

Enhancement Measures for the Native-speaking English Teacher (NET) Scheme

Point-to-note for Appointment and Re-appointment of NETs under the NET Scheme in Primary Schools (2025/26 school year)

Provision of NETs for Schools

A NET is generally provided for every public sector primary school (including special schools with a primary section) operating six classes or more and implementing mainstream curriculum. Such provision covers schools for children with intellectual disability (ID schools) implementing an appropriate school-based English Language curriculum as adapted from the English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 6) (2017) prepared by the Curriculum Development Council. For enquiries about the appropriate school-based English Language curriculum in ID schools, please contact the Special Educational Needs Section of the Curriculum Support Division at 2892 5474.

2. Please note that primary schools (including special schools with a primary section) with the number of approved classes falling below six in the 2025/26 school year will normally not be allowed to recruit any new NETs. If NETs in those schools are serving in the first year of their two-year contract in the 2024/25 school year, they will be allowed to complete the contract up to the end of the 2025/26 school year in their respective schools. In general, schools with fewer than six classes in the 2025/26 school year will not be allowed to renew or extend the two-year contract of their serving NETs unless the number of classes resumes to six or more under special circumstances. Schools with less than six classes will be provided with peripatetic support through the Advisory Teaching Team of NET Section. These schools will be informed of the arrangements separately in due course.

Re-appointment of serving NETs and Appointment of new NETs

3. Schools and their serving NETs with contracts due to expire at the end of the 2024/25 school year are requested to discuss and reach an initial agreement as to whether they wish to have their contracts renewed for another two years. Schools should discuss the performance with their NETs, continuously evaluate their strengths and weaknesses and identify corresponding professional development needs for them, and reflect it in **Form A - Reply Proforma on Appointment of NETs**. Early discussion on contract renewal matters would enable NETs to make their own future plans and schools to arrange for recruitment or staff deployment. **All schools are requested to return the completed Form A to the Education Bureau (EDB) by 30 June 2025** to facilitate our planning for the recruitment of NETs.

4. For serving NETs who have been recruited through the EDB and wish to change to another school on completion of their current contract at the end of the 2024/25 school year, the EDB can offer assistance to them to look for a new appointment. These NETs are requested to return the completed **Form B - Application of Serving NETs for New Appointment on Completion of Contract by 30 June 2025**. They should note that there is no guarantee that they will be offered an appointment at other schools. If they subsequently fail to obtain a new appointment, they would not be able to return to their original schools.

5. Starting from the 2025/26 school year, eligible aided schools (including special schools) and caput schools can opt for either (i) retaining the existing NET post; or (ii) receiving a new NET Grant. For schools opting for (i), they may recruit **new NETs with uplifted qualification requirements** stipulated in **Annex 1** or NETs who were serving in the NET Scheme without a break in service directly on their own or entrust the EDB with the recruitment of NETs on their behalf following the existing qualification requirements stipulated in

Annex 2. Schools opting to **recruit their NETs directly** are required to submit **Form C - Personal Particulars of NETs Recruited Directly by Schools** to the EDB for approval **before signing any contracts** nor giving any offers to ensure that the TESL/TEFL qualifications of NETs meet the requirements for appointment of NETs in primary schools as set out in **Annex 3** and on the EDB webpage as appropriate. Besides, assessment of non-local qualifications of NETs should be arranged by schools in accordance with [EDB Circular No. 1/2005](#) before offering appointments.



6. In handling the recruitment and appointment of NETs, schools are required to comply with the Employment Ordinance, Education Ordinance, Education Regulations, other relevant legislations as well as guidelines issued by EDB from time to time. Schools are reminded to take note of the relevant requirements about appointment of staff stipulated in [EDB Circular No. 5/2005](#) and the [School Administration Guide](#).



Conviction Checks

7. Schools are reminded that, since the 2009/10 school year, NETs who have not served under NET Schemes (NET Scheme in Primary Schools/Enhanced NET Scheme in Secondary Schools) before or with a break in service are required to produce documentary evidence of their having/not having been found guilty of criminal offence [e.g. **Certificate of No Criminal Conviction (CNCC)**] from the countries/cities where they have resided before they take up an appointment as a NET in Hong Kong. Eligible candidates who are not able to obtain the above-mentioned CNCC since they have been residing in Hong Kong are required to obtain a certificate of statutory declaration from one of the District Offices of the Home Affairs Department certifying that they have not been found guilty of criminal offence before they could be appointed as NETs. Any NETs who have been found providing false information or withholding information willfully in this respect will be disqualified for employment or liable for termination of employment even though they have already assumed duties in schools.

8. With effect from 1 December 2011, the Hong Kong Police Force has launched the **Sexual Conviction Record Check (SCRC)** scheme which is applicable to prospective employees seeking child-related work or work relating to mentally incapacitated persons in organisations or enterprises (including NET posts under NET Scheme in Primary Schools). Given the importance of protecting our students, schools should request prospective NETs to undergo SCRC at the advanced stage of the employment process, including renewal of contracts. Schools are reminded that the scheme does not cover overseas sexual conviction record.

Employment Visa

9. Before signing a formal contract with NETs coming from abroad, schools are advised to remind them that the offer for employment is conditional upon their having obtained an employment visa allowing them to work for the school as specified in the Letter of Appointment and to stay in Hong Kong for an initial period of at least one year. The visa should be obtained, prior to their arrival in Hong Kong, from the Director of Immigration of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

10. For NETs who are already working in Hong Kong, the offer of employment is conditional upon their having obtained, prior to the commencement of the contract, approval from the Director of Immigration of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region allowing them to work for the school as specified in the Letter of Appointment and to continue to stay in Hong Kong for at least one year. NETs holding an employment visa for the previous school are still required to seek prior approval from the Immigration Department for change of employment before they report for duty in the new school. In any case, schools

should ensure that their NETs have obtained a valid employment visa before reporting for duty.

Teacher Registration

11. Section 42 of the Education Ordinance stipulates that any person who teaches in a school has to be either a registered teacher (RT) or a permitted teacher (PT). Therefore, schools should ensure that their NETs have undergone the registration formalities in compliance with the law. NETs should apply to be RTs or the schools should apply for NETs to be PTs prior to their assumption of duties. For enquiries in this regard, please contact the Teacher Registration Team of EDB at 3467 8281 or 3467 8282.

12. In order to ensure students' safety, schools should also observe the measures as set out in [EDB Circular No. 14/2023](#), including but not limited to applying to EDB for releasing information regarding the teacher registration status of the prospective NETs and consulting their previous employers about their performance after seeking their consent.



Retention Incentive

13. For serving NETs who have joined the NET Scheme before the 2025/26 school year and without a break in service, their eligibility for retention incentive remains unchanged. These NETs who have served two years of continuous service and are in the **third and fourth years of continuous service** OR have served four years of continuous service and are in the **fifth year of service onwards**, are eligible to apply for receiving a retention incentive of **5% OR 10% of the current base salary** respectively. Under normal circumstances, these NETs have to serve continuously in NET Scheme in order to be eligible for the retention incentive. The incentive is payable to these NETs in each school year subject to the school management's confirmation in the annual appraisal that the performance of NET has been satisfactory. For further details of the retention incentive, schools should refer to [EDB Circular No. 2/2013](#). For **newly-joined NETs** who join the NET Scheme in or after the 2025/26 school year (including serving NETs who re-join the NET Scheme after a break in service), they are **NOT** eligible for the retention incentive.



Fringe Benefits for NETs

14. Schools are reminded that once NET's normal place of residence is established as being outside Hong Kong and his/her eligibility for the fringe benefits under NET Scheme is confirmed, he/she should continue to be eligible for the fringe benefits when re-appointed continuously unless there are changes in NET's personal or family particulars such as change of marital status, permanent resident status and children having reached the age of 18, etc., which might affect his/her entitlement. All NETs receiving the fringe benefits should report the aforesaid changes to the schools for reassessment of their eligibility for the fringe benefits. Schools are required to remind their NETs of the above requirements and to submit timely applications for the fringe benefits when they report for duty to the schools. For further details of the fringe benefits, schools should refer to [EDB Circular No. 8/2009](#).



Payment of Contract Gratuity

15. Schools should arrange for the payment of contract gratuity for their NETs the soonest possible upon their satisfactory completion of contract. For details of the payment of contract gratuity and the payment of tax before leaving Hong Kong, schools should refer to [EDB Circular No. 4/2012](#).



16. For newly-joined NETs who join the NET Scheme in or after the 2025/26 school year (including serving NETs who re-join the NET Scheme after a break in service), a two-tier rate of contract gratuity will be introduced with a view to encouraging NETs to fulfill the training requirements when they start their career in Hong Kong. The rates of the two-tiered gratuity are as follows:

- For NETs serving in the 1st and 2nd contracts: 10% of total current basic salary (when added to the employer's contribution to the Mandatory Provident Fund Scheme) paid over the contract period payable on satisfactory completion of each contract;
- For NETs serving after 2 contracts: 15% of total current basic salary (when added to the employer's contribution to the Mandatory Provident Fund Scheme) paid over the contract period payable on satisfactory completion of each contract and upon fulfilling training requirements for newly-joined teachers within first three years of services.

Duties of NETs

17. NETs should work collaboratively with the English panel in the preparation of teaching materials, curriculum development, organisation of English-related activities and staff development, etc., and act as resource persons for the schools. Schools should carefully review the job description and duty lists of their NETs and make sure that they are gainfully deployed. Please make reference to the Deployment Guidelines issued by NET Section which are available on EDB webpage at www.edb.gov.hk > Curriculum Development > Resources and Support > [Native-speaking English Teacher \(NET\) Scheme](#) or seek advice from the Advisory Teaching Team at 3549 8336.

Terms and Conditions of Service

18. The specimen letter of appointment together with the [sample Memorandum on the Terms and Conditions of Service \("MOCS"\)](#) for appointment as teachers under the NET Scheme in Primary Schools is subject to annual review. A specimen letter of appointment, its accompanying sample memorandum on the terms and conditions of service as well as a sample letter of acceptance are available at EDB webpage for schools' reference. In this connection, schools are advised to **check for the latest version** of the aforesaid documents, which is expected to be available in June 2025, on EDB webpage before signing a formal contract with their serving/new NETs.



Training Requirement

19. All along, NETs are required to pursue continuous professional development (CPD) similar to their local counterparts so that they can keep abreast of the latest development of curriculum and education policies when performing the role of resource persons. NETs are required to fulfill CPD requirements under the [Professional Ladder for Teachers](#) and the prevailing training requirements stated in EDB circulars issued from time to time.



**Qualifications for Appointment of Newly-joined NETs
(Applicable to NETs who join the NET Scheme in or after the 2025/26 school year or
serving NETs who re-join the NET Scheme after a break in service)**

- The applicant should be a native-speaker of English¹ or possess native-speaker English competence².
- For appointment in special schools, preference will be given to applicants who have special education training and/or experience in teaching students with special educational needs.
- The applicant should obtain the following qualifications:
 - (i)(a) a relevant Bachelor's degree majoring in the study of English³ from a Hong Kong university, or equivalent; **or**
 - (i)(b) a Bachelor's degree in any subjects, and a higher degree majoring in the study of English³ or related subject from a Hong Kong university, or equivalent; **and**
 - (ii) a Post-graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) majoring in English Language⁴, or equivalent; **and**
 - (iii) a Teaching English as a Foreign / Second Language (TEFL / TESL) qualification⁵ at least at certificate level, or equivalent.

¹ Native speakers of English are people who acquire the language in infancy and develop the language through adolescence and adulthood within a community where English is spoken as the first language. Native-speaker English competence refers to the ability to use English fluently and spontaneously, to give grammatically accurate responses in communication and to write or speak creatively.

² Non-native speakers of English, i.e. people who have not acquired the language in early childhood, are also suitable for employment as NETs if their English competence is not different from that of native-speakers in terms of fluency, accuracy and creativity in language use.

³ A relevant Bachelor's degree/higher degree includes:

- (a) degrees specifically in the study of the English language (including English studies, English literature, and linguistics);
- (b) degrees in education with specialism in English;
- (c) degrees in the communicative use of English; and
- (d) degrees in translation with English as one of the principal languages studied.

⁴ Relevant teacher training means recognised teacher training with specialism in English and supervised practicum in English teaching. Untrained NETs should not proceed beyond Pt. 20. NETs without (ii) are required to obtain the qualification within the first four years of service, otherwise these NETs are not allowed to be appointed as NETs under the NET Scheme.

⁵ Please make reference to the requirements of TEFL/TESL qualification at certificate level, which is available on EDB webpage at www.edb.gov.hk > Curriculum Development > Resources and Support > Native-speaking English Teacher (NET) Scheme > Recruitment.

**Qualifications for Appointment of NETs
(Applicable to Serving NETs without a Break in Service)**

- The applicant should be a native-speaker of English¹ or possess native-speaker English competence².
- Preference will be given to applicants with experience in teaching English as a second/foreign language
- For appointment in special schools, preference will be given to applicants who have special education training and/or experience in teaching students with special educational needs.

Appointment of NETs should be considered according to the following order of priority:

1. **Category 1** (to be appointed at Assistant Primary School Master/Mistress (APSM) rank, MPS pt. 15-29)
 - (i) a bachelor's degree in English (i.e. majoring in English Language or English Literature or English Studies or Linguistics³ or a Modern Language³) from a Hong Kong university or equivalent;
 - (ii) a recognised teacher training qualification in primary education⁴; and
 - (iii) a Teaching of English as a Foreign Language or a Second Language (TEFL/TESL) qualification⁵ at least at certificate level, or an equivalent course of study recognised by EDB⁶.
2. **Category 2** (to be appointed at APSM rank, MPS pt.15-29)
 - (i) a bachelor's degree in any subject from a Hong Kong university or equivalent;
 - (ii) a recognised teacher training qualification in primary education⁴; and
 - (iii) a TEFL/TESL qualification⁵ at least at certificate level, or an equivalent course of study recognised by EDB⁶.

In the event that candidates meeting the requirements in Category 1 and Category 2 cannot be recruited, consideration may be given to appoint teachers with the following qualifications:

3. **Category 3** (to be appointed at APSM rank, MPS pt.15-29)
 - (i) a bachelor's degree in any subject from a Hong Kong university or equivalent;
 - (ii) a recognised teacher training qualification⁴; and
 - (iii) a TEFL/TESL qualification⁵ at least at certificate level, or an equivalent course of study recognised by EDB⁶.

4. **Category 4** (to be appointed at APSM rank, MPS pt.15-29, with salary bar at MPS pt.20)
 - (i) a bachelor's degree in any subject from a Hong Kong university or equivalent; and
 - (ii) a TEFL/TESL qualification⁵ at least at certificate level, or an equivalent course of study recognised by EDB⁶.

Notes:

1. Native speakers of English are people who acquire the language in infancy and develop the language through adolescence and adulthood within a community where English is spoken as the first language. Native-speaker English competence refers to the ability to use English fluently and spontaneously, to give grammatically accurate responses in communication and to write or speak creatively.
2. Non-native speakers of English, i.e. people who have not acquired the language in early childhood, are also suitable for employment as NETs if their English competence is not different from that of native-speakers in terms of fluency, accuracy and creativity in language use.
3. Relevant teacher training means recognised teacher training with specialism in English and supervised practicum in English teaching.
4. A degree in Linguistics or Modern Languages should be one in which English is the major language studied.
5. Please make reference to the requirements of TEFL/TESL qualification at certificate level, which is available on EDB webpage at www.edb.gov.hk > Curriculum Development > Resources and Support > Native-speaking English Teacher (NET) Scheme > Recruitment.
6. For example, a Post-graduate Diploma in Education majoring in English.

**Teaching of English as a Second/Foreign Language (TESL/TEFL) Qualifications
at the Certificate Level**

The following qualifications are recognised as the equivalence of the required TEFL/TESL qualification:

- I. Cambridge Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (CELTA)
- II. The Trinity Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (CertTESOL)
- III. Postgraduate Certificate in Education majoring in TEFL/TESL
- IV. Certificate awarded by TEFL/TESL courses that:
 - (a) include a minimum of **100 contact hours**;
 - (b) include a minimum of **6 hours of observed and assessed teaching practice, a pass in which is required**; and
 - (c) cover the majority of the topics under each of the headings shown below:

Language:	knowledge of language in the areas of phonology, lexis/vocabulary, grammar and discourse, and their pedagogical implications
Methodology:	commonly used approaches and techniques for - curriculum development and materials design; teaching English language systems; teaching language skills; effective classroom management; conducting a range of activity types; assessment for language learning (including monitoring and evaluation of student learning and giving appropriate feedback); a component relating to the development of the participants' understanding of the socio-cultural contexts in which learning and teaching take place. Such a component would comprise, for example, modules, learning tasks and activities that consider the status, roles and features of English throughout the world in general, and preferably in the Hong Kong context
Resources:	use of classroom facilities and multimedia and multimodal teaching resources to facilitate learning
Learners:	commonly used techniques for assessing learners' needs; raising learners' awareness and facilitating effective learning strategies
Teaching Practice:	a teaching practice component in the course where participants can put their teaching knowledge and skills into practice through teaching sessions. The course should include self-evaluation assessments and tutor-evaluation assessments.

Teaching of English as a Second/Foreign Language (TESL/TEFL) Qualifications at the Diploma Level

The following qualifications are recognised as the equivalence of the required TEFL/TESL qualification:

- I. Cambridge Diploma in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (DELTA)
- II. Trinity College London Licentiate Diploma in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (DipTESOL)
- III. Postgraduate Certificate in Education majoring in TEFL/TESL
- IV. Diploma awarded by TEFL/TESL courses that:
 - a) include at least 250 contact hours; and
 - b) include at least 20 hours of practicum in the programme, in which a pass is required OR require candidates to have at least two years' teaching experience as a pre-requisite for entering the programme.