

## **e-Textbook Writing Guidelines for Geography (Secondary 4 – 6)**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Senior Secondary (SS) Geography curriculum is in line with the local education reform and the international trend of geographical education which emphasise the application of knowledge into life situations, the development of subject-specific and generic skills as well as the cultivation of an environmental ethic and global perspective. The latest updated SS Geography curriculum has been implemented at S4 in September 2019, S5 in September 2020 and S6 in September 2021 progressively. The followings are some guidelines to publishers so that the writing of Geography e-textbooks will be geared to 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 of values education in the 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](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* 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](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 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)
  - *Geography Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4-6)* (2007) (with updates in July 2022)

## **2. Curriculum Aims and Objectives**

The e-textbooks should be written in line with the aims and objectives of the SS Geography curriculum. They should facilitate the adoption of issue-based approach in the learning and teaching of Geography, and enhance skills development and values formation in students.

## **3. Guiding Principles**

### **3.1 Content Selection and Organisation**

- The writing of the e-textbooks should be in line with the curriculum aims and objectives stated in the *Geography Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4 – 6)* (2007) (with updates in July 2022), and should realise the related learning elements recommended in the *Curriculum Framework of National Security Education in Hong Kong* (2021) (<https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/kla/pshe/national-security-education/index.html>).
- Selection and organisation of content should be done with a view to assisting students to develop a comprehensive conceptual framework of the geographical issues and problems to be studied, and to understand geographical phenomena and features from a macro perspective. Minor details of specific features and processes should be kept to a minimum.
- The e-textbook should help students study the remote, non-observable environment by relating their learning to the students' immediate living environment. One possible way of achieving this is to supplement the study of the case studies of distant areas with relevant local examples.

### **3.2 Learning Activities**

- The overall design of learning activities should aim at catering for students' learning diversity. e-Textbooks should include a wide range of

learning activities to facilitate teachers to adopt different learning and teaching strategies to suit the ability, need and interest of their students.

- Learning tasks, activities and exercises should be designed for a variety of learning situations — recapitulation, decision-making, problem-solving, identifying key issues, interpretation of local topographic maps and simplified map extracts, statistical maps and diagrams, pictures and photographs, field observation, etc.
- 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.
- Map interpretation and field study are the core skills of Geography. Appropriate map interpretation exercises and field study tasks **MUST** be integrated and included in every unit / chapter / topic of the e-textbook.
- 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, some food for thought, as well as motivation for attempting any task of learning.
- Various types of data-response exercises should be included to help students develop the abilities of interpretation and analysis of information.
- Classroom and students' activities such as discussion, debates, role-playing, simulation games, project work, surveys, case studies, information collecting, etc. could also be included as part of the exercises.
- Learning activities should be challenging enough in view of students' ability. Activities that require student to copy mechanically from the text or that focus largely on students' reading comprehension ability should be avoided.
- In addition to assisting students to construct a solid knowledge foundation and develop skills, learning activities should cultivate students' proper values and attitudes and help them to become informed and responsible citizens of society, our country and the world.

### 3.3 Language and Presentation

- Pinyin should be adopted for Chinese names and places.
- It is undesirable to include Chinese terms in-parenthesis for books in English. This practice should be avoided as far as possible and the terms should be restricted to the “glossary section” at the end of each chapter or at the footer of the respective page. Where appropriate, guidance on pronunciation could be provided to facilitate student learning.
- [\*An English-Chinese Glossary of Terms Commonly Used in the Teaching\*](#)

[of Geography in Secondary Schools](#) updated by the Education Bureau in 2022 should be referred to where applicable.

### 3.4 Illustration

- Legends and scales (preferably linear scales) must be included and accurately drawn for all maps.
- All statistical figures, wherever appropriate, should indicate the years they represent.

### 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 virtual field trips, virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) resources to inaccessible field sites, such as overseas field sites and local field sites that are unsafe to students.
- Provision of video clips / animations to explain abstract geographical concepts and processes.
- Provision of simplified, easy-to-use GIS programs for students to construct, overlay and interpret maps and other spatial data.
- Interactive assessment tasks could be included in e-textbook to facilitate assessment for learning.

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

- Outdoor geographical enquiry activities, in particular fieldwork and visits, that are to be conducted by students in person, should not be completely replaced by digital means.
- Drawing of sketch maps, cross-sections, transects, climatic graphs and other subject-specific diagrams should not be replaced by digital means.

### 3.7 Technical and Functional Requirements

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

## 4. Others

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- 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](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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