

11 November 2021

Education Bureau Circular No. 18/2021

Requirement for Newly-appointed Teachers in Public Sector Schools to Pass the Basic Law Test

【Note: This circular should be read by

- (a) Supervisors and heads of all government schools, aided schools (including special schools) and caput schools – for action; and
- (b) Supervisors and heads of schools not included in (a) and heads of sections – for information】

Summary

This circular informs all public sector schools¹ of the requirement for newly-appointed teachers to pass the Basic Law Test (BLT) starting from the 2022/23 school year and the relevant details.

Background

2. The words and deeds of teachers have a far-reaching impact on students' growth. Teachers should be committed to nurturing students into quality citizens with a sense of social responsibility and national identity, an affection for Hong Kong as well as an international perspective. In this regard, teachers should have a correct understanding of the Basic Law in order to enlighten students and help them correctly understand the constitutional status of Hong Kong and develop positive attitudes towards the Basic Law and "One Country, Two Systems".

3. Currently, teachers appointed on civil service terms in government schools

¹ For government schools, the requirement and relevant arrangements set out in this circular apply to newly-appointed monthly-paid temporary teachers. Teachers appointed on civil service terms will continue to be governed by the relevant requirements of the Civil Service Bureau.

are required to obtain a pass in the BLT conducted by the Civil Service Bureau (CSB) in order to be considered for appointment. For details of the BLT, please visit the CSB website at <https://www.csb.gov.hk/english/recruit/basiclaw/1372.html>. As announced in the 2021 Policy Address, starting from the 2022/23 school year, newly-appointed teachers in public sector schools are required to pass the BLT in order to be considered for appointment.

Details

4. Starting from the 2022/23 school year, newly-appointed regular teachers (including newly-joined teachers, teachers changing schools, and teachers switching to a regular teaching post (remunerated with Salaries Grant) from a teaching post outside the approved establishment (remunerated with cash grant)) and monthly-paid temporary teachers (including monthly-paid non-civil service contract teachers in government schools) in all public sector schools are required to pass the BLT in order to be considered for appointment. The requirement applies to all ranks of the teacher grade (including principals). At the current stage, the requirement is temporarily not applicable to daily-rated supply teachers, teachers employed under the Native-speaking English Teacher Scheme and teachers who are remunerated with cash grants. The Education Bureau (EDB) will consider progressively extending the relevant requirement to other schools (such as schools joining the Direct Subsidy Scheme, kindergartens joining the kindergarten education scheme, etc.) and other teachers.

5. To tie in with the above requirement, the EDB will conduct two rounds of BLT in January and February 2022 respectively for the above teachers on a pilot basis. **The relevant test results are only applicable to the newly-appointed teachers in the 2022/23 school year**². For the content and format of the BLT, the EDB would draw reference to the arrangements of the BLT conducted by the CSB. Candidates have to answer 15 multiple-choice questions within 20 minutes. Those who get at least 8 out of 15 questions correct (i.e. attaining a score at or above 53 out of the full mark of 100) will be deemed to have a pass result. Teachers who have sat for a BLT (Degree/Professional Grades) in a civil service recruitment exercise

² If the CSB updates the BLT and/or relevant test for civil service recruitment, the EDB will draw reference to the experience and views of the CSB upon the launch of the updated test, and draw up the arrangements for teachers in and after the 2023/24 school year.

conducted by the CSB³ and attained a score at or above 53 out of the full mark of 100 (i.e. getting at least 8 out of 15 questions correct) will be deemed to have met the relevant requirement.

6. The first round of BLT organised by the EDB is scheduled for 8 January 2022. Persons interested in taking the test may apply from 15 November 2021 (9 a.m.) to 26 November 2021 (5 p.m.) through the online application system on the EDB webpage (<http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/basiclawtest>). For details and application procedures of the BLT, please visit the above



EDB webpage. Places for the test are limited. Applicants will be arranged to sit for the test on a first-come-first-served basis. The date of the second round BLT will be announced in due course. The EDB will draw on the experience gained from the pilot test and explore the mode to be adopted in future (such as considering commissioning an assessment service provider to conduct the BLT on a self-financing basis) with a view to providing more convenient and efficient test services.

7. Prior to appointing regular teachers and monthly-paid temporary teachers in the 2022/23 school year, public sector schools should verify whether the candidates have passed the BLT, fill in the related information in the appointment forms/documents (such as Appointment Forms of Teaching Staff in Aided Schools applicable to aided schools) and submit them together with copies of the BLT results to the respective sections of the EDB⁴ in accordance with the existing procedures. Schools shall refund any overpayment of salaries to the EDB if they fail to provide copies of the relevant BLT results or the appointments concerned fail to meet the above requirement.

Related Amendments to the Codes of Aid

8. Relevant provisions in the Code of Aid for Primary Schools, Code of Aid for Secondary Schools, Code of Aid for Special Schools, Code of Aid for Aided

³ Individual government departments may arrange the BLT in their civil service recruitment exercise (degree/professional grades). The relevant results will also be considered.

⁴ Aided schools should submit the relevant appointment forms/documents with copies of the BLT results to their respective District School Development Section and Funds Section; caput schools, their respective District School Development Section; and government schools, the Government Schools Section.

Schools, and Compendium to Code of Aid for Aided Schools will be updated accordingly.

Enquiries

9. Schools should make the above arrangements known to the entire teaching staff and remind teachers seeking transfer to sit for the BLT for preparation. For enquiries about the BLT organised by the EDB, please contact the Teacher Professional Development Special Duty Team of the Professional Development and Training Division at 2892 5709. For enquiries about appointment matters of schools, please contact the respective Senior School Development Officers.

Ms W P LEE
for Secretary for Education