionally their MOI arrangements taking into account their school-based situation in each of the school years of the cycle. In light of “Fine-tuning the MOI for Secondary Schools - Arrangements for the Second Cycle (2016/17 to 2021/22 School Years)”, if there are changes in the number of students capped for each S1 class³ because of the number of students allocated through the Secondary School Places Allocation for the 2020/21 school year, schools may exercise their professional discretion to consider whether the MOI arrangements in the classes/ groups concerned should be maintained with regard to other prescribed criteria (including teachers’ capability and readiness in adopting English as the MOI and school support measures) so as to cater for students’ learning needs in a stable language environment. To ensure the effectiveness of learning and teaching, the EDB will continue to engage schools in professional dialogue when required and schools shall review and revise their MOI arrangements where appropriate.

5. Information about schools’ MOI arrangements will continue to be included in the Secondary School Profiles 2019/2020 to be issued in December 2019. The MOI of individual subjects will be listed under the sections ‘Subjects Offered in the 2019/2020 school year’ and ‘Subjects to be Offered in the 2020/2021 school year’ as appropriate with elaborations in the section ‘Whole-school Language Policy’ under ‘Learning and Teaching Plan’ of ‘School Characteristics’ in the Profiles. The MOI information is to facilitate parents to make school choices for Secondary 1 admission in the 2020/21 school year. Schools are also advised to enhance the transparency of their MOI arrangements through disseminating the relevant information on their school websites.

Enquiries

6. For enquiries, please contact your Senior School Development Officer or the Review and Planning Section:

³ The number of students capped for each S1 class is the number of students allocated to each class under the Secondary School Places Allocation System in that school year plus two repeater places.

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Yours sincerely,
H P CHOI
for Secretary for Education

c.c. Chief School Development Officers