

Professional Development Incentive Grant Scheme for Language Teachers

Notes to Applicants (revised on 13 July 2017)

A. Objective

The Professional Development Incentive Grant Scheme for Language Teachers (the Scheme) aims to encourage serving English and Chinese language teachers (that is, those who joined the teaching profession before 2004/05 school year) to enhance their subject knowledge and pedagogy in the language that they teach.

B. Allocation of Grant

Each applicant may receive 50% of the tuition fee¹ of the approved programme of study, up to a maximum of \$62,500², upon its successful completion.

C. Eligibility Criteria

1. Applicant should fulfill the following requirements-

- (i) Hong Kong resident with the right of abode, or the right to land or to remain in Hong Kong without restriction, i.e. an “A”, “R”, “U” or “***” code should appear on the Hong Kong Identity Card; and
- (ii) joined the teaching profession and taught at the primary or secondary level before the 2004/05 school year; and
- (iii) teaches Chinese or English Language subject(s)³ in local government, aided, Caput, Direct Subsidy Scheme, Private Independent School Scheme or private day school offering formal local curriculum at secondary and primary levels at the time of application; and
- (iv) has no break of service⁴ between the commencement of 2004/05 school year and the time of application.

¹ “Tuition fee” excludes any administration charges, cost of textbooks and examination fees, etc.

² The Standing Committee on Language Education and Research (SCOLAR) decided in June 2017 on the upward adjustment of the maximum subsidy of the Scheme from \$50,000 to \$62,500 per eligible teacher with effect from **1 September 2017**. Please note that the reimbursement conditions remain unchanged. Retrospective arrangements will only be **applicable to** those applicants completing the relevant programmes of studies from **January to August 2017**. Arrangements will **NOT** be made to top up the subsidy for the programmes of studies completed **on or before 31 December 2016**.

³ Any teacher (including regular or temporary post; full-time or part-time teacher) teaching language subjects during normal school hours or after school may apply. Teachers teaching only the Putonghua, Chinese Literature or English Literature are not eligible to apply.

⁴ “Break of service” refers to leaving the teaching post at a primary or secondary school in Hong Kong for more than 45 days. It has further been extended to one calendar year from 2006/07 school year onwards.

2. Two special groups of full-time students may also apply-
 - (i) Teacher with non-relevant degree being admitted to local full-time Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) / Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PCEd) programmes and majored in relevant language subject in 2003/04 academic year.
 - (ii) Local full-time Bachelor of Education (BEd) student who was in the third or fourth year of study and minored in Chinese or English Language in 2003/04 academic year.

3. The following teachers are NOT eligible to apply-
 - (i) New language teachers who join the teaching profession in or after the 2004/05 school year, except the two special groups of students.
 - (ii) Daily-paid supply teachers.
 - (iii) Teachers engaged under the Native-speaking English Teacher (NET) Scheme in primary and secondary schools.
 - (iv) Teachers of English Schools Foundation or international schools.
 - (v) Teachers teaching non-local curriculum in Private Independent Schools.

4. Teachers who have received grants from “The Incentive Grant Scheme for English Teachers” (the IGS) are also eligible to apply, subject to all the requirements of the Scheme. The aggregate total of the grants received under the two schemes should not exceed \$62,500 per applicant.

5. Teachers may apply to the Scheme for pursuing more than one programme of study, subject to the requirements of the Scheme. The aggregate total of grants received should not exceed \$62,500 per applicant.

D. Eligible Programmes of Study

1. Applicant should pursue any full-time or part-time undergraduate or postgraduate study programme on subject knowledge and/or pedagogy with respect to the language subject taught.
2. “Programmes Accepted for Grants under the Professional Development Incentive Grant Scheme for Language Teachers” (Appendix I) is a list of local programmes that are eligible under the Scheme. The list is for reference only and will be updated regularly. Please refer to the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research (SCOLAR) website (www.language-education.com) for the latest information.
3. Eligibility of degree programmes outside the list of accepted programmes will be considered on a case by case basis by a Vetting Committee after its successful completion. Applicants may refer to the suggested core areas of study listed at

Appendix II before applying for these programmes. **Please note that the information is for reference only.**

4. Applicant who pursues a non-local degree programme should obtain a confirmation from the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic & Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) on its equivalence to a local degree programme before submitting the required documents to the Vetting Committee for consideration.
5. Recommended training in respect to the qualifications held:

	Qualifications Held		Training recommended by SCOLAR
	Degree (first or higher)	Teacher Training	
(a)	Relevant Major	Relevant Major	• No additional training required
(b)	Relevant Major	Non-relevant Major	• Postgraduate Diploma / Certificate in Education (PGDE / PCEd) in relevant language subject
(c)	Relevant Major	No	
(d)	Non-relevant Major	Relevant Major	• Postgraduate programme in subject knowledge (PGSK) or • Relevant language major degree
(e)	Non-relevant Major	Non-relevant Major	• PGSK or relevant language major degree; and • PGDE / PCEd in relevant language subject
(f)	Non-relevant Major	No	
(g)	No	Relevant Major	• Bachelor of Education (BEd) in relevant language subject; or • Relevant language major degree
(h)	No	Non-relevant Major	• BEd in the relevant language subject; or • Relevant language major degree and PGDE / PCEd in relevant language subject
(i)	No	No	

- (i) Applicant could refer to the “Programmes Accepted for Grants under the Professional Development Incentive Grant Scheme for Language Teachers” to determine if his/her degree is recognised as language major programme.
- (ii) As for teacher training qualifications, all BEd, PGDE and PCEd programmes in relevant language subject offered by local tertiary institutions are recognised as language major teacher training programmes.
- (iii) Applicant may seek advice from the Professional Development and Training Division of the EDB if in doubt. (Tel: 2892 5783 Fax: 2123 1229).

E. Application for the Earmarking of Grant

1. Applications will be processed on a first-come-first-served basis.
2. Under normal circumstances, the Scheme will notify the applicant of the progress within 30 working days after receiving the application. During the peak season (July to October), the time taken will be about 2 months.
3. Applicant should forward the application within 6 months from the commencement of the programme, no matter whether the programmes pursued are / are not on the accepted list. Late application will not be processed.
4. Degree programme not on the accepted list-
 - (i) The Scheme will record the application but earmarking of grant will NOT be approved until the programme is recognised as meeting SCOLAR requirements by the Vetting Committee and funds is available at that time.
 - (ii) If the programme is included in the accepted list while the applicant is pursuing it, he/she has to apply for the earmarking of grant, which is subject to the availability of funds at that time.

F. Application for the Release of Grant

1. Grant will be released to an applicant upon his/her successful completion of the approved programme of study.
2. Under normal circumstances, the Scheme will notify the applicant of the result / progress within 30 working days after receiving the required documents. During the peak season (July to October), the time taken will be about 2 months.
3. Programme on the accepted list-
 - (i) Applicant should forward the following documents within 6 months from the programme completion date:
 - Original official transcript* / certified true copy (with original institution's official chop) indicating the successful completion of the approved programme (with the relevant major/specialized area of study, if applicable), school years and semesters, etc.; and
 - Original official receipts for tuition fees paid* / certified true copy (with original institution's official chop) with detailed breakdown.

* The documents will be returned after processing.
4. Degree programme not on the accepted list-
 - (i) Applicant should apply in writing to the Professional Development and

Training (PDT) Division of EDB for an assessment after the successful completion of the programme. The Vetting Committee will consider whether the programme is equivalent to a language major degree. The assessment will normally be conducted in March, July and November each year.

- (ii) If the programme pursued is a non-local one, the applicant should obtain the written confirmation from the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic & Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) on its equivalence to a local degree programme before submitting the required documents to the Vetting Committee for consideration.
- (iii) Application for the earmarking and release of grants will be approved, subject to the recognition of the programme as equivalent to a language major degree programme and availability of funds at that time.
- (iv) Applicant should forward the following documents within 6 months from the programme completion date:
 - Original official transcript* / certified true copy (with original institution's official chop) indicating the successful completion of the approved programme of study (with the relevant major/specialized area of study, if applicable), school years and semesters, etc.; and
 - Original official receipts for tuition fees paid* / certified true copy (with original institution's official chop) with detailed breakdown
 - Original written confirmation* from EDB stating that the degree programme pursued is recognised as meeting the SCOLAR requirements.

* The documents will be returned after processing.

- 5. Grants will be released in Hong Kong dollars. Where a non-local programme of study is involved, the amount of grant released will depend on the exchange rate at the time of reimbursement.

G. Matters for Attention.

- 1. Applicant should inform the Scheme in writing of any change of information provided in the application form.
- 2. If an applicant needs to alter the programme, he/she should submit a fresh application. The processing of the new application will be subject to the requirements of the Scheme and the availability of funds at that time.

H. Application Form

Application forms can be downloaded from: www.language-education.com. The completed application form could be sent by post or by hand to:

Rm 1702, Skyline Tower, 39 Wang Kwong Road, Kowloon Bay, Kowloon.

I. Enquiries

Language Education and SCOLAR Section

Tel. no.: 3527 0180

Fax no.: 3150 8018

Email: pcfs@edb.gov.hk

Professional Development and Training Division (PDT)

Tel no.: 2892 5783

Fax no.: 2123 1229

Email: ltq@edb.gov.hk

Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic & Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ)

Tel. no.: 3658 0000

Fax no.: 2845 9910

Email: info@hkcaavq.edu.hk

J. Personal Data Statements

1. Any personal data supplied in the application form and other supplementary information will be used by the Scheme or its authorized agents for activities related to -
 - (i) the processing and authentication of applications under the Scheme;
 - (ii) the processing of payment of grant; and/or
 - (iii) statistics and research.
2. The Scheme will disclose the personal data of an applicant to relevant parties for the purpose of the above-mentioned activities, where all the parties have given their consent to such disclosure, and where such disclosure is authorized or required by law.

K. Taxability of the Grant Reimbursed

According to the guidelines of the Inland Revenue Department, the grant reimbursed to the applicants pursuing programmes comprising “Part-time” mode of study is taxable. If the conditions prescribed under Section 12(6) of the Inland

Revenue Ordinance are fulfilled, applicants may claim for the deduction of the tuition fees paid as Self-education Expense, subject to an upper limit of \$100,000 for the years of assessment from 2017/2018 onwards. For details, please visit the website of GovHK:

<https://www.gov.hk/en/residents/taxes/salaries/allowances/deductions/selfeducation.htm>