

Education Bureau Circular Memorandum No. 150/2022

From: Secretary for Education	To : Supervisors and heads of all
Ref: EDB(SLPD)/PL/PEF/1	government primary schools and
Date: 25 August 2022	aided primary schools (including special schools)

Providing Employment Flexibility for Aided Primary Schools to Promote STEAM Education

Summary

This is to inform aided primary schools (including special schools with a primary section) the arrangement of more flexibility for employment of teachers having expertise in STEAM¹-related subjects in aided primary schools with a view to promoting school-based STEAM education from the 2022/23 to 2024/25 school years on a pilot basis for three years.

Background

2. The Education Bureau (EDB) has been promoting STEM education in schools, and would further enhance it as STEAM education premised on the present foundation. In this connection, schools would need to employ or redeploy teachers with STEAM expertise. According to the Code of Aid, the requirements for appointment to Assistant Primary School Master / Mistress (APSM) are possessing a recognised local bachelor's degree plus teacher training in primary education, or equivalent qualifications. Taking into consideration the keen demand from primary schools for teachers with expertise in STEAM-related subjects (in particular for Science, Technology and Engineering), the EDB will provide flexibility for employment of teachers having expertise in STEAM-related subjects to fill APSM vacancies in the staff establishment in aided primary schools (including special schools with a primary section) as STEAM teacher on a pilot basis with a view to facilitating schools in the implementation and promotion of STEAM education.

Details

3. From the 2022/23 to 2024/25 school years, schools can, taking into account their

¹ STEAM is an acronym that refers to the academic disciplines of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics. Arts include Music and Visual Arts subjects.

school-based needs, employ holders of bachelor's degree in STEAM-related subjects but without teacher training in primary education (including those with teacher training in secondary education) as STEAM teachers as regular teachers paid under the Salaries Grant. STEAM teachers should not take up more than 10% of the teaching posts in the approved staff establishment². When employing STEAM teachers, schools should follow the existing employment procedures and guidelines for the appointment of regular teachers, and indicate the rank of these teachers as "STEAM teacher" on the appointment forms.

4. Government primary schools may make reference to the arrangement in aided schools to employ STEAM teacher as temporary teacher to fill APSM vacancies of their schools.

Salary for STEAM teachers

5. The salary scale of STEAM teachers is based on reference from the current pay scale of APSM, i.e. Master Pay Scale Point (MPS Pt) 15 to 29.

For newly appointed STEAM teachers

- (i) Untrained newly appointed STEAM teachers will enter at the minimum of the pay scale (i.e. MPS Pt 15) with a salary bar which is 5 pay points above the prevailing starting salary (i.e. MPS Pt 20). Upon completion of the recognised teacher training in primary education, these teachers could apply for lifting the salary bar and the award of two additional increments;
- (ii) Newly appointed STEAM teachers with teacher training in secondary education only will also enter at the minimum of the pay scale (i.e. MPS Pt 15), but would not be subject to a salary bar as they are trained teachers. Upon completion of the recognised teacher training in primary education, these teachers could apply for the award of two additional increments (subject to the maximum salary point);

For teachers changing schools

- (iii) For serving secondary school teachers appointed as STEAM teachers in aided primary school, their salaries would be assessed on the basis of the prevailing starting salary of STEAM teacher plus the recognised post-qualification (i.e. local bachelor degree) experience;

² STEAM Teachers are excluded from the existing arrangement for schools obtaining cash grant by freezing up to 10% of their teaching establishment.

- (iv) For STEAM teachers changing schools and appointed as STEAM teachers in another aided school, the same principals and assessments will be applied as for other teachers changing to another aided school and employed in the same post.
- (v) For STEAM teachers subsequently appointed as APSMs, their salaries would be assessed in accordance with the arrangement for Certificated Master/ Mistress (CM) regrading to APSM.

Promotion

- (vi) Attention should be drawn that STEAM teachers are not APSMs hence not eligible for promotion to Primary School Master / Mistress (PSM). Teaching experience as STEAM teachers would not be counted for promotion purpose.

6. With the above flexibility in employment, primary schools are expected to engage talents with STEAM-related expertise to support the schools in implementing STEAM education. They should collaborate with other teachers in the planning, organisation and implementation of quality STEAM-related learning activities. Schools should encourage STEAM teachers to complete teacher training programmes in primary education as soon as possible with a view to facilitating their effective application of their expertise subject knowledge on learning and teaching. School should also arrange experienced teachers or senior teachers to support them in curriculum development and pedagogies, for example, through mentorship scheme, collaborative lesson preparation and peer lesson observation, etc.

7. The above flexible arrangements will be implemented on a pilot basis for three years. Schools should regularly assess the effectiveness of the arrangement to optimise use of manpower resources. The EDB will also gauge views from schools to evaluate the impact of the arrangements through prevailing mechanism such as school development visits, other school visits, questionnaire surveys.

Enquiries

- 8. For enquiries, please contact the respective senior school development officer.

Ms W P LEE
for Secretary for Education

c.c. Supervisors and heads of other schools, and heads of sections – for information