e-Textbook Writing Guidelines for History (Secondary 1 – 3)

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 History, etc. in a bid to ensure that the e-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). For details, please refer to the *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 for values education in the e-textbooks where appropriate. For details, please refer to *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* (2021) was released in 2021. Publishers should incorporate the learning elements on 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 government 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:

- *Personal, Social and Humanities Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 6)* (2017)
- *Personal, Social and Humanities Education Key Learning Area: History Curriculum Guide (Secondary 1 – 3)* (2019)

2. Curriculum Aims and Objectives

e-Textbook publishers should refer to *the Personal, Social and Humanities Education Key Learning Area: History Curriculum Guide (Secondary 1 – 3)* (2019). The writing of e-textbooks should be written in line with the aims and objectives of the revised junior secondary History curriculum and should facilitate constructing and enhancing students' historical knowledge foundation, skills development and values formation in the learning and teaching of History.

2.1   Curriculum Aims

The aims of Secondary 1 – 3 History curriculum are:

(a)   to enhance and develop students' interest in studying history;

(b)   to help students understand the present in the context of the past;

(c)   to enrich students' knowledge of their own community and culture, as well as other major cultures of the world;

(d)   to develop students' historical skills and generic skills for further studies and life situations;

(e)   to nurture students to become citizens who have global perspectives, knowledge and sense of responsibility.

2.2   Curriculum Objectives

After completion of the junior secondary History curriculum, students should be able to:

(a)   Knowledge and Understanding

i.   understand and comprehend from a variety of perspectives (political, economic, technological and scientific, social, religious, aesthetic, etc.), the main characteristics of world civilisations in different periods;

ii.   understand and comprehend the main characteristics of the development of Hong Kong and to relate them to the national and world development;

iii.   comprehend basic historical concepts and terms;

iv.   understand the relationship between cause and consequence of historical events;

v.   comprehend change and continuity in major historical issues and developments;

vi.   understand that the past may be interpreted in different ways.

(b) Skills

i.   use historical terminology in an appropriate way;

ii.   present historical events accurately in chronological order;

iii. describe characteristics of historical maps, models, diagrams, charts, pictures, tables and cartoons;

iv. make deductions and inferences from historical sources;

v.   identify different interpretations of major historical events and personalities;

vi. distinguish the differences between historical facts and opinions;

vii. comprehend the implication of sources, question and explore the accuracy and reliability, and then construct fair and impartial personal viewpoints;

viii. make an imaginative reconstruction of past events;

ix. select, organise and deploy sources, and express in a well-structured way.

(c) Attitudes and Values

i.   develop an interest in the past and an appreciation of human achievements and aspirations;

ii.   relate the study of history to contemporary life;

iii. understand views, beliefs and values of different societies at different times so as to foster proper values and attitudes;

iv. be willing to take up the responsibility of preserving antiquities and monuments, conserving cultural heritage and promoting history and culture.

3. Guiding Principles

3.1 Bridging of curriculum

- The content should show bridging relation with the Basic Education.

  Before receiving junior secondary education, students have already acquired initial understanding of some important historical events that influenced global development (e.g. war and peace) from General Studies in primary level. Junior Secondary History textbooks should build on this primary learning foundation to further enrich students' historical knowledge, enhance their ability to study history and foster proper values and attitudes so as to lay a foundation for lifelong learning.

3.2   Content

- The content should cover the foundation part and the extended part of the 12 topics, as well as all case studies in the revised curriculum.

- The content should be useful to the learning and teaching process and will facilitate students' active participation and their balanced development in the three aspects of knowledge construction, use of integration skills and fostering of proper values and attitudes.

- While the historical information provided should be accurate, adequate and systematically organised, due emphasis should be placed to the development of students' historical concepts and skills.

- To enhance students' understanding of History as a dynamic and lively subject, the content should be able to provide students with authentic, valid and up-to-date materials and sources which can stimulate curiosity, empathy and a sense of reality in the learning of history.

- Illustrations such as maps, pictures and diagrams, etc. should be included where they can help to stimulate interest or reinforce understanding, and their contents and positions should match the text. Relevant illustrations and information should be authentic, objective and valid, and avoid using materials with strong subjective stance and biases.

- In the description of historical events, objectivity, impartiality and professionalism should be exercised and different perspectives should be provided. Supporting evidence for the description should be quoted from reliable and credible sources, and the origin of sources should be provided as far as possible. Facts and views/opinions should be distinguished from each other.

- Diverse standpoints and perspectives in understanding and interpreting the past should be provided.

- Headings should align with contents.

- The content should be accurate and systematically organised. It should align with the suggested allocation of time in the curriculum guide in order to avoid too heavy contents.

3.3   Learning and Teaching

- A variety of appropriate learning tasks, activities and exercises should be devised to stimulate students' enquiry, empathy and imagination, and realise the related learning elements recommended in the *Curriculum Framework of National Security Education in Hong Kong* and the *History Curriculum Framework of National Security Education (S1 – 6)*. Source-based exercises should be employed to develop students' abilities to comprehend and analyse the information. Other learning activities such as questioning, discussion, role-play, simulation games, project work, information

collecting, etc. could also be suggested. Life-wide learning activities which align with the curriculum can be proposed.

- To facilitate students' self-directed learning, various supplementary reference materials and extended reading in each chapter should be provided. Extended learning exercises could also be provided in order to enrich students' knowledge of historical development.

- Junior secondary education emphases helping students build a solid foundation of knowledge. As such, the design of learning activities and assessment items 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 historical 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 lead students to make general responses with limited sources and personal understanding, thereby deviating from the curriculum objectives.

- Learning activities should be challenging enough in view of students' ability. Activities that require students to copy mechanically from the text or that focus largely on students' reading comprehension ability should be avoided.

- The design of the learning activities should allow flexibility to cater for the diversity of students' interests and abilities.

3.4 Structure and Organisation

- The content sequence should be appropriate and logical. Key words and concepts are identified and highlighted.

- The structure of the content should be made apparent by means of functional devices including table of content, chapter titles, headings and outlines.

- To facilitate students using the enquiry approach to learn History, each chapter should start with an enquiry question and the content of each chapter should be structured and organised by a number of different guiding questions so as to arouse students' interest, provoke their thinking and help them gradually construct their knowledge and understanding of topics. An overview can be put at the beginning and a summary or conclusion at the end of each chapter. It should aim to introduce the basic content of the chapter and the major trends of historical development, so that students can grasp the historical knowledge holistically and understand the major patterns of historical development.

3.5 Language

- The level of difficulty of the language used in the textbook should be commensurate with the language ability of students. *An English-Chinese*

Glossary of Terms Commonly Used in the Teaching of History in Secondary Schools (2018) should be referred to where applicable.

- Pinyin should be adopted for Chinese names and places.

- Where appropriate, guidance on pronunciation could be provided to facilitate student learning. For translated Chinese names and places, they can be accompanied by their original terms.

3.6   Pedagogical Use of e-Features

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

- Provision of animations to illustrate some famous historical events and figures in more interesting and impressive ways.

- Provision of interactive maps to show the changes of boundaries of countries, relating to different historical events and period.

- Provision of virtual field trips to relatively inaccessible field sites.

- Provision of interactive time-lines and mind-maps to better illustrate some historical concepts.

- Provision of copyright cleared or appropriate hyperlinks to copyright-free virtual field trips.

- Multimedia, such as photographs, illustrations, pictures, graphs, videos and simulations should be relevant to the e-textbook content and be accurate with appropriate descriptions to stimulate and facilitate learning. They should serve to direct students to the instructional focus rather than to distract them from them.

- Interactive assessment tasks could be included in e-textbook to facilitate assessment for learning.

3.7   Learning Elements/Skills Not Replaceable by Digital Means

- Tours and visits should not be completely replaced by digital means. Museum visits, community visits and heritage tours by students in person can promote life-wide learning and develop their historical imagination and empathy through firsthand experience.

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 the third party) in the e-textbooks should be linked to the publisher's website for the publisher's easy management. For the 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 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 instructions in "公開地圖內容表示規範" issued by the Ministry of Natural Resources in developing maps of China.

(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, 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 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 proof-reading work, including that for e-features, language, punctuation, information, illustration,

pagination, etc., is completed and the e-textbooks are error-free before submitting them for review.

4.7 Publishers should review the e-textbook content 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 the learning content is designed with an appropriate quantity and level.

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

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