

e-Textbook Writing Guidelines for Economics (Secondary 4 – 6)

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 Economics, etc. in a bid to ensure that the e-textbooks are written in accordance with the specific requirements of the cartoon 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 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 and updated in 2025. 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 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)*
- *Economics Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4 – 6) (2007) (updated as at November 2015)*

2. Curriculum Aims and Objectives

2.1 Curriculum Aims

- The aims of the Economics curriculum are to enable students to:
 - (a) develop an interest in exploring human behaviour and social issues through an economic perspective;
 - (b) understand the world in which they live through mastery of basic economic knowledge;
 - (c) enhance their general intellectual capacity for life-long learning, through developing their capacities in economic analysis, so that they possess the skills necessary for reasoning about issues and making rational choices; and
 - (d) participate as informed and responsible citizens in the decision-making processes of a modern democratic society.

2.2 Curriculum Objectives

- Knowledge and Understanding
 - (a) economic terminology and concepts, as well as elementary economic theories;
 - (b) basic economic problems faced by every individual and society, and alternative approaches to tackling these problems;
 - (c) the considerations and forces underlying the economic decisions that need to be taken by individuals, firms, institutions and governments;
 - (d) the interactions of different economic sectors; and
 - (e) the Hong Kong economy and its relationship with the economies of other parts of the nation and the world.

- Skills
 - (a) interpret economic information presented in verbal, numerical or graphical form;

- (b) apply their economic knowledge to a variety of problems and issues in a range of economic contexts;
 - (c) analyse information through the use of economic concepts and theories;
 - (d) evaluate information, arguments, proposals and policies from different economic perspectives and make informed judgements; and
 - (e) communicate economic ideas and informed judgements, in a clear, logical and appropriate form.
- Values and Attitudes
 - (a) participate as informed persons in the discussion of economic issues and decision-making; and
 - (b) become active and responsible citizens and contribute to the well-being of the local community, the nation and the world.

2.3 The e-textbook should be written in line with the aims and objectives of the SS Economics curriculum and should help users to adopt a wide range of learning and teaching strategies, such as direct instruction, enquiry and co-construction of knowledge. Moreover, it should facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, development of skills and formation of proper values and attitudes in students.

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 *Economics Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4 – 6)* (2007) (updated as at November 2015) and should realise the related learning elements recommended in the *Curriculum Framework of National Security Education in Hong Kong* (2021).
- The content should cover all topics in the Compulsory Part and Elective Part in the curriculum.
- The content should be complete, up-to-date, objective and impartial. Information and data must be accurate and relevant to the content. The sources of the data and information (and the dates of retrieving it, if applicable) should also be stated clearly for users' reference.
- Concepts and theories must be correct and precise. They should be discussed and elaborated to the appropriate level, and linked with students' experience as far as possible. The examples and cases chosen should be interesting, authentic, and should be familiar and comprehensible to students.

- Illustrations such as graphs, tables and pictures must be accurate, appropriate and suitably annotated to stimulate and facilitate learning.
- To encourage and facilitate students to read larger amounts of materials on their own, selected further reading lists could be included to let students read extensively. An index could also be included to make easy reference.

3.2 Learning and Teaching

- Learning tasks, activities and exercises should be designed for a variety of learning situations – recapitulation, decision-making, problem-solving, identifying economic problem(s) from social phenomena / issues, applying economic concepts and theories to analyse economic issues, evaluating arguments, proposals and policies from different perspectives and making informed judgments, etc.
- Formats and foci of learning tasks and assessments should be diversified. The knowledge constructed, integrated use of skills and proper values and attitudes developed and / or assessed through these tasks and exercises should be in line with the curriculum aims and objectives, and should be extended beyond the requirements of public examination.
- Learning tasks and exercises of different levels of difficulty should be provided to cater for learner diversity. Appropriate support should also be provided to guide students to master the concepts and knowledge.
- Classroom and students' activities such as discussion, debate, role-play, simulation game, project work, survey, case study, information collection, essay writing, etc. could also be included as part of the exercises.
- 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 students in terms of their prior knowledge, and deviate from the curriculum objectives.
- There should be tasks designed for students to help them prepare for learning a topic, such as pre-reading of an article or information / data collection related to certain economic issues. Tasks should also be suggested for students' independent learning and further enquiry.
- There should also be tasks and guidelines to help students progressively develop skills of communicating economic ideas in verbal, numerical and graphical forms and making informed judgements or decisions in a clear, logical and appropriate way.
- Stimulus materials in the form of newspaper cuttings, extracts from articles, cartoons, flow-charts, photos, diagrams, statistical tables or graphs, etc. should be provided so that students can have some concrete materials to base on as well as motivation for learning.

3.3 Structure and Organisation

- The organisation of content should take students' prior knowledge and readiness into consideration. The content sequence should be appropriate. New concepts should be built on old ones and should be introduced when and where appropriate.

3.4 Language

- The language used should be precise, fluent, accurate and easy to understand. The level of language complexity used should match with the cognitive development and language ability of the students.
- For e-textbooks in English, it is undesirable for texts to include translation of terms in parentheses. This practice should be avoided as far as possible and the terms should be restricted to the “glossary section” in the e-textbooks or at the footer of the respective page.
- Pinyin should be adopted for Chinese names and places.
- [*An English-Chinese Glossary of Terms Commonly Used in the Teaching of Economics in Secondary Schools*](#) (2020) developed by the EDB should be referred to where applicable. Where appropriate, guidance on pronunciation 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.
- Provision of video clips or animations to help students understand abstract economic concepts.
- Provision of non-textual resources such as photographs, audio records, video records and posters to cater for the diversity among students, such as the differences in learning styles, and language proficiency, etc.
- Interactive assessment tasks could be included in e-textbook to facilitate assessment for learning.

3.6 Learning Elements / Skills Not Replaceable by Digital Means

- Experiential learning beyond classroom, such as running a small business in school and attending talks on government budget, that provide opportunities for students to learn and apply economic concepts in authentic contexts.

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 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)
- 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 eTextbook Review Reports for the previously submitted version should be duly followed before submission.

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