

# Printed Textbook Writing Guidelines for Religious Education (Secondary 1-3)

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this set of guidelines is to familiarise interested textbook publishers with the curriculum aims and objectives and related principles for writing textbooks of Religious Education (Secondary 1-3), etc. in a bid to ensure that the textbooks are written in accordance with the specific requirements of the curriculum and the updated “Seven Learning Goals of Secondary Education” ([www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/7-learning-goals/secondary/index.html](http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/7-learning-goals/secondary/index.html)). For details, please refer to the *Secondary Education Curriculum Guide* (2017) and its Supplementary Note (2021) ([www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/major-level-of-edu/secondary/cg\\_documents.html](http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/major-level-of-edu/secondary/cg_documents.html)).
- 1.2 The *Values Education Curriculum Framework (Pilot Version)* was released in 2021 and ten priority values and attitudes (PVA) were introduced. The PVA have been optimised since 2023 with the PVA “Care for Others” extended to “benevolence” and two PVA (i.e. “Filial Piety” and “Unity”) added. Publishers should incorporate the learning elements of values education in the textbooks where appropriate. For details, please refer to the *Values Education Curriculum Framework (Pilot Version)*(2021) (Chinese version only) ([www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/4-key-tasks/moral-civic/ve\\_curriculum\\_framework2021.html](http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/4-key-tasks/moral-civic/ve_curriculum_framework2021.html)) and the EDBCM No.183/2023 on *Enriching the Values Education Curriculum Framework (Pilot Version) – Optimisation of “Priority Values and Attitudes”* ([applications.edb.gov.hk/circular/upload/EDBCM/EDBCM23183E.pdf](http://applications.edb.gov.hk/circular/upload/EDBCM/EDBCM23183E.pdf)).
- 1.3 The *Curriculum Framework of National Security Education in Hong Kong* was released in 2021 and updated in 2025. Publishers should incorporate the learning elements of national security education in the textbooks where appropriate. They may also refer to the government website “National Security Education Day” for information such as major fields of national security. For details, please refer to the *Curriculum Framework of National Security Education in Hong Kong* ([www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/kla/pshe/national-security-education/index.html](http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/kla/pshe/national-security-education/index.html)) and the government website “National Security Education Day” ([www.nsed.gov.hk/index.php?l=en](http://www.nsed.gov.hk/index.php?l=en)).
- 1.4 For the general principles and requirements for writing textbooks and the requirements for submission of printed textbooks for review, publishers should refer to the latest edition of the *Guiding Principles for Quality Textbooks* and *Guidelines on Submission of Printed Textbooks for Review* available on the EDB’s Textbook Information website ([www.edb.gov.hk/textbook](http://www.edb.gov.hk/textbook)).

1.5 The textbooks should be written in line with the following CDC curriculum documents:

- *Personal, Social and Humanities Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1-Secondary 6) (2017)*
- *Religious Education Curriculum Guide (Secondary 1-3) (2024)*

## **2. Curriculum Aims and Objectives**

2.1 The aims of Religious Education (Secondary 1-3) are:

- educating students about religion, religious traditions, religious lifestyles and representative religious figures;
- enabling students to understand, through their own experience, others' and history, the influence of religion on how people perceive themselves and the world as well as their values and cultures;
- educating students about how religion can lead to a healthy and positive life, and help fulfil social and environmental responsibilities;
- guiding students to pursue a faith or spiritual way of living, and to seek answers to questions in life; and
- developing students' respect for religion and different cultures and values.

2.2 The learning objectives of Religious Education (Secondary 1-3) are:

- Knowledge: Students are expected to
  - understand basic religious teachings, important religious figures, religious life and the significant influence of religion on human society;
  - understand the values and insistence of religious practitioners; and
  - understand key concepts related to personal growth, social interaction, care for the community, and pursuit of happiness, etc.
- Skills: Students are expected to
  - develop skills related to Religious Education, such as mindfulness practice, reflection, prayer, study of scriptures, introduction and explanation of one's belief to others, and understanding of different issues from the perspectives of religious practitioners; and
  - develop and apply the nine generic skills integratively, such as applying religious values in the study of issues related to personal and social well-being to foster holistic thinking skills.
- Values and Attitudes: Students are expected to
  - be reflective and strive for self-improvement;

- be compassionate and caring for others;
- have the commitment to making the world better; and
- seek happiness for themselves and others with harmony in diversity.
- Actions and Practices: Students will have opportunities to
  - give and make offering;
  - show care and serve; and
  - participate in religious practices or activities.

### 3. Guiding Principles

#### 3.1 Content

- The writing of the textbooks should be in line with the curriculum aims and objectives of the Religious Education curriculum.
- The writing of the textbook should be student-centred and from the religious perspectives. The design of learning and teaching activities and homework should be related to the content and aims at promoting students' learning interests.
- Elements of enquiry should be emphasised in the design of learning activities which develop students' ways of knowledge enquiry and the skills in thinking and evaluating knowledge relating to religion.
- Textbook publishers should refer to the *Religious Education Curriculum Guide (Secondary 1-3) (2024)* for details.

#### 3.2 Learning and Teaching

- The starting point for writing the textbook would be students' levels and interests. Students would be guided to understand the founders, origin, doctrines and practices of the religion they study.
- The textbooks should give an account of and analyse concepts relating to religion in a lively way.
- In order to facilitate students' easy understanding of the content, relevant and essential information such as diagrams, maps and data should be introduced where appropriate.
- To avoid putting extra burdens on students, information on years as well as names of places and people that is not essential should be kept to a minimum. If religious classics are quoted, chapters, sections and the versions adopted should be cited clearly.

- Old names of mountains, rivers and cities related to historical religious events should be used. Modern names should be added as remarks. The interchangeable use of old and modern names should be avoided.
- When using images of the national flag, national emblem, regional flag and regional emblem:
  - **avoid drawing** the national flag, national emblem, regional flag and regional emblem on your own;
  - use real photos to show the national flag, national emblem, regional flag, regional emblem, etc.;
  - use the files of the national flag, national emblem, regional flag and regional emblem downloaded from the Protocol Division Government Secretariat and follow the relevant requirements on the use of these images.
- The principle in the design of homework, which is an extension of the learning themes, would be the enhancement of learning effectiveness.
- Questions for thinking / homework should aim at developing students' higher order thinking (e.g. analysis, synthesis and evaluation) and consolidating the learning outcomes. The forms of homework should be diversified.
- Junior secondary education emphasises helping students build a solid foundation of knowledge. As such, learning activities and tasks included in textbooks should aim at helping students acquire knowledge and develop understanding; whereas excessive evaluation questions should be avoided. Moreover, the introduction of broad questions without the provision of sufficient information and guidelines should also be avoided, so as not to exceed the capability of junior secondary students in terms of their prior knowledge, and deviate from the curriculum objectives.
- The design of homework should take account of students' interests and, if possible, link up with students' daily life.
- The design of learning activities should link up with students' daily life and related life-wide learning activities, as well as provide sufficient information and guidelines to cater for students' different interests, levels and abilities.

### 3.3 Structure and Organisation

- The structure and organisation of textbook should be in line with the *Religious Education Curriculum Guide (Secondary 1-3) (2024)*.
- Textbook publishers should follow the recommended titles of topics in the syllabus. However, they may decide sub-titles on their own.

- The organisation of textbooks should be systematic. The presentation and genre should be diversified to promote students' learning interests.

### 3.4 Language

- [\*An English-Chinese Glossary of Terms Commonly Used in the Teaching of Religious Education \(Christian\) in Secondary Schools\*](#) (1988) published by the Education Bureau should be referred to where applicable.
- Vernacular language should be used. The level of difficulty of the language used in the textbooks should commensurate with the language ability of students. The wordings used should be clear and simple.
- Where appropriate, guidance on pronunciation could be provided to facilitate student learning.

### 3.5 Textbook Layout

- The font size of the texts and footnotes should not be too small so as to avoid affecting the eyesight of students. The typesetting should enhance readability.
- Illustrations, maps, data, etc. should be appropriately positioned in respect of the texts.
- Publishers may refer to the latest edition of EDB's [\*Guiding Principles for Printing of Textbooks\*](#) for use of paper, colouring, use of inks, etc.
- Typesetting should be practical in principle. There should be good use of the space on each page so as to keep the thickness and the weight of textbook to a minimum.

## 4. Others

- 4.1 When writing textbooks, publishers have to ensure that the content and information provided in the materials should be correct, complete, up-to-date, objective and impartial. The source and the date of the information should be provided as appropriate. The information in the illustrations and images should avoid showing the brand-names of the commercial items unless they are necessary.
- 4.2 Except for the single URL of the publisher's website, no other URLs or QR codes should be included in the printed textbooks. Publishers are required to clearly declare in the "Preface" or "Editor's Notes" that the learning and teaching resources on the publisher's website have not been reviewed by the EDB.
- 4.3 Publishers may provide self-developed supplementary learning materials or the web links to the learning and teaching resources developed by the third

party on the publishers' websites. Publishers may also provide their websites' URLs in the Teacher's Book for teachers' reference to facilitate lesson preparation or design of learning and teaching activities. Publishers should be accountable for the learning and teaching resources they provide.

- 4.4 The maps included in the textbooks should be accurate and only contain essential information suitable for student learning. Reference should be made to the requirements and standard maps of the Ministry of Natural Resources of the People's Republic of China for all maps of China included in the textbooks, and wherever appropriate, the respective map review numbers and dates of reference should be quoted. Textbook publishers should also follow strictly the provisions in “公開地圖內容表示規範” issued by the Ministry of Natural Resources.  
([https://www.gov.cn/zhengce/zhengceku/2023-02/17/content\\_5741977.htm](https://www.gov.cn/zhengce/zhengceku/2023-02/17/content_5741977.htm))
- 4.5 It is mandatory for the publishers to ensure that all proof-reading work, including that for language, punctuation, information, illustration, pagination, etc., is completed and the textbooks are error-free before submitting them for review.
- 4.6 Publishers should review the textbook content from time to time. When necessary, publishers can make amendments to the printed textbook content in the form of corrigenda with the EDB's consent. The EDB may also require publishers to make amendments when needs arise.
- 4.7 Publishers should clear all copyright issues of the textbooks as appropriate.
- 4.8 Expiration of the copyright on the textbook materials is not accepted as a reason for publishers to apply for textbook revision or “Reprint with Minor Amendments”.
- 4.9 The suggested time allocation set out in the curriculum documents should be taken into consideration to ensure that the learning content is designed with an appropriate quantity and level.
- 4.10 If publishers submit other versions (such as Chinese version or electronic version) of the same textbook title for review at the same time, they should duly check the consistency of the content among all the versions. If another version is to be submitted at a later stage, the suggestions in the Textbook Review Reports for the previously submitted version should be duly followed before submission.