

**Requirement for Newly-appointed Teachers to
Pass the Basic Law and National Security Law Test**

Q&A

General Information

Q1 When will the Basic Law and National Security Law Test (BLNST) organised by the Education Bureau (EDB) be held? When will the test result be announced? Is there a review mechanism? Will there be any supplementary test if a teacher cannot obtain a pass result?

A1 In the 2023/24 school year, the EDB will conduct five rounds of BLNST for teachers and the tests will be held on 28 October, 3 December 2023, 6 April, 16 June and 20 July 2024 respectively. Having regard to the different entry requirements for teaching posts in secondary and primary schools as well as kindergartens, the above-mentioned five rounds of test will be arranged for degree holders and non-degree holders respectively. Teachers who wish to take the test should plan ahead and submit an application on time. For details of the requirement and arrangements for each round of BLNST, please refer to the EDBC No. 13/2022 “Requirement for Newly-appointed Teachers to Pass the Basic Law and National Security Law Test”, EDBCM No. 169/2023 “Arrangements for Basic Law and National Security Law Test in the 2023/24 school year” and the EDB webpage (<https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/blnst>) .

Candidates will be notified of their test results by post within one month after the test. If candidates would like to have a review of their BLNST result, they should make the request to the EDB by e-mail by the deadline shown on the result notification. There is no supplementary test for the BLNST. Teachers can apply to sit for the test again if they have not obtained a pass result in the BLNST.

Q2 Who needs to meet the BLNST requirement?

A2 Starting from the 2023/24 school year, the following newly-appointed teachers in public sector schools, Direct Subsidy Scheme Schools (DSS Schools), kindergartens joining the kindergarten education scheme (Scheme-KGs) are required to fulfill the BLNST requirement:

In general, newly-appointed teachers include newly-joined teachers and teachers changing schools:

- (i) Newly-appointed teachers in public sector schools include:
 - Regular teachers remunerated with Salaries Grant;
 - Teachers remunerated with cash grant¹;
 - Teachers remunerated with Salaries Grant and cash grant simultaneously;
 - Teachers remunerated with cash grant switching to (i) teachers remunerated with Salaries Grant or (ii) teachers remunerated with Salaries Grant and cash grant simultaneously in the same public sector school;
 - Monthly-paid temporary teachers switching to (i) regular teachers, (ii) teachers remunerated with Salaries Grant and cash grant simultaneously or (iii) teachers remunerated with cash grant in the same public sector school; and
 - Monthly-paid temporary teachers (including those filling temporary vacancies of teaching posts within staff establishment or serving for more than 90 days and are approved by schools switching from daily-rated to monthly-paid temporary teachers).
- (ii) Newly-appointed teachers in DSS schools and Scheme-KGs refer to all newly-appointed monthly-paid teachers.

¹ Cash grant includes the grant obtained by schools upon freezing their teaching establishment or other grants provided to schools for employment of teaching staff in light of the new initiatives.

The BLNST requirement is **not applicable** to the following newly-appointed teachers:

- Daily-rated supply teachers;
- Teachers employed under the Native-speaking English Teacher (NET) Scheme in public sector schools or NETs appointed on terms (e.g. entry requirements, fringe benefits, etc.) comparable to the NET Scheme for performing the same kind of duties in DSS schools² (In general, each DSS school could nominate at most one teacher to perform the same kind of duties as NET, primary-cum-secondary schools are counted as two schools);
- Teachers mainly teach a non-local curriculum (i.e. teaching non-local curriculum as approved by the EDB in 80% or more of their lessons) in DSS schools;
- NETs in Scheme-KGs;
- Teachers mainly teach a non-local curriculum (i.e. teaching non-local curriculum as approved by the EDB in 80% or more of their lessons) in Scheme-KGs which also offer a non-local curriculum;
- The following newly-appointed teachers in public sector schools:
 - Re-employment of part-time teachers in the same school, but have his/her part-time ratio changed;
 - Re-employment of teachers remunerated with Salaries Grant and cash grant simultaneously (e.g. each accounts for 50%), but his/her ratio of remuneration with Salaries Grant changed. This includes teachers switching from regular teachers (remunerated with Salaries Grant) to teachers remunerated with Salaries Grant and cash grant simultaneously in the same school;
 - Re-employment of teachers remunerated with cash grant in the

² In present, one NET is generally provided for every public sector school to enhance the teaching of English Language and increase exposure of students to English. DSS schools may appoint one NET to perform same kind of duties on terms (e.g. entry requirements, fringe benefits, etc.) comparable to NET Scheme in aided schools as the funding related to NET Scheme in aided schools has been subsumed into the DSS unit subsidy rate.

- same school;
- Re-employment of regular teachers on terms with a defined contract period (DCP) in the same school;
 - Surplus teachers switching from teachers remunerated with Salaries Grant to teachers remunerated with cash grant in the same school;
 - The deployment of teachers within the primary and secondary sections of special schools. This is also applicable to aided schools with the same situation (the two sections are headed by one school head and both sections are aided schools); and
 - In principle, a teacher who is redeployed to another school by the School Sponsoring Body because of his/her redundant/surplus status is considered to be a newly-appointed teacher and is required to meet the new requirement. In view of various scenarios involved, schools wishing to appoint these redundant/surplus teachers may apply for a discretionary arrangement by submitting relevant supporting documents issued by the School Sponsoring body. The Bureau will consider their applications on a case-by-case basis.

The examples are by no means exhaustive. For enquiries, please contact the Teacher Professional Development Special Duty Team by phone at 2892 5709.

Q3 Is the BLNST requirement applicable to teachers to be promoted?

A3 A teacher who is promoted to another school is a newly-appointed teacher and is required to meet the BLNST requirement. A teacher who is promoted in the same school (both posts are within the approved establishment and remunerated with Salaries Grant) is not a newly-appointed teacher and the BLNST requirement is **not applicable**.

Q4 Is the BLNST requirement applicable to teachers of the child care centre section who are deployed to serve in the kindergarten section of the same kindergarten-cum-child care centre?

A4 In the Scheme-KGs (including kindergartens/ kindergarten-cum-child care centres and schools with kindergarten classes), the BLNST requirement is applicable to all newly-appointed monthly-paid teachers. Monthly-paid teachers serving in the child care centre section who are deployed to serve in the kindergarten section of the same kindergarten-cum-child care centre without break in service are not newly-appointed teachers or teachers changing schools and the BLNST requirement is **not applicable**.

Q5 If a teacher has already taken the BLNST organised by the EDB, is he/she required to take the test again in the future?

A5 Teachers who have passed the BLNST (degree level) will not be required to take any BLNST at / below an equivalent level again. For those who have passed the BLNST (non-degree level) and subsequently attained a degree qualification, they will be required to take the BLNST (degree level) if they wish to apply for graduate teaching posts .

Q6 For teachers who have attained a pass result in the Basic Law Test (BLT), do they need to take the BLNST again if they plan to join the teaching profession or change schools in the 2023/24 school year or after?

A6 The content of the BLT and BLNST is different. In this regard, newly-appointed teachers are required to obtain a pass result in the BLNST in order to be considered for appointment if they plan to join the teaching profession or change schools in the 2023/24 school year or after.

Teachers who possess a pass result in the BLNST issued by the Civil Service

Bureau (CSB) or various recruiting departments/grades will be deemed to have met the relevant requirement and will not be required to take the BLNST organised by the EDB again.

Q7 If teachers possess a pass result in the BLNST issued by the EDB, is it acceptable for applying for civil service jobs?

A7 The CSB announced on 28 July 2023 that for all civil service recruitment exercises advertised on or after 28 July 2023, job applicants could apply for the BLNST conducted by the CSB, the EDB or various recruiting departments/grades, the pass result of which is mutually acceptable for applying for both civil service jobs and teaching posts in public-funded schools or kindergartens joining the kindergarten education scheme. The mutual acceptance arrangement is applicable to the pass results issued by the CSB, the EDB or recruiting departments/grades, regardless of whether the BLNST is conducted before or after the implementation of the new arrangement. For details, please refer to the press release (<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202307/28/P2023072700450.htm?fontSize=2>).

Q8 How do schools verify the teachers to be appointed have met the BLNST requirement? Can schools still appoint a teacher if he/she has not passed the BLNST at the time of appointment?

A8 According to the requirement, all public sector schools, DSS schools and Scheme-KGs should verify whether the teachers to be appointed have passed the BLNST prior to appointing teachers.

Teachers to be appointed for graduate teaching posts should provide the pass result in BLNST (degree level); teachers to be appointed for non-graduate teaching posts should provide the pass result in BLNST at or

above non-degree level.

Schools shall bear the responsibility and pay the salaries on their own if the newly-appointed teachers fail to meet the BLNST requirement. The EDB will also take follow-up actions, including requesting the schools to refund any overpayment of salaries to the EDB.

Q9 How does the EDB ensure the schools' compliance with the BLNST requirement during their appointment of new teachers?

A9 Starting from the 2023/24 school year, public sector schools, DSS schools and Scheme-KGs should verify whether the teachers to be appointed have passed the BLNST prior to appointing teachers and submit the information of their newly-appointed teachers for that school year to the EDB. For details about submission of information, please refer to EDB's letter to schools "Arrangements for Submitting the Basic Law and National Security Law Test (BLNST) Information of Newly-appointed Teachers in the 2023/24 School Year" and "User Manual about the submission of BLNST information for Newly-appointed Teachers through the e-Services Portal", which are available on the EDB webpage (<https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/blnst>). Besides, starting from the 2023/24 school year, schools should properly keep the employment records of the newly-appointed teachers and copies of teachers' pass results in the BLNST for not less than two years for EDB's inspection as and when necessary.

Q10 Will serving teachers be required to take the BLNST?

A10 The words and deeds of teachers have a far-reaching impact on students' growth. Teachers should have a correct understanding of the Basic Law and the National Security Law so that they can enlighten students by helping them fulfill their responsibilities as a national and Hong Kong resident in a positive, law-abiding, public interest-oriented and responsible attitude. All

schools, including public sector schools, DSS schools and Scheme-KGs, should encourage teachers to take the BLNST to correctly understand the Basic Law and the National Security Law. Moreover, the EDB will continue to provide training in relation to the Constitution, the Basic Law and the National Security Law to serving teachers.

BLNST (degree level)

Q11 Who can apply for the BLNST (degree level)?

A11 Applicants for the BLNST (degree level) organised by the EDB shall meet one of the following criteria:

- (i) should be a serving teacher, have attained a bachelor's degree and plan to change to another public sector school, DSS school or Scheme-KG to be a teacher; or
- (ii) will have attained a bachelor's degree in the 2023/24 or 2024/25 academic year and plan to be a teacher in public sector schools, DSS schools or Scheme-KGs; or
- (iii) should have attained a bachelor's degree, not a serving teacher but plan to be a teacher in public sector schools, DSS schools or Scheme-KGs.

The EDB will conduct random check and applicants are required to provide copies of transcripts and/or certificates to prove their eligibility for the test. Applicants who fail to provide the required proof shall be liable to disqualification from the test. The test results will also be voided even the applicants have taken the test.

Persons who do not possess a bachelor's degree or will not have attained a bachelor's degree in the 2023/24 or 2024/25 academic year are NOT eligible to apply for BLNST (degree level). They can apply for the BLNST (non-degree level) to be organised by the EDB on 28 October 2023 or 16 June 2024.

If applicants have any questions about their degree qualification to be attained in the 2023/24 or 2024/25 academic year, they should consult their tertiary institutions.

BLNST (non-degree level)

Q12 Who can apply for the BLNST (non-degree level)?

A12 Applicants for the BLNST (non-degree level) organised by the EDB shall meet one of the following criteria:

- (i) should be a serving teacher who does not possess a bachelor's degree and plans to change to another public sector school or DSS school to take up a non-graduate teaching post, or be a teacher in another Scheme-KG; or
- (ii) should be a person who does not possess a bachelor's degree and plans to take up a non-graduate teaching post in public sector schools or DSS schools, or be a teacher in Scheme-KGs and will have attained relevant qualification in the 2023/24 academic year (e.g. Diploma/Higher Diploma in Early Childhood Education or equivalent) ; or
- (iii) should be a person who does not possess a bachelor's degree and plans to take up a non-graduate teaching post in public sector schools or DSS schools, or be a teacher in Scheme-KGs.

A pass result in BLNST (non-degree level) is only applicable for applying for non-graduate teaching posts. For those who have passed the BLNST (non-degree level) and subsequently attained a degree qualification, they will be required to take the BLNST (degree level) if they wish to apply for graduate teaching posts.

Persons who possess a bachelor's degree or will have attained a bachelor's degree in the 2023/24 or 2024/25 academic year, even they plan to take up non-graduate teaching posts, can apply for the BLNST (degree level) to be organised by the EDB on 3 December 2023, 6 April or 20 July 2024.

Teachers who have passed the BLNST (degree level) can apply for both graduate teaching posts and non-graduate teaching posts.

Professional Development and Training Division

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