

EDUCATION BUREAU CIRCULAR MEMORANDUM NO. 54 / 2004

(Formerly referred as EMB Circular Memorandum No.54 / 2004)

Note : Annexes 2 to 4 have become obsolete and are thus not attached. Please refer to the “Latest Updating/News” Section available on Education Bureau’s website at <http://www.edb.gov.hk/index.aspx?nodeid=685&langno=1> <https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/teacher/qualification-training-development/training/language-edu/index.html> for *Revised Annex 2*, *Revised Annex 3*, “*Latest News of the Preparatory Course*” and other updated information.

From	: Secretary for Education and Manpower	To	: Heads of all secondary and primary day schools (except ESF schools and international schools)
Ref.	: EMB/TEP/TEA/18		
Date	: 12 March 2004		- for necessary action

Implementation of Recommendations of Standing Committee on Language Education and Research on Language Teacher Education and Qualifications

(This circular memorandum should be read by
all heads and teachers of secondary and primary schools.)

Summary

This circular memorandum informs school heads and teachers of the details of implementing the recommendations of the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research (SCOLAR) with regard to teacher education and qualification requirements of language teachers and related training provisions.

Background

2. In June 2003, SCOLAR recommended in its Final Report, among other measures, that language teachers should be adequately prepared in terms of proficiency, subject knowledge and pedagogy. There are clear specifications with regard to the training and qualifications to be attained by new Chinese and English language teachers with effect from the 2004/05 school year.

Details

New requirements specified by SCOLAR

3. Starting from the 2004/05 school year, new Chinese and English language teachers in primary and secondary schools should hold at least a Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree majoring in the relevant language subject, or both a first/ higher degree majoring in the relevant language subject¹ and a recognized teacher training qualification majoring in the relevant

¹ The lists of recognized language major degree programmes being offered and/or to be offered in the 2004/05 academic year by local tertiary institutions are at Annex 2.

language subject.

4. New Chinese and English language teachers without the recommended qualifications in paragraph 3 above should acquire them within three to five years of their entry into the profession. Specifically,

- (a) new language teachers holding a first degree in the relevant language subject should complete a Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) or Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PCEd) programme majoring in that language subject **within three years** of taking up the employment;
- (b) new language teachers holding a first degree in a subject not relevant to the language they teach should complete a PGDE or PCEd programme majoring in the relevant language subject and a postgraduate programme focusing on the subject knowledge (PGSK) of that particular language **within five years** of taking up the employment. These new language teachers may, however, opt to pursue a **first/higher degree majoring in the relevant language subject** instead of a PGSK; or
- (c) new language teachers without a first degree should complete a BEd programme majoring in the relevant language subject **within five years** of taking up the employment.

For details of various qualification combinations and the corresponding training required of new language teachers, please refer to *Annex 1*.

5. New language teachers who have not received any initial teacher training should attend a Preparatory Course in the relevant language subject before or shortly after assuming teaching duty.

Teachers to come under the remit of the new requirements

6. New Chinese and English language teachers who join the profession and hold a permanent post in local public sector (i.e. Government, Aided, Special, Caput and Direct Subsidy Scheme) and private primary and secondary day schools offering full curriculum in the 2004/05 school year and thereafter should be subject to the new requirements.

7. Serving language teachers without the recommended qualifications are encouraged to acquire the relevant qualifications as soon as possible.

8. The new requirements will NOT apply to the following categories of language teachers-

- (a) English Schools Foundation and international school teachers;
- (b) teachers appointed under the Native-speaking English Teacher (NET) Scheme in primary and secondary schools; and
- (c) supply teachers.

Recognized courses/ programmes for meeting SCOLAR requirements

9. A vetting committee has been set up under the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) to compile reference lists of courses/ programmes that fulfill the new requirements, which include-

- (a) recognized language major degree programmes;
- (b) recognized PGSK programmes; and
- (c) PGDE/PCEd programmes that will start before September each year and Preparatory Courses.

The vetting committee comprises school principals, tertiary practitioners and EMB officers. It will update the reference lists at regular intervals to include new courses/ programmes that may arise in future. These lists will be made available on the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB)'s website (<http://www.edb.gov.hk/index.aspx?nodeid=685&langno=1> <https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/teacher/qualification-training-development/training/language-edu/index.html>).

Language Major Programmes

10. The lists of recognized language major degree programmes (one for English and one for Chinese) being offered and/or to be offered in the 2004/05 academic year by local tertiary institutions have been compiled for reference by schools and teachers. Teachers who have completed any of the courses on the reference lists are considered to have acquired a relevant degree in the respective language subject. Please see ***Annex 2*** for details.

11. Teachers holding other local language-related degree programmes that are not on the lists and non-local qualifications, if they so wish, may submit the relevant documents to the vetting committee via the Professional Development and Training Division of EMB for consideration. Teachers holding non-local qualifications should first seek assessment from the Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation on whether these are considered equivalent to a local degree or above level prior to their submission to EMB.

Postgraduate Programmes in Subject Knowledge (PGSK)

12. The lists of recognized PGSK programmes (one for English and one for Chinese) to be offered in the 2004/05 academic year by local tertiary institutions have also been compiled for reference by schools and teachers. Please see ***Annex 3*** for details.

PGDE/PCEd and Preparatory Courses

13. In line with the spirit of SCOLAR recommendations for providing basic and survival training to untrained teachers before they begin teaching, untrained new language teachers are encouraged to enrol on a PGDE/ PCEd programme that commences prior to September each year. Failing this, untrained new language teachers should attend a Preparatory Course. A list of PGDE/ PCEd programmes that will start before September 2004 and preparatory courses are at ***Annex 4***.

Appointment and professional development of language teachers

14. For the benefit of student learning, schools are reminded to give priority to recruiting new language teachers who have acquired the relevant training and qualifications. From the 2004/05 school year and thereafter, schools should, when offering an appointment to new language teachers without the required qualifications, set conditions in the employment contract that the teachers concerned must acquire the required qualifications within 3 or 5 years as appropriate. Schools are requested to plan the professional development of these teachers and report progress to their School Management Committee.

Professional Development Incentive Grant Scheme for Language Teachers

15. To encourage serving Chinese and English language teachers to upgrade their qualifications, SCOLAR recommended that a Professional Development Incentive Grant Scheme for Language Teachers be set up to provide eligible serving teachers with grants to meet 50% of the tuition fee of relevant programmes of study, subject to a maximum of ~~\$30,000~~ \$84,000 per teacher. Details about the Scheme will be announced through a separate letter to schools issued by SCOLAR on the same date as this circular and on the SCOLAR website (~~<http://www.language-education.com/>~~ <https://scolark.hkedcity.net/>). Please contact the ~~SCOLAR Support Unit~~ Language Education and SCOLAR Section on ~~2892 6468~~ 3527 0180 for further details of the Scheme.

Enquiries

16. Enquiries concerning this circular memorandum should be directed to:

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Ms Susanna Cheung
for Secretary for Education and Manpower

c.c. All section heads

Training Requirements for New Language Teachers

Qualifications held by new teachers of the Chinese and English Language subjects		Training recommended by SCOLAR and Time Frame for Completion
Degree (first or higher)	Teacher Training	
Relevant major	Relevant major	No additional training required with respect to SCOLAR's recommendations
Relevant major	Non-relevant major	Within 3 years of joining the profession, to complete –
Relevant major	No teacher training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a Postgraduate Diploma / Certificate in Education (PGDE / PCed) programme majoring in the relevant language subject
Non-relevant major	Relevant major	Within 3 years of joining the profession, to complete – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a postgraduate programme in subject knowledge (PGSK) for teachers of the relevant language subject OR a relevant language major degree programme
Non-relevant major	Non-relevant major	Within 5 years of joining the profession, to complete -
Non-relevant major	No teacher training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a PGSK for teachers of the relevant language subject OR a relevant language major degree programme; AND a PGDE / PCed majoring in the relevant language subject
No degree	Relevant major	Within 5 years of joining the profession, to complete - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a BEd programme majoring in the relevant language subject; OR a relevant language major degree programme
No degree	Non-relevant major	Within 5 years of joining the profession, to complete -
No degree	No teacher training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a BEd programme majoring in the relevant language subject; OR a relevant language major degree programme AND a PGDE / PCed majoring in the relevant language subject