e-Textbook Writing Guidelines for
English Language Education Key Learning Area

1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this set of guidelines is to familiarise interested e-textbook publishers with the curriculum aims and objectives and related principles for writing e-textbooks of the English Language and related resources in a bid to ensure that they are written in accordance with the specific requirements of the curriculum and the updated "Seven Learning Goals of Primary Education" (www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/7-learning-goals/primary/index.html), the Three Major Directions and Seven Major Renewed Emphases / the updated "Seven Learning Goals of Secondary Education" (www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/7-learning-goals/secondary/index.html). For details, please refer to the *Primary Education Curriculum Guide* (2024) (Chinese version only) (www.edb.gov.hk/PECG-2024) / *Secondary Education Curriculum Guide* (2017) and its Supplementary Notes (2021) (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 e-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) 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).

1.3 The *Curriculum Framework of National Security Education in Hong Kong* was released in 2021. Publishers should incorporate the learning elements of national security education in the e-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) and the website "National Security Education Day" (www.nsed.gov.hk/index.php?l=en).

1.4 For the general principles and requirements for writing e-textbooks and the requirements for submission of e-textbooks for review, publishers should refer to the latest edition of the *Guiding Principles for Quality Textbooks* and

Guidelines on Submission of e-Textbooks for Review available on the EDB's Textbook Information website (www.edb.gov.hk/textbook).

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

- *English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 6)* (2017)
- *English Language Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – 6)* (2004) (To be updated)
- *Supplement to the English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Secondary 1 – 3)* (2018)
- *English Language Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4 – 6)* (2021)

The updated versions of the curriculum documents are accessible at www.edb.gov.hk/elecg.

2. Curriculum Framework

2.1 Curriculum Aims

The overall aims of the English Language curriculum are:

- to provide every student of English with further opportunities for extending their knowledge and experience of the cultures of other people as well as opportunities for personal and intellectual development, further studies, pleasure and work in the English medium; and

- to enable every student to prepare for the changing socio-economic demands resulting from advances in information technology; these demands include the interpretation, use and production of materials for pleasure, study and work in the English medium.

2.2 Learning Targets and Objectives

The subject target of English Language is for students to develop an ever-improving capability to use English:

- to think and communicate;

- to acquire, develop and apply knowledge; and

- to respond and give expression to experience;

and within these contexts, to develop and apply an ever-increasing understanding of how language is organised, used and learnt. The subject target is supported by three interrelated strands:

- Interpersonal Strand

- Knowledge Strand

- Experience Strand

[For details of the Strand Targets for Key Stages 1– 4, please refer to Appendix 2 of the *English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 - Secondary 6)* (2017) (www.edb.gov.hk/elecg).]

The Learning Objectives define more specifically what students are expected to learn and use in order to work towards the Learning Targets for different Key Stages. They cover the following areas:

- language forms and communicative functions

- language skills

- language development strategies

- attitudes specific to English Language learning

The following components are fundamental in enabling students to work towards the learning targets and objectives:

- generic skills

- proper values and attitudes

[For details of the Learning Objectives, please refer to Appendices 3 – 9 of the *English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 6)* (2017) (www.edb.gov.hk/elecg).]

3. Guiding Principles

3.1 Content

3.1.1 The e-textbooks are written in line with the following CDC curriculum documents:

- *English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 6)* (2017)

- *English Language Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – 6)* (2004) (To be updated)

- *Supplement to the English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Secondary 1 – 3)* (2018)

- *English Language Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4 – 6)* (2021)

The updated versions of the curriculum documents are accessible at www.edb.gov.hk/elecg.

3.1.2 The four components of the curriculum (aims, content, learning / teaching strategies, assessment) are manifested in the following aspects to support students in learning English:

- There is a balanced coverage of the Learning Targets in the Experience, Knowledge and Interpersonal Strands at each Key Stage.

- The e-textbooks provide quality resources for a task-based approach in the learning, teaching and assessment cycle.

- There is an adequate coverage of and a balance between the learning and teaching of language forms (vocabulary, text types, language items and structures) and communicative functions for the Key Stage concerned.

- The facts, information or ideas are accurate, up-to-date and clearly presented.

- Language items and structures are introduced in context. Opportunities are provided for students to explore the form, meaning and use of the target language items and structures at the text level. Grammar rules and terms are introduced in a progressive way at appropriate stages of learning.

- The language skills are taught in context and practised in an integrative and systematic manner.

- There are opportunities for the development and application of enabling skills, such as phonics, vocabulary building skills and reference skills, in appropriate contexts, to facilitate lifelong and self-directed language learning.

- Opportunities are provided for meaningful and appropriate use of English for purposeful communication, personal enrichment and reflection.

- There is adequate spiral learning of grammar and vocabulary and application of such knowledge and skills in meaningful contexts.

- The content contains cross-curricular elements to heighten students' understanding of the academic use of language and help connect their learning experiences acquired in different Key Learning Areas (KLAs).

- Language arts materials (e.g. poems, songs, short stories) are provided to develop students' capability to use English creatively (e.g. to respond and give expression to real and imaginative experiences) and enhance their language skills.

- There are learning / teaching activities that promote the Updated Four Key Tasks (i.e. Moral and Civic Education: Towards Values Education, Reading to Learn: Towards Reading across the

Curriculum, Project Learning: Towards Integrating and Applying Knowledge and Skills across Disciplines, Information Technology for Interactive Learning: Towards Self-directed Learning) to facilitate students' whole-person development and foster their learning to learn capabilities to achieve lifelong and self-directed learning.

- There are learning / teaching activities and further reading lists that promote self-directed language learning.

3.1.3 Enrichment Components

(For the three-year Senior Secondary English Language e-textbooks only)

- Language arts and non-language arts elements are naturally integrated into different modules of learning or developed into extension modules with a specific focus to tie in with co-curricular activities and / or Other Learning Experiences.

- Students are exposed to a wide variety of themes (e.g. sports, popular culture, social issues) and text types (e.g. poems, song lyrics, short stories, drama scripts, debate speeches).

3.2 Learning and Teaching

3.2.1 Specific requirements for nurturing students' generic skills and proper values and attitudes

- There are opportunities for students to develop different generic skills for lifelong and self-directed language learning and use them in an integrative manner (e.g. "collaborative problem solving skills", "holistic thinking skills").

- There are learning / teaching activities to cultivate students' proper values and attitudes in different cross-curricular domains (e.g. national security education, moral, civic and national education, life education, sex education, environmental education, anti-drug education) for character building and whole-person development.

- There are opportunities for students to develop media and information literacy and equip them with the ability and attitude for effective, ethical and responsible use of information.

- There is a variety of presentations and adequate stimulus to motivate students and develop a positive attitude towards English language learning.

- There is room for imagination and creativity in the productive tasks to facilitate the creative use of language (e.g. tasks requiring the use of

language to appeal to the senses, points of view, effective story openings and endings).

- There are opportunities for students to develop their cognitive skills (e.g. critical thinking skills, logical reasoning).

- The chosen themes / topics are capable of promoting open-mindedness and cultural understanding.

- Issues are presented from different perspectives to enable students to explore the topics from different angles and make judgements.

- Over-generalisation, stereotyping and any form of discrimination on the grounds of, for example, gender, age, race, religion, culture, occupation, disability are avoided.

3.2.2 Special requirements and advice on the design of students' work

- The tasks, activities and exercises are useful and adequate in quantity in helping students achieve the learning targets and objectives.

- There is a balanced use of pedagogical and real-life tasks.

- The tasks and activities provide meaningful contexts and are well integrated to provide students with opportunities to use the language purposefully and develop language development strategies progressively.

- The tasks are well supported by relevant examples and language practice exercises.

- The tasks, activities and exercises are motivating and challenging.

- Where appropriate, life-wide learning activities, which help widen students' exposure to the authentic and integrative use of language skills and facilitate learning beyond the classroom, can be provided.

- Grammar and vocabulary are learnt and taught in context and through the use of a variety of tasks and texts.

- There are awareness-raising activities for students to explore and / or compare the forms and functions of the target language items in texts.

- The language practice exercises are contextualised and meaningful.

- There are opportunities for students to access and produce multimodal texts to enable them to understand how the interplay of different modes (e.g. images, sounds, animations) creates meaning and develop new literacy skills.

- There are opportunities to promote Language across the Curriculum (LaC) or Reading/Writing across the Curriculum (R/WaC) (where appropriate in support of STEAM education) to connect students'

learning experiences acquired in different KLAs, develop in them a better understanding of the academic use of language and help nurture an entrepreneurial spirit.

- There are opportunities for students to select, synthesise and evaluate information from multiple sources in completing a task.

- Tedious, mechanical and repetitive learning tasks / exercises are avoided.

- There is a purpose and a target audience for each speaking or writing task.

- There is a good variety of reading / listening texts, activities and tasks / exercises that arouse students' interests.

- There are different types of questions on reading texts, including higher-order questions, to stimulate critical thinking.

- There are opportunities to help students develop metacognitive strategies (e.g. goal setting, monitoring their own progress, self-evaluation and reflection) in the learning materials and activities, and promote assessment for / as learning.

3.2.3 Catering for learner diversity

- The tasks, activities and exercises can be easily used / adapted to suit students of different needs, interests, abilities and aspirations.

- Where appropriate, suggestions on extended tasks can be provided for stretching the potential of students.

3.3 Structure and Organisation

Specific requirements on curriculum organisation

- The content is suitably organised and suited to students' needs, interests, abilities and aspirations, and relevant to their everyday experience.

- There is an appropriate balance of both depth and breadth in the presentation / exploration of the theme / topic / issue to avoid overload in content.

- The learning points are arranged in proper and logical sequence, e.g. from easy to difficult, from simple to complex, and from factual to conceptual.

- The table of contents and titles / headings / outlines provide a clear indication of the content of the e-textbooks for students' reference and are well-presented.

3.4 Language

- The language used is accurate and appropriate.

- The language used is at an appropriate level of difficulty.

- The e-textbooks / learning materials provide good models of authentic language in use.

- The style and vocabulary used in the texts are suitable.

3.5 Multimedia content

- Multimedia content (including photographs, illustrations, pictures, graphs, videos and simulations) should be necessary and related to the e-textbook content, and does not lead to negative connotations.

- There is sufficient and appropriate multimedia content.

- The multimedia content is suitably labelled and explained so as to stimulate and facilitate learning.

- The multimedia content is of satisfactory quality in terms of clarity, design, attractiveness and effectiveness.

- The multimedia content should serve to direct students to the instructional focus rather than to distract them from it.

3.6 Pedagogical Use of e-Features

3.6.1 The e-textbooks should meet the technical and functional requirements with appropriate pedagogical use of e-features for learning, teaching and assessment.

3.6.2 Features of interactive activities and subject-specific e-features

- Interactive assessment activities should be included in the e-textbook to facilitate assessment for/ as learning.

- There is use of e-features to facilitate learning, teaching and assessment, including:

  ➢ demonstration of reading aloud continuous texts and dialogues;
  ➢ demonstration of pronunciation of key words and illustration of meaning of key words in audio and / or visual formats;
  ➢ switching on / off the texts in listening practice; and
  ➢ provision of prompts and answer-checking function, where appropriate, to facilitate assessment for / as learning.

3.6.3 Print on Demand (Optional)

- It is suggested that a print-on-demand function be provided for users to create one or multiple hard copies of the primary reading materials.

3.7　Learning Elements / Skills Not Replaceable by Digital Means

- Skills such as penmanship and proofreading skills are not replaceable by digital means. Learning and teaching activities should be designed to provide opportunities for students to practise such skills.

3.8　Technical and Functional Requirements

- Refer to the latest edition of the *Guiding Principles for Quality Textbooks* for the relevant requirements.

4.　Others

4.1　When writing e-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 commercial items unless they are necessary.

4.2　All URLs and hyperlinks (including the publisher's self-developed learning materials and the learning and teaching resources developed by any third party) in the e-textbooks should be linked to the publisher's website for the publisher's easy management. For third-party resources, the URLs or hyperlinks should be linked to the websites with high credibility, such as the official websites and the websites of academic institutions, and avoid linking to commercial or social media platforms. In case problems arise from the hyperlinked content (including the third-party resources), the publisher should take immediate follow-up actions and bear the relevant liability.

4.3　Publishers should avoid putting excessive hyperlinks that provide additional references in the e-textbooks so as not to violate the self-containment principles. Publishers may place the hyperlinks of their self-developed supplementary learning materials or the learning and teaching resources developed by the third party on their website. Publishers may also provide their website's URL in the Teacher's Book for teachers' reference to facilitate lesson preparation or design of learning and teaching activities. Publishers should be accountable for such learning and teaching resources they may provide.

4.4　The maps included in the e-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 e-textbooks, and wherever appropriate, the respective map review numbers and dates of reference should be quoted. Textbook publishers

should also follow strictly the instructions 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)

4.5 When using images of the national flag, national emblem, regional flag and regional emblem, the following points should be noted:

- **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 and regional emblem;
- 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 stipulated by the Protocol Division Government Secretariat on the use of these images.

4.6 It is mandatory for the publishers to ensure that all proofreading work, including that for e-features, language, punctuation, information, illustration and pagination, is completed and the e-textbooks are error-free before submitting them for review.

4.7 Publishers should review the content of e-textbooks from time to time. When necessary, publishers can make amendments to the e-textbook content with the EDB's consent. The EDB may also require publishers to make amendments when needs arise.

4.8 Publishers should clear all copyright issues of the e-textbooks as appropriate.

4.9 The suggested time allocation set out in the curriculum documents should be taken into consideration to ensure that an appropriate quantity and level of learning content is designed.

4.10 If publishers submit other versions (such as printed 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 given in the e-Textbook Review Report for the previously submitted version should be duly followed before submission.

4.11 Publishers should submit or make available the audio scripts of all the listening and phonics practices in the e-textbooks, and the answer keys to all practices.

4.12 For additional learning and teaching resources (e.g. presentation slides, worksheets) which normally come with the Teacher's Book in printed textbooks, publishers should remove them from the Student's Book, or tailor-make them to suit students' needs, interests and abilities to facilitate self-directed learning.

4.13 Publishers may make reference to the glossary provided in the *English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 –*

Secondary 6) (2017) (www.edb.gov.hk/elecg) for the description of terms used in the Curriculum Guide.

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