

## **Education Bureau Circular Memorandum No. 99/2023**

From : Secretary for Education                      To : Supervisors and Heads of secondary day schools offering the local curriculum leading to the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination

Ref. : EDB(EC)5/2041/09/C

Date : 7 June 2023

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### **Education Support for Non-Chinese Speaking Students Waiver of “Subsidised Examination Fee” in the 2023/24 School Year**

#### **Summary**

This circular memorandum informs schools of the arrangements for the waiver of the “subsidised examination fee” for eligible non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students entering for non-local Chinese Language examinations in the 2023/24 school year.

#### **Background**

2. To help NCS students (particularly those who have a late start in learning Chinese or have not been given full opportunities to study the local Chinese Language curriculum) attain internationally recognised alternative Chinese Language qualifications, the Education Bureau (EDB) has administered the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) (Chinese) Examination, the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) (Chinese) Examination and the General Certificate of Education (GCE) (Chinese) Advanced Subsidiary (AS)-Level and the GCE Advanced (A)-Level Examinations in Hong Kong through a service provider, with a view to facilitating their academic and career advancement. Eligible NCS students entering for these examinations at present are only required to pay a “subsidised examination fee” on par with that of the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE) (Chinese Language)<sup>1</sup>.

3. With the passage of the Appropriation Bill 2023, which includes paying the examination fees for school candidates sitting for the 2024 HKDSE, by the Legislative Council at the meeting on 3 May 2023, the “subsidised examination fee” of eligible NCS students entering for the aforementioned non-local Chinese Language examinations in the 2023/24 school year will be waived accordingly. Other implementation details will follow the established arrangements.

#### **Eligibility**

4. NCS students who study at Secondary (S) 4 to S6 in day schools pursuing the local curriculum and have met either one of the specified circumstances stated below:

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<sup>1</sup> For details, please refer to Education Bureau Circular No. 23/2009 “Reduction of Examination Fee Level of the General Certificate of Secondary Education (Chinese) Examination” and Education Bureau Circular No. 19/2012 “Expanded Examination Subsidy”.

- (a) having learnt Chinese Language for less than six years while receiving primary and secondary education; or
- (b) having learnt Chinese Language for six years or more in schools, but have been taught an adapted and simpler curriculum not normally applicable to the majority of students in local schools,

and enter for the examinations mentioned in paragraph 2 in the 2023/24 school year as school candidates will be granted a waiver of the “subsidised examination fee.”

### **Maximum Number of Waivers**

5. The existing maximum number of entries for examinations under the “subsidised examination fee” is applicable to the aforementioned waiver arrangements. Details are as follows:

- (a) each eligible NCS student will be subsidised for up to two entries for any of the following three examinations: the GCSE (Chinese) Examination, the IGCSE (Chinese) Examination and the GCE AS-Level (Chinese) Examination; and
- (b) each eligible NCS student will be subsidised for up to two entries for the GCE A-Level (Chinese) Examination.

### **Certification for Eligibility**

6. Heads of schools are required to certify the NCS student particulars (including the fulfilment of the specified circumstances as mentioned in paragraph 4) on the relevant entry forms for the Chinese Language examinations mentioned in paragraph 2 issued by the service provider commissioned by EDB.

7. To ensure the proper use of public funds, EDB reserves the right to take actions if inaccurate/false information is provided. EDB will check the number of subsidised examination entries for each eligible NCS student.

### **Enquiry**

8. For enquiries about the aforementioned arrangements for the waiver of the “subsidised examination fee”, please contact the Non-Chinese Speaking Student Support and Education Commission Section at 3509 8573 or 3509 8572.

Ms Cynthia CHAN  
for Secretary for Education

c.c. Heads of Sections