
INFORMATION NOTE

Requirement for Chinese proficiency in seeking education and employment

1.1 In view of the fact that the requirement for Chinese proficiency might have deprived the ethnic minorities of equal opportunities in seeking education and employment, the Bills Committee on Race Discrimination Bill has requested the Research and Library Services Division (RLSD) to prepare an information note on the requirement for Chinese proficiency in seeking education and employment.

Requirement for Chinese proficiency in seeking education¹

1.2 To prepare this information note, RLSD has asked the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB), the Joint University Programmes Admissions System (JUPAS)² Office and selected representative vocational training programme organizers to provide information on the following issues:

- (a) requirement for Chinese proficiency for admission to individual institutions and programmes;
- (b) policies exempting the ethnic minorities who live in Hong Kong (for the purpose of local admission) to meet such a requirement (if existed); and
- (c) criteria for establishing such policies, if applicable.

¹ On 19 March 2007, the Education and Manpower Bureau stated through its web-based forum of "Clear the Air" that starting from September 2007, all non-Chinese speaking students of government-, aided- and direct-subsidy-scheme primary and secondary schools would be required to study Chinese language to help them integrate into the society.

² JUPAS is a scheme and the main route of application designed to assist students in applying for admission to the eight University Grants Committee-funded institutions: The Chinese University of Hong Kong, City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Baptist University, The Hong Kong Institute of Education, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Lingnan University and The University of Hong Kong.

1.3 According to EMB, it has not issued any guidelines and/or codes of practice which govern the setting and exemption of Chinese proficiency as an admission criterion to post-secondary education institutions and vocational training programme organizers. EMB respects the autonomy of post-secondary education institutions and vocational training programme organizers in managing their own affairs, including the admission policies.

1.4 As regards the post-secondary education institutions and vocational training programmes, the findings are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1 — Requirement for Chinese proficiency in seeking education

Post-secondary education institutions and vocational training programmes	Requirement for Chinese proficiency in seeking education
JUPAS Office	Yes, there is the Chinese proficiency requirement for admission to the degree programmes offered by the eight University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded institutions. Applicants should satisfy the minimum entrance requirement of having a pass in the subject of Chinese Language either in the Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination or the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE). Nevertheless, all the UGC-funded institutions have policies on granting waivers of the Chinese language requirement by accepting a minimum requirement of having a pass in an alternative language subject (e.g. French and German) in HKCEE.
Vocational Training Council (VTC) ⁽¹⁾	The majority of higher diploma and diploma programmes have not stipulated any Chinese language proficiency as an admission criterion. In the 2006-2007 academic year, there are 12 programmes ⁽²⁾ which have stipulated such a requirement because of the extensive use of Chinese in the course of study. VTC does not have any policies on waiving the Chinese language qualification in the admission requirement.

Notes: (1) Under VTC, there are eight education institutions in operation, which are: Institute of Professional Education and Knowledge, Hong Kong Design Institute, Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education, School of Business and Information Systems, School of Higher and Professional Education, VTC Training and Development Centres, VTC Youth College and VTC Yeo Chei Man Senior Secondary School.

(2) The 12 programmes are: (i) Higher Diploma in Advertising and Global Brand Management; (ii) Higher Diploma in Child Care and Education; (iii) Higher Diploma in Lifestyle Publishing; (iv) Higher Diploma in Pharmaceutical Technology; (v) Higher Diploma in Pharmaceutical Operation and Management; (vi) Higher Diploma in Public Relations and Media Business; (vii) Higher Diploma/Diploma in Business Strategy and Tactics; (viii) Higher Diploma/Diploma in Sales and Marketing; (ix) Diploma in China Business Practices; (x) Diploma in Hotel Chinese Catering Studies; (xi) Diploma in Import/Export Studies; and (xii) Diploma in Sales Management and Services Marketing.

Table 1 — Requirement for Chinese proficiency in seeking education (cont'd)

Post-secondary education institutions and vocational training programmes	Requirement for Chinese proficiency in seeking education
Construction Industry Training Authority (CITA)	No, there is no such a Chinese proficiency requirement for admission. ⁽³⁾
Clothing Industry Training Authority	No, there is no such a Chinese proficiency requirement for admission. ⁽⁴⁾
Youth Pre-employment Training Programme (YPTP)	No, there is no such a Chinese proficiency requirement for admission. ⁽⁵⁾
Project Yi Jin	No, there is no such a Chinese proficiency requirement for admission. ⁽⁶⁾

Notes: (3) CITA currently offers three main categories of training courses: (i) full-time construction supervisor/technician programmes for Form 5 graduates and basic craft courses for Form 3 school leavers; (ii) full-time adult short courses; and (iii) part-time courses. CITA has adopted Cantonese as the medium of instruction for all CITA courses under (i) and (ii). For (iii), English-speaking classes for nine safety-related courses and one skill enhancement course are available subject to request.

(4) The Clothing Industry Training Authority provides different streams of technical courses and craftsman courses for Form 3 and Form 5 school leavers. The Authority has adopted Cantonese as the medium of instruction. However, English is used for course materials, assignments and examinations. Special tailor-made courses with English as the medium of instruction may be provided upon request.

(5) YPTP, organized by the Labour Department, is open to youths aged 15 to 19 to enhance the employability of young school leavers. While its mainstream training is conducted mostly in Cantonese, the Labour Department has put in place special tailor-made training courses with English as the medium of instruction to meet the needs of the ethnic minorities.

(6) The Project Yi Jin, targeting at Form 5 school leavers and adult learners aged 21 or above, is a scheme to promote "lifelong learning". Students who successfully complete the programme will be awarded a full certificate which has been assessed by the Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation as comparable to five passes in HKCEE. The medium of instruction of Project Yi Jin courses is Cantonese. Chinese is used for course materials, assignments and examinations. Currently, no special tailor-made courses with English as the medium of instruction are provided for the ethnic minorities.

Requirement for Chinese proficiency in seeking employment

1.5 A survey was conducted between 6 March 2007 and 2 April 2007 to ascertain if there was a requirement for Chinese proficiency in seeking employment of selected major employers, namely the Government, the Airport Authority (AA), the Hospital Authority (HA), the Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation (KCRC) and the MTR Corporation Limited. The survey targeted at junior level positions such as manual worker and office assistant. Table 2 summarizes the findings.

Table 2 — Requirement for Chinese proficiency⁽¹⁾ in seeking employment

Selected major employers	Requirement for Chinese proficiency in seeking employment
The Government	As regards the position of general worker, the Government does not require the applicants to meet any Chinese proficiency requirement. However, for the positions of postman, fireman, police constable, personal secretary, clerk and office assistant, the applicants should meet such a requirement.
Airport Authority	There were no job openings of manual worker in the survey period. As regards the positions of office assistant and guest services officer, AA does not require the applicants to meet any Chinese proficiency requirement. However, it is required that the applicants should be fluent in Chinese (Cantonese and Putonghua).
Hospital Authority	HA does not have any Chinese proficiency requirement for the position of general services assistant. However, as regards the positions of security officer and clerk, HA requires that the applicants should meet such a requirement.
Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation	KCRC does not have any Chinese proficiency requirement for the positions of rail worker and technician. However, as regards the job openings of secretary, clerk, office assistant and station assistant, KCRC requires that the applicants should meet such a requirement.
MTR Corporation Limited	There were no job openings of manual worker and office assistant in the survey period.

Note: (1) In Table 2, the Chinese proficiency requirement means a pass in the subject of Chinese Language in HKCEE.

Prepared by Jackie WU
25 April 2007
Tel: 2869 9644

Information notes are compiled for Members and Committees of the Legislative Council. They are not legal or other professional advice and shall not be relied on as such. Information notes are subject to copyright owned by the Legislative Council Commission (the Commission). The Commission permits accurate reproduction of the information notes for non-commercial use in a manner not adversely affecting the Legislative Council, provided that acknowledgement is made stating the Research and Library Services Division of the Legislative Council Secretariat as the source and one copy of the reproduction is sent to the Legislative Council Library.

References

1. *Career Times*. (2007) Available from: <http://www.careertimes.com.hk/> [Accessed 2 April 2007].
2. Civil Service Bureau. (2007) *Recruitment*. Available from: <http://www.csb.gov.hk/english/recruit/7.html> [Accessed 2 April 2007].
3. *Classified Post*. (2007) Available from: <http://www.classifiedpost.com/> [Accessed 2 April 2007].
4. *Clothing Industry Training Authority*. (2007) Available from: <http://www.clothingtraining.org.hk/> [Accessed 27 March 2007].
5. *Construction Industry Training Authority*. (2007) Available from: <http://www.cita.edu.hk/enquiries/enquiry-eng.htm> [Accessed 27 March 2007].
6. Hong Kong International Airport. (2007) *Job Opportunities*. Available from: <http://www.hongkongairport.com/eng/jo/index.html> [Accessed 2 April 2007].
7. Hospital Authority. (2007) *Job Vacancies*. Available from: http://www.ha.org.hk/hesd/nsapi/?MIval=ha_visitor_index&intro=ha%5fbrowse%5fact%26act%3dJVA [Accessed 2 April 2007].
8. *Jiu Jik*. (2007) Available from: <http://www.jiujik.com/> [Accessed 2 April 2007].
9. *JobMarket*. (2007) Available from: <http://www.jobmarket.com.hk/> [Accessed 2 April 2007].
10. *JobsDB.com*. (2007) Available from: <http://www.jobsdb.com/HK/EN/> [Accessed 2 April 2007].
11. *Joint University Programmes Admissions System Office*. (2007) Available from: <http://www.jupas.edu.hk/jupas/jupasFront.htm> [Accessed 27 March 2007].
12. *Jump*. (2007) Available from: <http://jump.mingpao.com/> [Accessed 2 April 2007].

-
13. Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation. (2007) *Careers*. Available from: <http://www.kcrc.com/html/eng/corporate/careers/index.asp> [Accessed 2 April 2007].
 14. *Labour Department, Youth Pre-employment Training Programme*. (2007) Available from: <http://www.yptp.labour.gov.hk/revamp/home.aspx?lang=en> [Accessed 27 March 2007].
 15. MTR Corporation Limited. (2007) *Career Opportunity*. Available from: https://www.mtr.com.hk/eng/career/career_opport.html [Accessed 2 April 2007].
 16. *Project Yi Jin*. (2007) Available from: <http://www.emb.org.hk/emb/chi/contedu/yijin/index.html> [Accessed 27 March 2007].
 17. *Recruit*. (2007) Available from: <http://www.recruitonline.com/> [Accessed 2 April 2007].
 18. Vocational Training Council. (2006) *Higher Diploma/Diploma/Foundation Diploma Programmes*. Available from: http://www.vtc.edu.hk/vtc/web/template/text.jsp?fldr_id=897 [Accessed 27 March 2007].
 19. *Vocational Training Council*. (2007) Available from: <http://www.vtc.edu.hk/admission/eng/index.php> [Accessed 27 March 2007].