

## Education Bureau Circular Memorandum No. 88/2026

From : Secretary for Education  
Ref : (3) in 1075-2025-8050-9020-00005 (P001)  
Date : 3 June 2026

To : Heads of All Primary and Secondary Schools (except ESF schools and international schools)  
- for necessary action

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### **Language Proficiency Requirement (LPR) for Teachers of English / Putonghua and related Administrative Arrangements**

(Note: This circular memorandum should be read by supervisors / heads and teachers of all primary and secondary schools)

#### **Summary**

The purpose of this circular memorandum is to remind primary and secondary schools to make appropriate deployment of teachers to teach the English and Putonghua subjects in accordance with the LPR policy, and announce the related administrative arrangements.

#### **Details**

##### *The LPR policy*

2. The LPR policy has been implemented since 2000. The purpose of the policy is to enhance the quality of education by ensuring that all language teachers possess at least basic language proficiency. It is applicable to all teachers of English / Putonghua holding a regular post in aided schools, as well as teachers of English / Putonghua in government schools, caput schools, Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) schools and private primary / secondary day schools offering a local formal curriculum<sup>1</sup> who are comparable to teachers holding a regular post in aided schools. The LPR policy is not applicable to teachers employed under the Native-speaking English Teacher (NET) Scheme and those in ESF schools and international schools. More information about the LPR policy can be found on the Education Bureau (EDB) website ([www.edb.gov.hk/lpr](http://www.edb.gov.hk/lpr)).

##### *The enhanced arrangements*

3. According to the LPR policy, all the teachers of English / Putonghua as mentioned in Paragraph 2 should have met the LPR. The EDB Circular Memorandum No. 74/2024 (see QR code on the right) was released in March 2024 to announce the arrangements regarding the enhanced LPR for English and Putonghua teachers with effect from the 2024/25 school year. Under the enhanced arrangements, teachers can meet the LPR through exemption (applicable to English teachers) or obtaining specified results in the designated test and assessment (applicable to English and Putonghua teachers). English teachers should attain an overall band score of 7.5 or above with no individual



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<sup>1</sup> Local curriculum refers to the curriculum developed by the Curriculum Development Council.

band scores (i.e. the Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking band scores) below 7.0 in the same test report form of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) (Academic Module) and obtain the “attained” results in the Classroom Language Assessment (CLA) within the first school year of taking up teaching the respective language subject. Putonghua teachers should attain Grade A, Level 2 or above in the Test of Proficiency in Putonghua conducted by the State Language Commission and obtain the “attained” results in the CLA within the first school year of taking up teaching the respective language subject. Teachers who have attained the relevant results and met the LPR in the written and speaking assessments and CLA of the Language Proficiency Assessment (LPA)<sup>2</sup>, as jointly conducted by the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority and EDB, will continue to be recognised, fulfilling the requirement for serving as a regular English or Putonghua teacher.

#### *Classroom Language Assessment (CLA)*

4. New / newly deployed teachers of English / Putonghua holding a regular post (except English teachers who have been granted exemption) should have obtained specified results in the test mentioned in Paragraph 3, before taking up teaching the respective language subject. **They have to obtain the “attained” results in the CLA within the first school year<sup>3</sup> of their taking up these duties. The CLA (2026/27 school year) is open for applications from 1 September 2026 (9:00 a.m.) to 16 September 2026 (12:00 noon).** Applicants who wish to sit for the CLA (2026/27 school year) should submit their applications via the online registration system. Detailed information on the CLA will be available on the EDB website ([www.edb.gov.hk/cla](http://www.edb.gov.hk/cla)).

5. Please note that if the regular teachers fail to apply for the CLA by the specified deadline, they will not meet the LPR. The school must immediately take appropriate follow-up actions, such as changing their terms of employment or redeploying them to teach other subjects. If a regular teacher previously taught English / Putonghua in early years but did not apply for the CLA and obtain the “attained” results, they should report to the principal immediately. The principal must promptly inform the Language Teacher Qualifications Team of the Bureau for follow-up.

#### *Application for Exemption from the LPR*

6. Applications for exemption from the LPR for English teachers are accepted all year round. Eligible new / newly deployed teachers of English holding a regular post should submit applications to EDB before 30 September of the corresponding school year. Related application form and detailed information are available on the

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<sup>2</sup> The assessment, formerly known as the Language Proficiency Assessment for Teachers (LPAT), ceased to be offered from the 2024/25 school year.

<sup>3</sup> Regular teachers, regardless of the month they begin teaching the language subject in a school year, must apply for the CLA and obtain the “attained” results within that school year.

EDB website ([www.edb.gov.hk/exemption](http://www.edb.gov.hk/exemption)). Provided that applicants submit all the necessary supporting documents / information with their applications, they will be informed of the results individually by post after processing. Under the enhanced LPR, exemption from the LPR does not apply to Putonghua teachers from the 2024/25 school year.

#### *Follow-up and monitoring*

7. To ensure that all the teachers of English / Putonghua assigned to teach the relevant subject in schools possess basic language proficiency for delivering quality teaching, schools must take proper note of the LPR policy when planning the deployment of language teachers in the 2026/27 school year. They must review whether the English / Putonghua teachers, particularly the new / newly deployed ones, have met the LPR, and make appropriate deployment as needed.

8. EDB will closely monitor the teachers' qualifications required of the LPR, and require schools to report the attainment of the LPR by English and Putonghua teachers in September every year. Advisory letters will be sent to the school heads concerned, which will also be copied to the School Supervisor or Chairman of the School Management Committee (SMC) / Incorporated Management Committee (IMC), to inform them of the non-compliant cases of the LPR policy, and to call for follow-up actions to be taken as appropriate, including changing the relevant teachers' terms of employment or redeploying them to teach other subjects.

#### *Teachers of English / Putonghua NOT holding a regular post*

9. The LPR policy is not applicable to teachers of English / Putonghua NOT holding a regular post; that is, teachers whose employment is temporary in nature. These teachers are employed as temporary replacements of teachers holding a regular post taking leave temporarily or employed to take up a post not within the approved staff establishment. They normally constitute a small proportion of the teaching staff of a school. To ensure that all the teachers of English / Putonghua assigned to teach the relevant subject in schools possess basic language proficiency for delivering quality teaching, these temporary teachers of English / Putonghua are also encouraged to attain the LPR.

#### *Teachers employed under the NET Scheme*

10. The LPR and all its related arrangements are not applicable to teachers employed under the NET Scheme in government, aided and caput schools, including those employed under the NET Grant<sup>4</sup>. These teachers serve as a resource person for the English subject in schools. They mainly support and collaborate with the local English teachers in facilitating the implementation of the curriculum and the

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<sup>4</sup> Starting from the 2025/26 school year, each eligible aided and caput school can opt for a teaching post under the NET Scheme or the NET Grant, and each eligible government school is allocated one teaching post under the NET Scheme. For details, please refer to the EDB Circular No. 8/2025.

development of the subject. In DSS schools and private schools, teachers who are native speakers of English not employed under the NET Scheme are considered comparable to teachers of English holding a regular post in aided schools and are required to meet the LPR.

### **Enquiries**

11. For enquiries, please contact the Language Teacher Qualifications Team at 2892 5783.

Ms W P LEE  
for Secretary for Education

c.c. Heads of Sections – for information