

e-Textbook Writing Guidelines for Religious Education (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, guiding principles for writing e-textbooks, etc. of Religious Education (Secondary 1 – 3) in a bid to ensure that the e-textbooks are written in accordance with the specific requirements of the curriculum and “The Seven Learning Goals of Secondary Education” (www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/7-learning-goals/secondary/index.html). (For details, please refer to *Secondary Education Curriculum Guide* (2017) and its Supplementary Notes (2021).)
- 1.2 *Values Education Curriculum Framework (Pilot Version)* has been released in 2021. Upon the addition of “Law-abidingness” and “Empathy” in 2020, the Education Bureau (EDB) has listed “Diligence” as the tenth priority value and attitude. Publishers are suggested to reinforce the learning elements for values education in the e-textbooks where appropriate, especially for the above-mentioned three newly added priority values and attitudes. (For details, please refer to *Values Education Curriculum Framework (Pilot Version)*(2021)(Chinese version only)(www.edb.gov.hk/tc/curriculum-development/4-key-tasks/moral-civic/ve_curriculum_framework2021.html).)
- 1.3 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).
- 1.4 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)
 - *Religious Education Syllabuses for Secondary Schools (Secondary 1 – 3)* (1999)

2. Curriculum Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 The aims of Religious Education (Secondary 1 – 3) are:
 - to help students understand the relationship between religion, life and society, and to further explore the meaning of life;
 - to develop students’ respect for religions; and

- to enable students to learn to search for a way for the harmonious coexistence of different religions in a diverse human society.

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

- to enable students to acquire an understanding of religion and religious ways of living;
- to enable students to reflect upon their own experience of life and upon mankind’s quest to understand the place and significance of religions/belief systems;
- to enable students to appreciate the contributions of religions/belief systems to human cultures and individuals in their search for the meaning of life; and
- to give assistance to students in their search for a faith/life stance by which to live.

3. Guiding Principles

3.1 Content

- The writing of the e-textbooks should be in line with the curriculum aims and objectives stated in the syllabus of *Religious Education (Secondary 1 – 3)* (1999).
- The writing of the e-textbooks 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.
- e-Textbook publishers should refer to the syllabus of *Religious Education (Secondary 1 – 3)* (1999) for details.

3.2 Learning and Teaching

- The starting point for writing the e-textbooks would be students’ levels and interests. Students would be guided to understand the founders, origin, doctrines and practices of the religion they study.
- The e-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.
- 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 e-textbooks should be in line with the syllabus of *Religious Education (Secondary 1 – 3)* (1999).
- e-Textbook publishers should follow the recommended titles of topics in the syllabus. However, they may decide sub-titles on their own.
- The organisation of e-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 e-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 Pedagogical Use of e-Features

- e-Textbooks may provide audio-visual tools to facilitate understanding of difficult concepts and interaction among learners, resources and teachers.

3.6 Learning Elements/Skills Not Replaceable by Digital Means

- Excursion to religious places, participation in religious rituals and carrying out of service should not be completely replaced by digital means. Students should learn from experiential learning activities which are organised and structured around religious teachings.

3.7 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 brand-names of commercial items unless it is 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 must link to the publisher's website for the publisher's easy management. For the third party resources, the URLs or hyperlinks should link 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 liabilities.

- 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 in their website. Publishers may also provide their website's URL in Teacher's Book for teachers' reference in preparing lessons or designing learning and teaching activities. Publishers should be accountable for the learning and teaching resources they provide.
- 4.4 It is incumbent on the publishers to ensure that all proof-reading work, including the e-features, language, information, punctuation, illustration, pagination, etc., is completed and accurate before submitting the e-textbooks for review.
- 4.5 Publishers should review the e-textbook contents from time to time. When necessary, publishers can make amendments to the e-textbook contents with the EDB's consent. The EDB may also require publishers to make amendments if deemed necessary.
- 4.6 Publishers should clear all copyright issues of the e-textbooks as appropriate.
- 4.7 Publishers should pay attention to the curriculum time allocation suggested in the curriculum documents of this subject to ensure that the learning contents are designed with an appropriate quantity and level.
- 4.8 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 contents among all the versions. If another version will be submitted at a later stage, the suggestions in the review reports for the previous submitted version should be thoroughly followed before submission.

Personal, Social and Humanities Education Section
Curriculum Development Institute
Education Bureau
February 2022