

# e-Textbook Writing Guidelines for Senior Secondary Citizenship and Social Development

## 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 Citizenship and Social Development, 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](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 Notes (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 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](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* (2021) was released in 2021 and updated in 2025. Publishers should incorporate the learning elements of national security 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](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 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](http://www.edb.gov.hk/textbook)).
- 1.5 The textbooks should be written in line with the following CDC curriculum document:

- Citizenship and Social Development. Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4 - 6) (2021)

## 2. Curriculum Rationale and Aims

Publishers should make reference to Citizenship and Social Development Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4 - 6) (2021). The textbooks should be written to align with and embody the curriculum rationale and aims of the senior secondary (SS) Citizenship and Social Development.

### 2.1 Curriculum Rationale

The curriculum of Citizenship and Social Development emphasises helping senior secondary students understand the situations of Hong Kong, the country and the contemporary world, as well as their pluralistic and interdependent nature. Through the learning process, students can connect the knowledge learnt in various subjects at the junior and senior secondary levels, and understand, study and explore different topics from multiple perspectives, so as to construct more knowledge relevant to various themes and build up a more solid knowledge base. Furthermore, students can understand the complexities, major considerations and priorities involved in the topics, decision-making process and different solutions to problems, in order to help students:

- acquire a broad knowledge base, and understand contemporary issues that may affect their daily life at personal, community, national and global levels;
- become informed and responsible citizens with a sense of national identity and global perspective;
- respect pluralism of cultures and views, and become critical, rational, reflective and independent thinkers; and
- acquire skills necessary to life-long learning, and be confident in facing future challenges.

### 2.2 Curriculum Aims

The aims of Citizenship and Social Development are to help students:

- enhance understanding of society, the country, the human world, the physical environment and related knowledge;
- develop multiple perspectives on contemporary mature topics in different contexts (e.g. cultural, social, economic, political and technological contexts);
- become independent thinkers; be able to adapt to the ever-changing personal, social, national and global circumstances and construct knowledge; understand the complexities of the topics, and the challenges

and processes involved in decision-making for making law-abiding, rational and affective analysis, and learning how to handle conflicting values;

- (d) inherit Chinese culture and heritage in a pluralistic society, deepen understanding and sense of identity of individuals with Chinese nationality and Chinese citizenship, and at the same time appreciate, respect and embrace diversity in cultures and views;
- (e) develop skills relevant to life-long learning and strengthen their ability to integrate and apply knowledge and skills, including critical thinking skills, creativity, problem solving skills, communication skills, collaboration skills, data management skills, self-management skills, self-learning skills, and information technology skills;
- (f) develop positive values and attitudes towards life, so that they can become informed and responsible citizens of society, the country and the world.

### **3. Guiding Principles**

#### **3.1 Content**

- The textbooks should be written in line with the curriculum rationale and aims stated in Citizenship and Social Development Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4 - 6) (2021) jointly prepared by the Curriculum Development Council and the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority.
- The contents must be in line with the Constitution and the Basic Law, enabling students to understand the constitutional relationship between the country and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) and deepening students' understanding on the rule of law and situation of our country, so as to enhance their sense of national identity, sense of belonging to our country and civic responsibility.
- The contents and information of the textbooks must be accurate, based on facts, comprehensive with diversified themes, timely and accurate, objective and impartial, and containing viewpoints from multiple perspectives. It is suggested to adopt or make reference to the information provided by the official bodies and organisations with credibility.
- The topics of the textbooks should be relevant to the curriculum, commensurate with the mental and cognitive development of students, contemporary and mature for enquiry, enabling students to grasp the development of the issues holistically and to engage in rational and impartial discussions based on objective facts, so as to construct knowledge.
- The textbooks should help students build up a solid knowledge base, and enable them to have balanced development in the construction of knowledge, application of generic skills in an integrative manner,

cultivation of positive values and attitudes, while at the same time enhancing their understanding of society, our country and the world as well as facilitating their participation in learning this subject.

- The textbooks should be written with reference to the recommended lesson time and learning focuses of each theme stated in the Curriculum and Assessment Guide, so as to ensure that the depth and breadth of contents of the textbooks suit the abilities and learning needs of students.
- For issues involving a clear delineation of right and wrong or explicit legal principles, the contents of the textbooks should be clearly detailed with objective facts and justifications, such as constitutional order, historical facts, moral standards, legal principles, and lucidly indicated that there is no room for debate or compromise on these issues, although the contents of which can help students understand events from different perspectives.

### 3.2 Learning and Teaching

- The design of textbooks, related learning activities and tasks should be in line with the curriculum rationale and aims, commensurate with the level of senior secondary students, helping students develop generic skills as well as positive values and attitudes. In order to cater for learner diversity and provide diversified learning experiences, learning activities and homework should suit different interests, levels and abilities of students. Sufficient information and clear guidelines should be provided in the tasks and suggested learning activities to guide students to think from multiple perspectives and analyse in an objective and impartial manner.
- The design of tasks should not be examination-oriented. Students should be given adequate opportunities to apply what they have learnt, to supplement and extend their learning in the classroom, so as to facilitate students' learning.
- Tasks and learning activities should be able to strengthen the learning effectiveness and extend student learning of the topics. Their design should be diversified in order to enhance students' learning interest. The learning activities and tasks, where possible, should connect with students' daily lives and experiences, as well as curriculum related life-wide learning activities.

### 3.3 Structure and Organisation

- When writing and editing textbooks, objectivity, impartiality and professionalism should be upheld. The contents should be accurate and include viewpoints from different perspectives. Reliable and convincing evidence and the source of information should also be provided.

- To facilitate students' easy understanding of the contents of the textbooks, relevant and accurate pictures, charts, maps and data should be aptly added.
- Inessential years, names of places and people should be minimised to ease the burden on students. When citing literature, statistics, news articles, views of different people, the sources of information as well as the years of publication should be clearly indicated. The information and data must be updated in a timely manner, or ways for students to grasp accurate and the latest information should be provided so as to help them understand the development and changes of events.
- Overly specialised or complex information could be provided as footnotes for students' reference if they can help deepen students' understanding of related topics.
- Pictures / images should be aligned with the contents, and supplemented with appropriate explanatory texts.
- Using cartoons and paintings should be particularly cautious not to show those exaggerated, violent, sensational or indecent images. Also, they should not contain contents which are inconsistent with facts, involving misconduct, or contrary to positive values.
- The illustrations must be evidence-based. Imaginary or fictitious images should be clearly explained.
- 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.
- 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 on the use of these images.

### 3.4 Language

- Written language should be used. The language used in the textbooks should be commensurate with the level of language proficiency of students, and the wordings should be concise and easy to understand.

- Chinese Pinyin should be adopted for Chinese names and places for English textbooks. (For exceptional cases, please refer to 《關於改用中文拼音方案拼寫中國人名地名作為羅馬字母拼寫法的實施說明》).
- For English textbooks, it is inappropriate to mark the Chinese translation of the glossary in parenthesis. The Chinese translation should be placed in the glossary at the end of each chapter or in the footnote on the same page. Where appropriate, pronunciation of the glossary could be provided to facilitate student learning.

### 3.5 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.
- Through e-learning, different sources of information are readily available, which provide students with a diversity of views and perspectives on the issues enquired. These diverse information can complement each other and triangulate and verify the authenticity, accuracy, completeness, adequacy or timeliness. Therefore, any piece of information should be regarded as one of the many perspectives to understand and analyse a certain issue but not the sole or only perspective.
- e-Textbooks should provide non-textual materials such as photographs, audio recording, videos, animation and posters, etc. to capitalise on the advantages of e-learning.
- Excessive reference materials should not be provided, so as not to increase the burden on students.
- Interactive assessment tasks could be included in the e-textbook to facilitate assessment for learning.

### 3.6 Learning Elements/Skills Not Replaceable by Digital Means

- Life-wide learning activities conducted for students outside classroom, for example, field trips and visits, should not be completely replaced by e-learning modes.

### 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 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 relevant to the learning needs of students. . 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 in developing maps of China.  
([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 e-features, language, punctuation, information, illustration, pagination, etc., is completed and the e-textbooks are error-free before submitting them for review.
- 4.6 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.

- 4.7 Publishers should clear all copyright issues of the e-textbooks as appropriate.
- 4.8 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.
- 4.9 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 Report for the previously submitted version should be duly followed before submission.

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