

Criteria and Procedures for a Change of School Names

Introduction

If a registered school wishes to change its name, it is required to obtain the approval from the Permanent Secretary for Education (“Permanent Secretary”) in accordance with section 20(A) of the Education Ordinance (“Ordinance”). Also, a proposed school should consider the following principles when selecting a school name. The criteria and key procedures outlined below are provided for schools’ reference.

Principles for Selecting a School Name

2. In accordance with section 14(1)(o) of the Ordinance, the Permanent Secretary may refuse to register a school if it appears to him that the proposed registered name of the school is unsuitable or is the same as or similar to:

- (i) the name in which another school is registered; or
- (ii) the name of any school the registration of which has been cancelled.

3. Besides, in accordance with section 17(a) of the Ordinance, the Permanent Secretary shall not register or provisionally register a school in any name containing the word “university” or the Chinese characters “大學” or “學院” .

4. The school name shall not contravene any law of Hong Kong or government policy. Association with any business or industry (as with individuals, organizations or groups) in the school name should carry no undesirable, profane, unrespectable, disreputable or political connotations. Proposed school names, which are misleading, offending and obscene, will not be accepted. It shall not promote the consumption of alcoholic drinks, tobacco and addictive.

Application for Changing a School Name

5. The applicant school is required to write to the School Registration and Compliance Section of the Education Bureau (“EDB”) for application of a name change. In the application letter, the registered school name (if applicable), the proposed new name (in both English and Chinese), the proposed effective date and reason(s) (if applicable) for changing name should be covered. In case a school will be named after a person and/or an organization, authorization from such person or organization shall be provided.

6. For any applicant school offering formal curriculum, regardless of financial type and school level, stakeholders should be consulted before applying for a name change. Schools should fully communicate with the School Sponsoring Body (or operator), the School Management Committee / Incorporated Management Committee, teachers and staff, parents

and/or alumni (if applicable) and address their concerns. In addition to the application letter, documentary proofs, such as consultation records and relevant meeting notes, are required.

7. Furthermore, the school supervisor of PSNFC¹ needs to declare or undertake his/her compliance with all requirements in Paragraphs 1 to 4 of the EDB Circular No. 5/2025 on ‘Investment by Private Schools’. The school supervisor of private schools needs to declare or undertake his/her compliance with all requirements in the EDB Circular No. 5/2025 on ‘Investment by Private Schools’.

8. To ensure that the applicant school can maintain normal operation and a sound financial position, the following documents, including but not limited to, may also be required-

- (i) curriculum documents;
- (ii) proof of capital; and
- (iii) company certificates and Articles of Association of the operating company of the school.

Procedures

9. Following prevailing mechanism, the EDB will consider each application on a case-by-case basis and may request the school to provide the requisite documents. Full compliance with the statutory requirements and the relevant circulars is necessary. If the applicant meets all the requirements and obtains clearance from relevant sections of EDB, approval for a name change will be granted by the School Registration and Compliance Section. Upon the issue of this approval, the Registration Certificate and related documents (e.g. Certificate of Accommodation) will be amended accordingly.

10. Pursuant to Regulation 84 of the Education Regulations (Cap. 279A), at or near the entrance to the premises of every school there shall be prominently displayed a board or other form of notice bearing in conspicuous lettering the registered name of the school. No name except the registered name of a school shall be displayed on the school premises; or used by the school, as being the name of the school.

Points to Note

11. Schools cannot self-proclaim or claim to be an “international school” before obtaining recognition as an international school from the EDB.

School Registration and Compliance Section
Education Bureau
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¹ PSNFCs refer to private schools offering non-formal curriculum (commonly known as ‘tutorial schools’).