

Diversity Learning Grant (DLG)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

General

1. What are the aim and ambit of DLG?

- *The aim of DLG is to encourage schools to offer a diversified curriculum to their students. Schools may use the grant to cater for the diverse needs of their students by offering DLG-supported programmes, i.e. Applied Learning (ApL) courses, adapted ApL courses, Other Programmes (OP) (including network programmes for Senior Secondary (SS) subjects and education programmes for gifted students) and Other Languages (OL) as their elective subjects.*
- *Details of the ambit of DLG can be found in the Education Bureau (EDB) Circular Memorandum (CM) No.146/2008.*
- *Details of application for DLG can be found as follows:-*
 - *Applied Learning courses - EDB CM No. 174/2014, EDB CM No.165/2015 and EDB CM No. 22/2016*
 - *Adapted Applied Learning courses – EDB CM No. 2/2015, EDB CM No.2/2016 and EDB CM No. 34/2016*
 - *Other Languages and Other Programmes – EDB CM No.69/2014, EDB CM No.60/2015 and EDB CM No. 69/2016*

2. What are the grant rates of the different categories of DLG?

- *For ApL courses: Full subsidy will be provided for students to take ApL courses in the 2016/17 school year (i.e. Secondary 6 of the 2015-17 cohort and Secondary 5 of the 2016-18 cohort) and beyond. The maximum number of enrolments per school per cohort entitled to DLG (i.e. the cap of 120 enrolments) will be removed. Each eligible student is entitled to funding for a maximum of TWO ApL courses. For students taking FOUR elective subjects with an ApL course as one of them, the ApL course will be regarded as the fourth elective subject and will NOT be subsidised by DLG. For details, please refer to the EDB CM No. 22/2016.*
- *For adapted ApL courses: Same as ApL courses, full subsidy will be provided for students to take adapted ApL courses in the 2016/17 school year (i.e. Secondary 6 of the 2015-17 cohort and Secondary 5 of the 2016-18 cohort) and beyond. The maximum number of enrolments per school per cohort entitled to DLG (i.e. the cap of 30 enrolments) will be removed. Each eligible student is entitled to funding for a maximum of TWO adapted ApL courses. For students taking FOUR elective subjects with an adapted ApL course as one of them, the adapted ApL course will be regarded as the fourth elective subject and will NOT be subsidised by DLG. For details, please refer to the EDB CM No. 34/2016.*

- *For Other Languages, starting from the 2016/17 school year, the subsidy rate of DLG-OL will be revised to \$3,900 per student per year. For details, please refer to the EDB CM No. 69/2016.*
- *For Other Programmes (i.e. network programmes for SS subjects and education programmes for gifted students), starting from the 2016/17 school year, the subsidy rate of DLG-OP will be revised as follows:*
 - *Basic rate: \$7,000 per SS class per year for all school applicants*
 - *Incentive funding: Additional incentive funding of \$800 per SS class per year for schools with a utilisation rate of DLG-OP of 80% or above, based on the schools' annual accounts of the most recent year (In sum, \$7,800 per SS class per year)*
 - *For details, please refer to the EDB CM No. 69/2016*

3. Will special schools benefit from DLG?

- *Yes. Special schools can apply for DLG for ApL, adapted ApL, Other Programmes and Other Languages according to the needs of the schools.*
- *DLG for senior secondary students with special educational needs (non-ID) studying in ordinary schools is merged with the Learning Support Grant.*

4. Are the different categories of DLG transferable?

- *No. Different categories of DLG should be kept in separate ledger accounts.*

5. Can schools charge students fees for taking DLG-supported programmes?

- *Taking into consideration the provision of 12 years of free education, schools eligible for DLG are not allowed to charge students any fee for taking ApL courses, adapted ApL courses, Other Languages and Other Programmes (network programmes for SS subjects).*
- *Fees may be charged for some Other Programmes (gifted education programmes), including those fee-charging credit-bearing programmes / web-based courses offered by local and overseas tertiary institutions.*

6. Do schools need to submit a 3-year plan when they apply for DLG?

- *Schools are required to draw up a 3-year plan and it should be endorsed by the Incorporated Management Committee (IMC) or School Management Committee (SMC). Schools do NOT need to submit the plan to the EDB but the plan must be incorporated into the school's annual plan as an annex and upload it onto the school's homepage on or before 30 November each year.*

A. Applied Learning (ApL) (Enquiry: 3698 3186) and Adapted ApL Courses (Enquiry: 2892 6493)

7. How to top up the deficit in DLG, especially in the support on ApL / adapted ApL courses (e.g. schools need to pay the course fees for students taking FOUR elective subjects with an ApL / adapted ApL course as one of them)?

- *Schools may deploy the following resources for the payment of ApL / adapted ApL course fees:*

<i>School Type</i>	<i>Resources to be Deployed by Schools</i>
<i>Aided Schools (Including special schools with senior secondary classes)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Capacity Enhancement Grant (CEG)</i> • <i>Surplus in the General Domain of Operating Expenses Block Grant (OEBG) / Expanded OEBG</i> • <i>Substitute Teacher Grant (STG) / Teacher Relief Grant (TRG)</i> • <i>Senior Secondary Curriculum Support Grant (SSCSG)</i> • <i>Schools' own funds</i>
<i>Government Schools</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Expanded Subject and Curriculum Block Grant</i> • <i>TRG</i> • <i>SSCSG</i>
<i>Caput Schools</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>CEG</i> • <i>SSCSG</i> • <i>Fee Subsidy</i> • <i>Schools' own funds</i>
<i>Schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>CEG</i> • <i>DSS Subsidy</i> • <i>Schools' own funds</i>

- *Apart from topping up the course fee through mobilising schools' allocated resources, schools can also contribute through collaborating with course providers in the delivery of ApL / adapted ApL courses (e.g. by deployment of teachers, administrative staff, facilities, venue, etc.). This may lead to course fee reduction offered by individual course providers.*

8. Are there any remedial measures for schools in need of financial support for ApL / adapted ApL courses?

- *A 'safety net' has been put in place to assist needy schools. Under special circumstances in which schools have genuine financial difficulties in offering ApL / adapted ApL courses, schools may make applications to the EDB for extra funding. Schools' applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.*

9. If students take four elective subjects including an ApL / adapted ApL course, will they be subsidised?

- *No. For a broad and balanced senior secondary curriculum, each eligible student is entitled to funding for a maximum of TWO ApL / adapted ApL courses. For students taking FOUR elective subjects with an ApL / adapted ApL course as one of them, the ApL / adapted ApL course will be regarded as the fourth elective subject and will NOT be subsidised by DLG.*

10. Can parents pay for the course fee if students take ApL / adapted ApL as the fourth elective?
- *In accordance with the introduction of 12 years of free education, schools eligible for DLG are not allowed to charge students or their parents any fee for taking ApL / adapted ApL courses even if they are taken as the fourth elective.*
11. How many ApL / adapted ApL courses can a student take? Will all the courses be subsidised?
- *Every student can take a maximum of two ApL / adapted ApL courses as their elective subjects and they will be subsidised by DLG. However, for students taking four elective subjects with an ApL / adapted ApL course as one of them, the ApL / adapted ApL course will be regarded as the fourth elective subject and will NOT be subsidised by DLG.*
12. Will the subsidy to the students be clawed back if they withdraw from the ApL / adapted ApL courses in the second year or after a few months of study?
- *A headcount will be conducted in September yearly and DLG for that particular school year will be calculated based on the actual number of enrolments in ApL / adapted ApL courses as at the headcount date. There will not be further adjustment or claw back of DLG for that particular school year afterwards. However, any unspent DLG by the end of the senior secondary cohort will be clawed back by the EDB.*
13. If students repeat S5 after taking ApL courses for one year, can they continue the second year study of ApL courses? Will they be subsidised by DLG?
- *For students who repeat S5 at schools but have successfully completed their first year study of ApL courses, they may continue their second year study of ApL courses with the support of the schools and course providers.*
 - *Students repeating S5 who wish to continue with the second year study of ApL courses will be subsidised by DLG provided that the total number of electives (including ApL courses) taken by the students is not greater than three.*
14. For schools offering adapted ApL courses, will students be subsidised by DLG if they are approved to extend their years of study according to the objective criteria jointly set by the EDB and the special education sector after they have completed the first year of adapted ApL courses?
- *Students who are approved to extend their years of study and wish to continue with the second year of study of adapted ApL courses will be subsidised by DLG.*

B. Other Languages (OL) (Enquiry: 2892 6403)

15. How and when will DLG for Other Languages be calculated and disbursed to schools?
- *The grant will be disbursed in 2 instalments according to the actual number of students enrolled in Other Languages courses submitted through on-line application and survey.*
 - *For details of the timeline for payment, please refer to EDB CM No.69/2016.*
16. Can DLG be used for the procurement of alteration works / minor adjustment / expansion of school facilities?
- *DLG is a subsidy for encouraging schools to offer a diversified curriculum for students. It must not be used for alteration works / minor adjustment / expansion of school facilities.*
17. Can schools apply for DLG in the 2nd or 3rd year of students' senior secondary schooling (S5 or S6)?
- *Yes. In that case, the EDB will only disburse the grant for the 2nd and/or 3rd year upon successful application.*
18. Can a school use the grant to employ a Teaching Assistant to be responsible for co-ordinating DLG programmes?
- *Yes. The duties of the Teaching Assistant arising from DLG programmes must be clearly stated to justify the recruitment of the Teaching Assistant (or a portion of this post).*
19. Can a school allow students to choose an external course provider for enrolling in other language courses and school reimburses students for the tuition fees?
- *No. Schools should not allow students to enroll in external other language courses on their own, and/or reimburse students for the tuition fees.*
 - *Schools should observe the relevant guidelines related to hire outside services issued by the EDB from time to time and comply with the procurement procedures. Schools should exercise their professional judgment to choose suitable organisations to teach the other language courses.*
20. What Other Languages are supported by DLG? Are there any conditions for subsidy?
- *The six Other Languages supported by DLG are French, German, Hindi, Japanese, Spanish and Urdu. The programmes of study of these languages should follow the curriculum and examinations pitched at the Advanced Supplementary (AS) Level offered by the Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) and administered by the HKEAA. Students will only be subsidised if they register for the said exam of the relevant language.*

21. Would claw back be arranged if students eventually do not register for the OL AS Level exam under the CIE?
- *For effective use of public money, schools should ensure that students have the basic knowledge for pursuing the relevant AS Level OL curriculum and alert them that they are expected to take the relevant exam, before nominating their students to study OL courses. This will help reduce the dropouts of students. If eventually students do not register for the OL exam under the CIE, schools should inform the EDB at the earliest instance. The EDB would discuss the funding arrangements with schools on a case by case basis.*
22. Can schools offer other languages which are not one of the above six?
- *Schools should note that other languages which are not one of the above six are not subjects recommended by the Curriculum Development Council. They will not be subsidised by DLG.*
23. Can schools offer more than one other language?
- *There is no limitation on the number of other languages that a school can offer. Schools should offer other languages to suit the abilities and interests of their students while ensuring the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum.*
24. Would students taking OL as their 4th elective subject be subsidised by DLG-OL?
- *Under the SS curriculum, students are encouraged to take 2 or 3 elective subjects. The SS student programme should fully occupy the learning time of the great majority of students. It is difficult for schools to arrange lesson time for the 4th elective subject without compromising students' learning time. Only under very special circumstances that a small number of students with greater capacity and diverse interest may take a 4th elective subject and register for the examination under the HKDSE. While students are not recommended to take 4 elective subjects, they will be subsidised to study OL courses if they satisfy the conditions stated in [Q.20](#).*
25. Can schools offer Other Languages in cooperation with other organisations using DLG?
- *Schools can decide on the mode of operation for Other Languages on their own.*
26. When procuring service from external course providers, what procurement procedure should be followed?
- *The school should follow the general service procurement procedure.*
27. Will there be a minimum or maximum number of students in a class?
- *No. Schools are encouraged to make the best use of the grant for the benefit of their students as far as possible.*

28. Can schools use DLG to pay their own teachers as instructors / facilitators of DLG Programmes?

- *No. The teacher receiving extra pay will be perceived as “double-dipping”.*

C. Other Programmes (OP) (Enquiry: 2892 6403)

29. How and when will DLG for Other Programmes be calculated and disbursed to schools?

- *The grant will be disbursed in 2 instalments according to the information submitted through on-line application and survey, the approved SS class structure and the expenditure reflected from schools’ annual accounts of the most recent year.*
- *For details of the timeline for payment, please refer to EDB CM No.69/2016.*

30. What is “incentive funding”? Which schools can be disbursed this additional incentive funding of DLG-OP?

- *“Incentive funding” is provided on top of the existing subsidy rate to strengthen the support for particular schools in need. Based on the schools’ annual accounts of the most recent year, we will additionally disburse \$800 per SS class per year to encourage and support these schools in offering GE and NP.*
- *Specifically, for schools with a utilisation rate of DLG-OP of 80% or above, the grant will be calculated as \$7,800 per SS class per year (i.e. \$800 per SS class per year additionally disbursed).*
- *For details, please refer to the EDB CM No. 69/2016.*

31. Will schools be supported with DLG-OP if they offer only network programmes and no programme for gifted students?

- *Schools can offer network programmes and/or programmes for gifted students according to the needs of the schools, i.e. network programmes only, programmes for gifted students only, or both. The subsidy, irrespective of the type of programme(s) offered and the number of such programmes, remains \$7,000 per SS class per year for the basic rate and additional incentive funding of \$800 per SS class per year for eligible schools (In sum, \$7,800 per SS class per year).*

32. Can DLG be used for the procurement of alteration works / minor adjustment / expansion of school facilities?

- *DLG is a subsidy for encouraging schools to offer a diversified curriculum for students. It must not be used for alteration works / minor adjustment / expansion of school facilities.*

33. Can schools apply for DLG in the 2nd or 3rd year of students’ senior secondary schooling (S5 or S6)?

- *Yes. In that case, the EDB will only disburse the grant for the 2nd and/or 3rd year upon application.*

34. Can a school use the grant to employ a Teaching Assistant to be responsible for co-ordinating DLG programmes?

- *Yes. The duties of the Teaching Assistant arising from DLG programmes must be clearly stated to justify the recruitment of the Teaching Assistant (or a portion of this post).*

C1. Other Programmes-Gifted Education Programmes (Enquiry: 3698 3473)

35. Why is it necessary for school to, in addition to the three-year proposal, compile a yearly programme proposal and programme evaluation report for gifted programmes?

- *Due to various reasons, schools may not be able to offer all the programmes stated in the three-year proposal, especially for gifted programme which is highly flexible. In this connection, it is desirable for schools to compile a yearly programme proposal and programme evaluation report so that schools can have a more systemic record of the programmes offered and the EDB can also provide timely professional advice.*

36. Is there any programme proposal and evaluation report for gifted education programmes for reference?

- *Please refer to Appendices I and II.*

37. What are the programmes for gifted students?

- *They are further structured learning opportunities provided through school-based pull-out programmes and/or off-site support that challenge the abilities of gifted students.*
- *These learning opportunities include enhancement programmes offered by schools/academic associations/professional bodies; credit-bearing courses specially designed and offered by tertiary institutions targeted for talented/gifted students at senior secondary level; and all programmes provided by the Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education.*
- *Schools may refer to EDB CM No.146/2008, EDB CM No.69/2014, EDB CM No.60/2015 and EDB CM No. 69/2016 for details.*

38. When students join the pull-out gifted education programmes in schools, do they need to be assessed by professional psychologists to prove that they are really gifted?

- *There are many ways and tools to identify if a student is gifted. IQ test is one of them and this has to be done by professionals.*
- *Teachers, parents and peers will also be able to evaluate if someone is gifted through the student's academic achievement, performance in classes and in social life.*
- *Teachers can also make reference to information regarding the tools, such as behavioural checklists, procedures for identifying gifted students from the website of the Gifted Education Section of the CDI, and attend professional development workshops organised by the Gifted*

39. Can a school use DLG to employ a teacher mainly for enhancing students' skills in choral speaking or debating so that they can join the Hong Kong Schools Speech Festival?
- *Firstly, we have to ensure that the training programme should include one or more of the gifted education elements i.e. creativity, higher-order thinking and personal and social skills.*
 - *There should be a clear selection mechanism for screening students for the programmes.*
 - *There should be a clear objective that the programme is to develop or enhance students' skills, and students' achievement will reflect the expected learning outcome for the programme.*
40. Do students need to pay for the gifted education programmes?
- *Maybe, depending on the needs of the schools and the programmes.*
41. Can a school use DLG to sponsor a talented student like Chan Yik Hei, while no other students are interested in his area of interest?
- *Yes. However, we do not encourage school to use the grant for just ONE student.*
42. Can a school use DLG in SBG programmes in junior forms with an aim to prepare students for studying the SS curriculum?
- *No. The grant must be used for the learning of students in SS classes.*
43. Is there a list of NGOs / academic associations / professional bodies that are qualified as service providers?
- *We cannot exhaust such a list and the school should exercise professional judgment to engage quality service providers.*
44. Does a proposed programme need to meet all the criteria set in the guidelines?
- *Yes. The Annual Programme Proposal should clearly state the nature of the programme, target students, selection of students and student products.*
45. Will the plan be checked by the EDB?
- *The Annual Programme Proposal should be endorsed by the SMC / IMC of the school. Evaluation reports of the programmes should be prepared and be reported to the SMC / IMC.*
 - *The Annual Programme Proposal should be incorporated as an annex of the Annual School Plan and uploaded to a prominent place of the school's homepage on or before 30 November each year. The Programme Evaluation Reports should also be incorporated as annexes of the School Report and uploaded to a prominent place of the school's homepage at the end of the school year.*

46. Can a school use the grant to buy tickets for students if the programme is on language arts activities like drama?
- *Yes. Ticket fare can be regarded as programme cost.*
47. When procuring services from external course providers, what procurement procedure should be followed?
- *The school should follow the general service procurement procedure.*
48. Is there special requirements on the qualifications of the service provider, e.g. training in gifted education?
- *No. The school should exercise professional judgment on the necessary qualifications of the service providers.*
49. Will there be a minimum or maximum number of student beneficiaries?
- *No. Schools are encouraged to make the best use of the grant for the benefits of as many students as possible.*
50. Is there any restriction on using the grant for one particular course or can the grant be shared out among different programmes under the same category?
- *Schools can flexibly allocate the grant among different programmes under the same category.*
51. Can a school use the grant to employ a Teaching Assistant to be responsible for co-ordinating pull-out gifted education programmes?
- *Yes. The duty of the Teaching Assistant, the nature, objectives, targets and deliverables/expected learning outcomes of the programmes must be clearly stated. We would suggest the teachers of that school to be responsible for conducting or co-ordinating the gifted education programmes and the Teaching Assistant to take up some of duties from the particular teachers concerned.*
52. Can DLG be spent on a pro-rata basis to cover the cost of a teaching assistant whose responsibilities include co-ordinating the gifted education programmes at school?
- *Yes. The percentage of time devoted to gifted programmes must be clearly stated.*
53. Can schools use DLG to pay their own teachers as instructors or facilitators of pull-out gifted programmes as these are extra work?
- *No. Teachers of that school should contribute to the School-based pull-out programmes if they have the expertise. It might place the school in an embarrassing situation if the relevant teachers are paid as this may involve 'transfer of interest' and 'conflict of interest'.*

54. Can schools use DLG to pay for students' examination fee (e.g. examination fee for students learning musical instruments)?
- *No. DLG is to support the course fee but not to pay for the examination fee. However, if the examination is part of a gifted programme and serves as a means to evaluating the learning outcomes of the students, then the fee can be regarded as part of the programme cost.*
55. Can parents or past students be hired then?
- *Yes. However scrupulous care must be taken in assessing their experience, expertise / qualifications and suitability and to avoid conflict of interest wherever possible.*
56. Is there a time frame within which the grant must be used / spent?
- *Yes. When the account balance brought forward from previous years is beyond the amount of grant received by the school in that year, the excess balance would be clawed back at the end of the year.*
57. Can DLG be spent on one programme for one group of gifted students (say on Mathematics) in the first year, and then on another programme for another group of students (say drama) in the second year, but of the same year cohort?
- *Yes. As long as the funding is spent on the SS students, there is no rule binding a gifted programme to be run for two or three years.*
58. Can DLG be spent on subsidising students to pay for the overseas exchange programmes which will include air-ticket, living expenses, etc.?
- *DLG can be used for paying the registration fee and course fee for overseas study tours / exchange programmes but not for paying air-tickets and living expenses.*
 - *Schools can consult the organisations organising the exchange programmes to itemise all the costs and list out the registration fees and course fee of the programmes.*

C2. Other Programmes-Network Programmes (Enquiry: 2892 6403)

59. Are the network programmes under DLG limited to Visual Arts, Music and Physical Education?
- *No. DLG will subsidise all SS subjects jointly offered by schools.*
60. Is there a minimum / maximum class size for network programmes?
- *No. Schools are encouraged to make the best use of the grant for the benefit of their students as far as possible.*

Sample Programme Proposal for DLG-funded Other Programme (Gifted Education)

Domain	Programme	Objective(s)	Targets (No./level/selection)	Duration/Start Date	Deliverables	Teacher i/c	Budget
Mathematics	Statistics in finance and investment	To broaden students' perspective in the application of mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ 15 students ♦ S4 students ♦ nominated by Mathematics Department with specific criteria 	12 lessons in three months from February 2012 (one lesson per week)	One assignment (either reading or writing) for each lesson	Mr ST Yau	HKD2,000 (reference books and handouts printing)
Chinese language	Chinese poetry and culture	To enrich students' repertoire in Chinese poetry and its relation to Chinese culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ 15 students ♦ S4 and S5 students ♦ nominated by Chinese Language Department with specific criteria 	15 lessons in 4 months	A final anthology of students' poems and reflection	Commissioned to 中華文化社	HKD18,000 (course fee)
Cross-KLA	Tutorial for the sports elites	To tailor-make language course to enhance the learning effectiveness of both languages of those school team students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Two students representing school/HK to take part in international sports competitions 	2 x 40 lessons in 10 months	One assignment (either reading or writing) for each lesson	Commissioned to Alumni with Ms YY CHAN as co-ordinator	HKD40,000

Evaluation Report on DLG-funded Other Programme (Gifted Education)

Title:	English Speaking Unit for the future leaders
Objectives:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To sharpen the English public speaking skills of those linguistically gifted To enhance the critical thinking skills of selected students
Deliverables:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Students would compile their own scripts applying the tactics and strategies learnt in the course Students would take part in the public speaking contest
Target:	15 S.4 and S.5 students
Selection mechanism:	<p>Students nominated by English language teachers of S. 4 and S.5 based on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The oral skills demonstrated in English oral lessons The attainment of oral examination within schools The performance in a group interactive interview held in the school
Duration and venue:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 24 lessons in six months A two-hour lesson weekly held in Geography room after school from 16:00 to 18:00
Evaluation:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The attendance of students was high (over 95%) The average rating on performance of students by course instructor was 4.2 on a five-point scale Of the three students nominated for participation in the Public Speaking Contest, one was awarded 1st runners-up and the other two awarded honourable mention. From the post-contest feedback made by the students, points for improvement could be identified and appropriate suggestion for improvement could be made. Examining the different scripts compiled by students in the course, it was obvious that students kept making improvement throughout in terms of the use of evidence and perspectives of addressing an issue of debate. Reviewing the student achievement and the performance of the course providers, it is recommended to offer a similar programme in the next year. Modification of the prospective programme is suggested to include experience sharing from students in this cohort. Affective Education elements, such as stress management, should be introduced at the end of the whole course to enhance the psychological well-being of students preparing for the participation in the contest.
Expenditure:	<p>HKD24,000 (hire of service from ABC Education) HKD250 (Application fee for Public speaking Contest) HKD100 (transportation for participating in Public Speaking Contest) Total: HKD24,350 (to be charged from DLG vote)</p>