

## Air-conditioning Grant for Aided Schools

As announced in the Chief Executive's Policy Address in October 2017, in order to create a better learning environment, the Government would provide air-conditioning (AC) systems for standard teaching facilities (including classrooms and special rooms), student activity centres and assembly halls in all public sector schools<sup>1</sup>.

2. Moreover, starting from the 2018/19 school year, a recurrent AC Grant has been provided for aided schools to cover the related daily expenses, including electricity charges and routine maintenance costs. The AC Grant has been subsumed under the General Domain of the Operating Expenses Block Grant (OEBG)/ the School Specific Grant of the Expanded Operating Expenses Block Grant (EOEBG) for aided schools. The prevailing arrangements of the OEBG/EOEBG for the ambit, adjustment of rates, schedule of disbursement and surplus retention are applicable to the AC Grant. Relevant rates of the Grant are uploaded on the EDB homepage: <http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/sch-admin/fin-management/subsidy-info/ref-e-oebg-cfeg/index.html> .

### Principles of Calculation

#### Types of Eligible Facilities

3. Except for the rooms/facilities constructed by the schools' own fund, all standard teaching facilities (including classrooms and special rooms), student activity centres and assembly halls<sup>2</sup> in public sector schools, as well as bedrooms and study rooms, TV/common rooms and dining/multi-purpose rooms in the boarding section of special schools/ex-practical schools, which are used directly for teaching and learning or scheduled with regular student activities, are classified as "eligible facilities" and provided with AC systems.

4. The related daily expenses of the AC systems, including electricity charges and routine maintenance costs, of all the eligible facilities confirmed by EDB can be paid from the AC Grant if AC systems have been installed in those facilities (including AC systems installed by schools prior to the implementation of this initiative). In addition, EDB has provided major repairs (MR) / emergency repairs (ER) for the AC systems installed in all the eligible facilities under the prevailing mechanism, including replacement of AC systems if necessary.

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<sup>1</sup> Schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) are also benefitted from the initiative. The AC Grant is included in the DSS unit subsidy rates. The above arrangements are also applicable to the bedroom and study room, TV/common room and dining/multi-purpose room in the boarding section of special schools /ex-practical schools.

<sup>2</sup> If schools do not have an assembly hall, one covered playground can be provided with AC systems.

5. Under the AC Grant, eligible facilities can be classified into 6 categories:
- i. **Classroom:** registered classroom
  - ii. **Small Group Teaching Room:** room which is in general about half the size of a classroom
  - iii. **Special Room:** special room that is directly related to academic subjects and is for conducting regular teaching activities, such as music room, visual arts room, multi-purpose room, laboratory, and room for therapy/treatment/training (applicable to special schools only), etc., but excluding those that are already provided with AC systems as standard facilities prior to the implementation of this initiative, such as computer assisted learning room, computer room, guidance activity room, speech therapy room (applicable to special schools only) etc.
  - iv. **Student Activity Centre:** larger room (the size is approximately three times the size of a classroom) for student activities. Other rooms with regular student activities but are not directly related to the teaching of academic subjects, such as Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) room and campus TV room, can be classified into this category for the calculation of the AC Grant. In special schools, rooms for students' therapy/treatment/training, other than those standard special rooms of the type of special schools concerned, such as sensory integration therapy room, physiotherapy or occupational therapy room not belonging to schools for children with physical disability/severe intellectual disability, can also be classified as eligible facilities under this category
  - v. **Assembly Hall:** an area for schools to conduct major functions and student assemblies, including hall-related rooms/parts, such as stage, balcony and dressing room, etc.
  - vi. **Boarding Section** (applicable to special schools and ex-practical schools only): bedroom and study room, TV/common room, and dining/multi-purpose room

#### Caps on Number of Each Type of Rooms for Calculation of AC Grant

6. The caps on the number of special rooms to be counted for the calculation of the AC Grant are set according to the type and number of special rooms listed in the Schedule of Accommodation (SoA) for Primary Schools and Secondary Schools, as well as the SoA of recent school building projects for different types of special schools. The detailed calculation of the AC Grant on the caps of different types of rooms are listed in Table 1. As for the caps on the number of eligible special rooms in different types of special schools, please refer to Table 2.

7. The numbers of different types of special rooms counted for the calculation of the AC Grant are subject to the caps as indicated in Table 1 and Table 2. Under special circumstances, if schools can provide full justifications, including class timetable, EDB may adjust the cap of individual types of room/facility for the calculation of the AC Grant on individual merits. However, in principle, the caps on the total number of special rooms for primary and secondary schools are 5 and 12 respectively. The total number of special rooms for special schools should not exceed the caps of respective types of special schools (the range of the cap is between 8 and 12 accordingly).

8. Apart from one SAC, if schools have other eligible rooms for students' after-school activities, such as STEM room and campus TV room, etc. (excluding rooms mainly used for storage), EDB provides additional subsidy equivalent to the rate of an SAC, regardless of the number of such rooms (the AC systems installed in the rooms/facilities are also included in the scope of maintenance provided by EDB). The same arrangements are also applicable to the eligible facilities that are used for students' therapy/treatment/training in special schools (if not belonging to the standard special rooms of the type of special schools concerned), such as sensory integration

therapy room, physiotherapy or occupational therapy room not belonging to schools for children with physical disability/severe intellectual disability. In other words, in principle, the subsidy for SAC is capped at 2 for each school.

9. As the AC systems in some of the rooms (such as rooms for administration, staff room, computer room, computer assisted learning room, guidance activity room, language room, speech therapy room (applicable to special schools only) etc.) in schools have all along been regarded as standard facilities, the related expenditure on electricity has been covered by the Operating Expenses Block Grant (OEBG) / Expanded Operating Expenses Block Grant (EOEBG) and thus are not included in the calculation of the AC Grant. Besides, rooms/facilities constructed by the schools' own fund, covered playground (except schools without assembly hall), or rooms mainly used for storage of teaching aids/tools (no regular teaching/student activities, such as store room, resources room, etc.) are neither regarded as eligible facilities nor included in the calculation of the AC Grant or provision of AC systems.

10. Schools may change the room use or make structural alteration to the teaching facilities in accordance with the prevailing mechanism to cater for the needs of schools. Schools should comply with the EDB's requirements and the requirements set out in the relevant legislation for the alteration, including obtaining prior approval from the government departments concerned and informing EDB. Otherwise, the rooms/facilities concerned are neither be regarded as eligible facilities nor be included in the calculation of the AC Grant temporarily. Additionally, eligible facilities which are temporarily not in use or without AC systems installed, or are under renovation and will not be available for use in the near future, are not included in the calculation of the AC Grant.

#### Rates of AC Grant

11. The rates of the AC Grant for classrooms, small group teaching rooms<sup>3</sup> and special rooms are adjusted in accordance with the movement of the Composite Consumer Price Index (CCPI) in June every year. The rates for SAC and assembly hall<sup>4</sup> are equivalent to the rates of 1 classroom and 2.5 special rooms respectively. If schools have no assembly hall, one covered playground is given a subsidy equivalent to the rate of 2 special rooms.

12. As regards the boarding section (applicable to special schools and ex-practical schools only), the rates of bedroom and study room as well as TV/common room and dining/multi-purpose room are adjusted in accordance with the movement of the CCPI in June every year.

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<sup>3</sup> The rate of a small group teaching room is equivalent to the rate of 0.5 classroom.

<sup>4</sup> If the size of the assembly hall is equal to or less than half of the standard size as set out in the SoA, the rate is equivalent to the rate of 2 special rooms.

13. Schools can access to the latest rates of the AC Grant on the EDB homepage. The relevant websites are as follows:

(i) Aided Secondary Schools: [https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/sch-admin/fin-management/subsidy-info/ref-e-oebg-cfeg/e\\_sec\\_table%20ii\\_e.pdf](https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/sch-admin/fin-management/subsidy-info/ref-e-oebg-cfeg/e_sec_table%20ii_e.pdf)

(ii) Aided Primary Schools: [https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/sch-admin/fin-management/subsidy-info/ref-e-oebg-cfeg/e\\_pri\\_table%20iii\\_e.pdf](https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/sch-admin/fin-management/subsidy-info/ref-e-oebg-cfeg/e_pri_table%20iii_e.pdf)

(iii) Aided Special Schools: [https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/sch-admin/fin-management/subsidy-info/ref-e-oebg-cfeg/e\\_spe\\_table%20iv\\_e.pdf](https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/sch-admin/fin-management/subsidy-info/ref-e-oebg-cfeg/e_spe_table%20iv_e.pdf)

#### Financial and Accounting Arrangements

14. The AC Grant has been subsumed under the General Domain of the OEBG / the School Specific Grant of the EOEBG for aided schools. The prevailing arrangements of OEBG/EOEBG for the ambit, adjustment of rates, schedule of disbursement and surplus retention are applicable to the AC Grant.

Table 1: Caps on Number of Each Type of Rooms for Calculation of AC Grant in Aided Schools  
(Only air-conditioned rooms are counted)

	Primary School	Secondary School	Special School
Classroom*	The calculation is based on the number of approved classes of the school year (excluding the number of classes approved under the Intensive Remedial Teaching Programme in primary schools), plus two additional classrooms for split-class teaching, but capped at the total number of registered classrooms of the school.		
Small Group Teaching Room	4	3	School with 18 or more classrooms: 3 School with less than 18 classrooms: 2
Special Room*	1 for each of the following types of rooms: music room, visual arts room, general studies room, multi-purpose room and library <sup>#</sup> , making up a total of 5.	1 for each of the following types of rooms: music room, visual arts room, multi-purpose room, biology laboratory, chemistry laboratory, physics laboratory, design and technology room, needlework room, home management room and geography room, plus two integrated science laboratories, making up a total of 12. (Note: for schools with a workshop, the workshop can replace any of the aforementioned special rooms. In other words, the cap on the number of special rooms for each school remains at 12.)	The caps on the number of special rooms for different types of special schools are listed as follows:  Mild intellectual disability: 8 Moderate intellectual disability: 8 Severe intellectual disability: 8 Physical disability: 12 Social development: 9 Hearing impairment: 9 Visual impairment: 11  For the categories of eligible special rooms for different types of special schools, please refer to Table 2.
Student Activity Centre (SAC)	1 Apart from the SAC, if schools have other rooms/facilities that are not directly related to the teaching of academic subjects but scheduled with regular student activities (excluding rooms mainly used for storage), schools are additionally provided with subsidy that is equivalent to the rate of an SAC, regardless of the number of rooms. The same arrangements are also applicable to other eligible facilities that are used for students' therapy/treatment/training in special schools (if not belonging to the standard special rooms of the type of special schools concerned).		
Assembly Hall / Covered Playground-cum-hall	1 (including hall-related rooms/parts)		

	Primary School	Secondary School	Special School
Boarding Section: bedroom and study room	-	(Applicable to ex- practical schools only) Based on the number of approved boarding places of the school year	Based on the number of approved boarding places of the school year
Boarding Section: TV/common room	-	(Applicable to ex- practical schools only) 1	1
Boarding Section: dining /multi- purpose room	-	(Applicable to ex- practical schools only) 1	1

\*The number of rooms is counted as 0.5 when the size of room is equal to or less than half of the standard size as set out in the SoA.

#Library - is only included in the calculation of the AC Grant for primary schools.

**Table 2: Categories and Caps on Number of Eligible Special Rooms in Different Types of Special Schools**

	Cap	For Special Schools Only						
		Mild Intellectual Disability	Moderate Intellectual Disability	Severe Intellectual Disability	Physical Disability	Social Development	Hearing Impairment	Visual Impairment
Music Room	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Visual Arts Room	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Multi-purpose Room	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Resources Room (for Teaching and Learning)	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Home Economics Room	1	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Design and Technology Room	1	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Integrated Science Laboratory	1				✓	✓	✓	✓
Optional Subject Room (New Senior Secondary Electives/Other Learning Experience) [Note 1]	2 - 3	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓ [Note 2]	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
Physiotherapy Room	1			✓	✓			
Occupational Therapy Room	1			✓	✓			
Activities of Daily Living Room	1				✓			
Low Vision Training Room	1							✓
Orientation and Mobility Room	1							✓

Note 1: “Optional Subject Room” is for special schools operating senior secondary classes only.

Note 2: “Optional Subject Room” in schools for children with severe intellectual disability may include “Special Room for Practical Subject” and “Multi-media Activity Room”.