

22 February 2019

Education Bureau Circular No. 5/2019

**Enhancement Measures for
Turning Senior Secondary Curriculum Support Grant and
Career and Life Planning Grant into Regular Teaching Posts**

Note: This circular should be read by –

- (a) Supervisors/heads of all aided schools (including special schools), government schools, caput schools and schools under Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) with senior secondary classes – for action

- (b) Heads of sections – for information

Summary

This circular announces the enhancement measures and long-term arrangements for turning the Senior Secondary Curriculum Support Grant (SSCSG) and the Career and Life Planning Grant (CLPG) into regular teaching posts. It should be read in conjunction with Education Bureau Circulars No. 9/2012 and No. 6/2014. This circular supersedes Education Bureau Circular Memorandum No. 36/2016.

Background

2. To tie in with the implementation of the Senior Secondary Curriculum under the New Academic Structure (NAS), the Education Bureau (EDB) has, since the 2008/09 school year, provided each secondary school with the SSCSG equivalent to the mid-point salary of 0.1 Graduate Master/Mistress (GM) per senior secondary class under NAS. Schools may use the grant flexibly for employing teachers or teaching assistants, and procuring services or learning and teaching materials to facilitate the implementation of the Senior Secondary Curriculum under NAS.

3. Starting from the 2014/15 school year, the EDB has also provided each public sector school operating senior secondary classes with a recurrent CLPG¹ equivalent to the mid-point salary of a GM. Schools should use the grant for enhancing the capacity of their dedicated teaching teams, so as to further expand and enrich their existing career guidance service, and strengthen the co-ordination of life planning education and the collaboration with the business sector, thereby helping students understand their capabilities, career/academic aspirations and working conditions of different trades, develop a positive attitude towards work and learning, set personal goals earlier, and integrate career/academic aspirations with whole-person development and lifelong learning.

4. To provide more stable teacher manpower for schools to enhance the implementation of the Senior Secondary Curriculum, and strengthen life planning education and related guidance services, the EDB has allowed schools to turn the SSCSG and/or CLPG into regular teaching posts since the 2016/17 school year. A review was conducted after this policy had been implemented for two school years. The EDB examined schools' implementation of the policy through questionnaire surveys and communication with the sector. Findings reveal that the policy of turning the two grants into regular teaching posts is well received among schools. It is generally agreed that these measures help provide a more stable teaching force for schools, which in turn enables schools to enhance the implementation of the Senior Secondary Curriculum, and strengthen the development of life planning education and related guidance services.

Enhancement Measures

5. After studying the findings of the review and taking heed of the views of the sector, the EDB has decided to further enhance the measures from the 2019/20 school year as follows:

- (i) starting from the 2019/20 school year, the regular teaching posts converted from the two grants will be counted towards the calculation of promotion post entitlement in order to strengthen the middle management manpower for taking relevant education initiatives forward; and
- (ii) the two grants are to be converted into regular teaching posts across the board.

6. For the across-the-board conversion of the two grants into regular teaching posts, considering that schools that currently opt for retention of grants may already

¹ In the 2018/19 school year, the provision of CLPG is at the level of \$609,900.

have plans for the use of such grants, the EDB will provide a three-year transitional period (i.e. from the 2019/20 school year to the 2021/22 school year) for schools to decide to convert the two grants into regular teaching posts before the 2022/23 school year in light of their own circumstances, so that schools will have sufficient time to make long-term plans and suitably deploy financial and human resources.

7. The implementation of the aforesaid enhancement measures is subject to the passage of the Appropriation Bill 2019 by the Legislative Council.

Conversion and Calculation Method

8. The number of regular teaching posts converted from SSCSG is calculated according to the number of senior secondary classes (S4 to S6) approved every school year, i.e. 0.1 GM for each of these classes. If there is any change in the number of senior secondary classes approved in a certain school year, the number of GM post(s) will be adjusted accordingly. For CLPG, one GM will be provided if schools turn the grant into a regular teaching post. The provision of GM post will not be adjusted even if there is a change in the number of senior secondary classes approved. However, the regular teaching post converted from CLPG will be deleted if a school ceases to operate senior secondary classes. The regular teaching posts converted from both grants are additional teachers provided under specific improvement programmes, and they are named ‘Additional Graduate Teacher for Supporting the Senior Secondary Curriculum’ and ‘Additional Graduate Teacher for Supporting Career and Life Planning’ respectively.

9. As mentioned in paragraph 5 above, starting from the 2019/20 school year, the regular teaching posts converted from the two grants will be counted towards the calculation of promotion post entitlement. These newly created posts will be added to the Basic Provision² and any other additional teaching posts that can be counted towards the calculation of promotion post entitlement to arrive at the total number of promotion posts, and the resultant fractional posts will be treated in the same way as

² Basic Provision eligible for counting towards the calculation of promotion post entitlement refers to the teaching posts provided under the following revised teacher-to-class (T/C) ratios for aided secondary schools with effect from the 2012/13 school year:

- (a) 1.7 teachers per junior secondary class (S1 to S3)
- (b) 2.0 teachers per senior secondary class (S4 to S6)

Starting from the 2022/23 school year, all schools must convert the SSCSG into regular teaching posts, which will be counted towards the calculation of promotion post entitlement. In other words, from that school year onwards, the T/C ratio for senior secondary classes will be increased by 0.1 across the board.

that under the existing practice.

10. In mid or late March every year, the EDB will issue a circular memorandum to aided secondary schools, inviting applications for grants for operating classes and appointment of teaching staff for the following school year. During the transitional period, schools are still required to indicate whether they would opt for conversion of grants in the following school year by completing the form attached to the circular memorandum (the relevant form for special schools is attached to the proposal letter on class organisation/and boarding capacity issued in April or May every year) and submit the completed form to the EDB before the specified date. For caput schools, the EDB will collect their option of turning the two grants separately.

11. As before, if schools decide to turn the grants into regular teaching posts after consulting teachers and obtaining approval from the School Management Committee (SMC) or Incorporated Management Committee (IMC), they must convert the whole grant instead of a portion of it. Also, a school's decision to turn the grants into regular teaching posts, once confirmed³, is irrevocable lest the stability of the teaching force be affected.

Accounting and Related Arrangements

12. For schools that opt to retain the SSCSG and/or the CLPG during the transitional period, the ambit of the grants, schools' accountability, accounting requirements, the cap on the unspent balance⁴ and other arrangements are the same as those under the current practice. For details, please refer to Education Bureau Circulars No. 9/2012 and No. 6/2014.

13. If there is unspent balance of the grants after the schools have opted to turn the SSCSG and/or the CLPG into regular teaching posts in a certain school year within the transitional period, schools may continue to deploy the balance up to 31 August of that school year⁵. After that date, the EDB will claw back any unspent balance for

³ In the event that schools find it necessary to change the original decision after submitting the form due to special circumstances, they should inform the respective Senior School Development Officers in writing not later than 30 June before the school year in which the conversion of grants is to take effect.

⁴ The SSCSG surplus that schools are allowed to retain is capped at the equivalent of the grant allocated for that year. As for CLPG, schools are allowed to retain the unspent balance of the grant up to 20% of the total provision disbursed for that year. The cap is calculated on the basis of school year for aided and caput schools.

⁵ If a school opts to turn the grants into regular teaching posts in the 2022/23 school year, it can still deploy the unspent balance up to 31 August 2023.

aided secondary schools (including special schools with senior secondary classes) and caput schools.

14. For caput schools that opt to turn the grants into regular teaching posts, the relevant expenditure on these regular posts⁶ will be included in the calculation of Fee Subsidy for schools. For schools under the DSS, the expenses in relation to the grants and the regular teaching posts provided under this initiative will continue to be calculated in the DSS unit subsidy rate.

Enquiry

15. Implementation details on the conversion of grants into regular teaching posts are provided in the Frequently Asked Questions and Answers on the ‘Staff Entitlement Matters of Aided Schools’ page of the EDB website (*Home > School Administration and Management > Administration > About School Staff > Staff Entitlement Matters of Aided Schools*). For further enquiries, please contact the respective Senior School Development Officers.

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⁶ Including expenditure on relevant promotion posts, if any.