

ITEM FOR ESTABLISHMENT SUBCOMMITTEE OF FINANCE COMMITTEE

**HEAD 156 – GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT :
EDUCATION BUREAU
Subhead 000 Operational expenses**

Members are invited to recommend to Finance Committee the retention of the following two supernumerary posts for a period of two years and six months from 1 January 2008 to 30 June 2010 –

2 Principal Education Officer
(D1) (\$97,250 - \$103,200)

PROBLEM

The existing two supernumerary posts of Principal Education Officer (PEO) (D1) created to cope with the additional work arising from the new Academic Structure for Senior Secondary Education and Higher Education (the 334 reform) will lapse on 1 January 2008. The Secretary for Education (SED) needs the continued dedicated support of the two supernumerary posts to implement the New Senior Secondary (NSS) curriculum as well as to provide school-based support to individual schools to assist their smooth transition to the new academic structure.

PROPOSAL

2. We propose to retain the two supernumerary posts of PEO (D1) in the Education Bureau (EDB) for a period of two years and six months from 1 January 2008 to 30 June 2010, to follow through the implementation of the new academic structure.

/JUSTIFICATION

JUSTIFICATION

Progress of the Preparatory Work

3. Since the two supernumerary posts were created in July 2005, the incumbents, namely PEO(New Senior Secondary) (PEO(NSS)) and PEO(School-based Support Services) (PEO(SBSS))^{Note}, have been actively undertaking various preparatory work for implementing the NSS curriculum as well as providing intensive on-site school-based support to individual schools to assist their smooth transition to the new curriculum.

4. PEO(NSS) is responsible for the overall planning and provision of professional support to implement the NSS curriculum and assessment (C&A) framework under the new academic structure, and for conducting regular reviews and evaluation of the implementation processes. In the past two years or so, PEO(NSS) coordinated three rounds of consultation on the C&A frameworks of the 24 NSS subjects, followed up on the concerns of various stakeholders, undertook international benchmarking to refine the C&A frameworks and implementation details, published the 24 sets of C&A Guides, and finalised the assessment design of the NSS subjects in collaboration with the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA).

5. In addition, PEO(NSS) has been overseeing the development of the curriculum frameworks for Applied Learning (ApL) and for students with intellectual disability (ID). He has also liaised with the tertiary institutions on their admission requirement under the new academic structure, and coordinated cross-divisional implementation strategies on various issues relating to the 334 reform, such as the formulation of professional development programmes for school leaders and teachers, and the development of learning and teaching materials.

6. PEO(SBSS) is responsible for providing intensive school-based professional support to the senior secondary education sector to ensure a smooth transition to the new academic structure. PEO(SBSS) heads the SBSS Office set up in September 2005 to provide more focused and targetted school-based support services to schools for the implementation of the NSS curriculum. Since then, the SBSS Office under the leadership of PEO(SBSS) has improved the school-based professional support programmes with a broad range of support services and capacity building options to gear up schools to transit smoothly to the new academic structure.

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^{Note} The post titles of the two PEO posts have been changed from PEO(NSS)1 and PEO(NSS)2 to PEO(NSS) and PEO(SBSS) respectively to better reflect their responsibilities.

7. PEO(SBSS) is also responsible for overseeing and monitoring the implementation of the enriched school-based professional support programmes financed by the Education Development Fund (EDF). The programmes include the Principal Support Network, School Support Partners Scheme, Professional Development Schools, University-School Support Programmes and Collegial Participation in External School Review. Furthermore, PEO(SBSS) has made arrangements for experienced teachers from the Mainland to provide on-site support to local schools on the teaching of Chinese Language and Mathematics and to foster collaborative school culture.

Major Tasks Ahead

8. The change to the new academic structure is a colossal task which needs careful planning, coordination and monitoring of the implementation blueprint. The Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Education was briefed on the progress of the 334 reform at the meetings on 10 July 2006, 25 May 2007 and 9 July 2007 respectively. While satisfactory progress was made so far, the preparatory work ahead of us is multifarious.

Development of curriculum and assessment guides

9. With the publication of the C&A Guides for the 24 NSS subjects, our next task is to promote schools' and teachers' understanding of the Guides to ensure that the Guides can be rolled out effectively. Moreover, in the coming two years, EDB will continue to collaborate with the HKEAA to develop proper assessment criteria, exemplars and guidelines under the NSS assessment framework and to prepare students for the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) examination. EDB will also support HKEAA in the international benchmarking of the HKDSE examination and publicising the new examination system to the general public, particularly schools, parents and students.

NSS curriculum for students with intellectual disability

10. Separately, EDB is developing the C&A frameworks for students with ID and the related Learning Outcomes Frameworks (LOF) for the core subjects (i.e. Chinese Language, Mathematics and Liberal Studies/Independent Living) and the two elective subjects (i.e. Physical Education and Visual Arts). EDB expects to complete the C&A Guides for the core subjects by the end of 2008 and those for the two elective subjects in 2009.

/Applied

Applied learning

11. On the implementation of ApL as an integral part of the NSS curriculum, EDB aims to finalise the C&A frameworks with generic guidelines on learning outcomes, teaching and assessment well before September 2009. We will also continue to adapt ApL courses for students with ID to suit their specific needs.

Interface with tertiary institutions

12. On the interface with the tertiary sector, we will continue to liaise with tertiary institutions, including University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded institutions and other post-secondary education providers, to ensure that various programmes, including the four-year undergraduate programmes, being developed by them can meet the goals and objectives of the new academic reform.

Professional development of teachers

13. To better equip the middle managers and the frontline teachers of secondary schools for the implementation of the NSS academic structure, we will continue to organise Middle Managers Workshops on Migration to the 334 Reform and relevant professional development programmes in the 24 NSS subjects in the lead-up to 2009. EDB will, as in the past, monitor closely the quality of these programmes to ensure that they can meet the needs of the school leaders and teachers.

Learning and teaching materials

14. We will step up our efforts in working with publishers and other professional organisations to ensure a wide range of quality learning and teaching materials, including textbooks, is available before September 2009.

More intensive school-based professional support

15. As 2009 is approaching, we anticipate a greater demand for on-site support to help schools prepare for the new academic structure and curriculum according to their specific contexts and the needs of the first cohort of students. We will continue to collaborate with various institutions, including HKEAA, tertiary institutions and course providers, to deliver comprehensive support programmes to school teachers and principals on whole-school planning, curriculum management, interpreting the curricula, learning and teaching and assessment.

16. The successful implementation of the NSS academic structure hinges very much on the close cooperation of the stakeholders and full understanding and support of our community. EDB will continue to maintain a close dialogue with all major stakeholders and the general public, particularly parents of the first few cohorts of students.

Proposed Retention of the Two Supernumerary PEO Posts

17. In the run-up to the implementation of the new academic structure in 2009, there is a strong operational need to retain the two PEO posts to continue to steer, plan and support the preparatory and co-ordination work to ensure timely completion of various tasks. We also consider it necessary to keep the two posts up to end June 2010 so that any problems identified during the initial stage of this unprecedented 334 reform are rectified properly and without delay.

Supernumerary PEO(NSS) post (D1)

18. PEO(NSS) will continue to be responsible to the Principal Assistant Secretary (Curriculum Development) for the overall planning and provision of professional support to implement the NSS curriculum and the related assessment framework, and for stepping up communications with various stakeholders. Specifically, he will –

- (a) coordinate and oversee the development of a Senior Secondary Curriculum Guide to assist schools in planning their NSS programmes;
- (b) work in collaboration with HKEAA on the implementation of Standards-referenced Reporting of results and the development of assessment criteria, exemplars and guidelines for the NSS subjects, and to organise professional development programmes to enable teachers to prepare students for the broadened assessment leading to the HKDSE examination;
- (c) coordinate the development of C&A frameworks of piloted ApL courses for the migration of ApL to the NSS curriculum as well as the development of C&A frameworks and related LOFs for selected core and elective subjects for students with ID, and to adapt ApL courses for the 334 reform for these students;
- (d) continue to liaise with the tertiary institutions, including UGC-funded institutions and other post-secondary education providers, on the specific requirements of programmes offered; and

/(e)

- (e) coordinate implementation strategies on various related issues such as professional development programmes for school leaders and teachers, learning and teaching materials including textbooks, and funding measures that would help schools diversify their curriculum to meeting different needs of students.

Supernumerary PEO(SBSS) post (D1)

19. PEO(SBSS) will continue to work direct to the Deputy Secretary for Education (4) to coordinate cross-divisional responsibilities and on-site support services offered by EDB as well as the support programmes financed by the EDF in order to deliver more coherent support services to schools. Specifically, he will –

- (a) oversee, monitor and evaluate the implementation of on-site professional support services in schools, and identify through reviews and discussions with key stakeholders specific needs of schools in adapting to the NSS curriculum;
- (b) enhance support to school leaders through expanding the scope and contents of the Principal Support Network to cover more principals with a view to strengthening their capacity in managing the change in curriculum planning according to the needs of the NSS curriculum;
- (c) expand the University-School Support Programmes to provide a broader range of support programmes and an effective professional platform for teachers to develop their competencies in taking forward the NSS curriculum;
- (d) enhance school-based support services at the junior secondary and primary levels in order to build up a firm foundation in preparation for the smooth implementation of the NSS curriculum; and
- (e) foster a collaborative culture through expansion in the scope and scale of the Professional Development Schools and the School Support Partners Scheme.

- Encls. 1 & 2
20. Job descriptions of PEO(NSS) and PEO(SBSS) are at Enclosures 1 and 2 respectively. As the focus and nature of implementation issues under the 334 reform may change to suit the evolving needs of major stakeholders, the duties and responsibilities of the two PEO posts may be adjusted from time to time in light of operational experience in the coming period. The organisation chart of the Bureau as at 1 November 2007 is at Enclosure 3.
- Encl. 3

/ALTERNATIVES

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

21. We have critically examined the feasibility of redeploying existing directorate staff in EDB to take on the work of the PEO(NSS) and PEO(SBSS) during the proposed retention period. However, as all the directorate staff are fully engaged in their own schedules of duties, including those related to the 334 reform and other new education initiatives, it is operationally not possible for them to take up the tasks of the two PEOs without adversely affecting the discharge of their current duties, in particular when the workload of the two supernumerary posts concerned is expected to remain heavy in the run-up to and during the early stage of the implementation of the 334 reform. As such, we consider that there are strong operational grounds for EDB to be provided with continued dedicated support of the two PEOs at this critical moment.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

22. The additional notional annual mid-point salary cost of the proposal is \$2,402,400. The full annual average staff cost, including salaries and staff on-costs, is \$3,466,000. We have included sufficient provision in the 2007-08 Estimates and will earmark adequate funding in relevant years to meet the cost of this proposal.

CONSULTATION WITH LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PANEL

23. We consulted the LegCo Panel on Education on 12 November 2007 on the proposed retention of the two supernumerary PEO posts. Members supported the proposal. Taking on board the suggestion of some Members, we have built into the present submission the flexibility for making adjustments to the responsibilities of the two PEO posts during the course of the retention period (please see paragraph 20 above).

BACKGROUND

24. The Chief Executive set out in his 2004 Policy Address the direction to develop a new senior secondary and university system that will effectively prepare our next generation to cope with the challenges of the 21st century and the demands of our rapidly developing knowledge-based society. The Administration launched a three-month public consultation in October 2004 and proposed a new structure comprising three-year junior secondary, three-year senior secondary and four-year undergraduate academic system. The consultation ended in January 2005 and the proposed changes generally received overwhelming support.

25. In May 2005, the Administration published the Report entitled “The New Academic Structure for Senior Secondary Education and Higher Education – Action Plan for Investing in the Future of Hong Kong”. The report summarised the results of the consultation exercise and set out the road map for implementing the 334 structure in the 2009/10 school year. To implement various supporting measures for the 334 reform as well as to provide on-site school-based professional support to individual schools to facilitate their smooth transition to the new academic structure, the Administration proposed in June 2005 vide LC Paper No. CB(2)1716/04-05(03) to create two supernumerary directorate posts pitched at PEO (D1) rank for five years up to 30 June 2010. The LegCo Panel on Education considered the proposal on 3 June 2005. While agreeing to the functional needs of the two posts in question, Members advised the Administration to adopt a prudent approach and shorten the proposed tenure of the posts concerned. Taking on board Members’ advice, the Administration put forward a proposal to the Establishment Sub-committee on 9 June 2005 vide EC(2005-06)5 for the creation of the two supernumerary posts, initially for two years and six months from 1 July 2005 to 31 December 2007, subject to a review on their continued need in mid 2007. On 24 June 2005, the Finance Committee approved the creation of the two supernumerary posts as proposed. The two supernumerary posts will lapse on 1 January 2008.

ESTABLISHMENT CHANGES

26. The establishment changes in the Bureau for the last two years are as follows –

Establishment (Note)	Number of posts			
	Existing (as at 1 November 2007)	As at 1 April 2007	As at 1 April 2006	As at 1 April 2005
A	31+(2)#	32+(3)	32+(4)	32+(3)
B	1 217	1 211	1 209	1 198
C	4 551	4 592	4 675	4 748
Total	5 799+(2)	5 835+(3)	5 916+(4)	5 978+(3)

Note:

A – ranks in the directorate pay scale or equivalent

B – non-directorate ranks, the maximum pay point of which is above MPS Point 33 or equivalent

C – non-directorate ranks, the maximum pay point of which is at or below MPS Point 33 or equivalent

() – number of supernumerary directorate posts

– as at 1 November 2007, there is no unfilled directorate post in EDB

CIVIL SERVICE BUREAU COMMENTS

27. The Civil Service Bureau supports the proposed retention of the supernumerary posts for a period of two years and six months to continue providing dedicated support to SED to implement the NSS curriculum as well as to provide school-based support to individual schools to assist their smooth transition to the new academic structure. The grading and ranking of the proposed posts is considered appropriate having regard to the level and scope of the responsibilities required.

ADVICE OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON DIRECTORATE SALARIES AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

28. As the posts are proposed on a supernumerary basis, their retention, if approved, will be reported to the Standing Committee on Directorate Salaries and Conditions of Service in accordance with the agreed procedure.

Education Bureau
November 2007

Job Description
Principal Education Officer (New Senior Secondary)

Rank : Principal Education Officer (D1)

Responsible to : Principal Assistant Secretary (Curriculum Development)
(PAS(CD))

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To assist PAS(CD) in planning and providing support to the new senior secondary (NSS) curriculum under the new academic structure, including developing a framework for Other Learning Experiences; providing professional input to the development and rolling out of the Student Learning Profile for the use of students, schools and the wider community; developing a Senior Secondary Curriculum Guide to help schools plan their NSS programmes; reviewing the roles, qualifications and training needs of laboratory technicians and workshop teachers; and ensuring the professional development of teachers and principals are well-planned, targetted and timely.
2. To establish on-going dialogue with various stakeholders, such as school councils, principals, teachers, education and professional bodies, and tertiary institutions, in refining implementation details for the NSS curriculum.
3. To facilitate collaboration between the Curriculum Development Council and the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority on the development of subject descriptors for the Standards-referenced Reporting, as well as assessment criteria and related exemplars and assessment guidelines for the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education subjects.
4. To advise on the design of the curriculum and assessment framework and delivery modes of Applied Learning.
5. To establish on-going consultation and dialogue with the special education sector and parents on the final design of the NSS curriculum for students with intellectual disability.
6. To collaborate and communicate with relevant divisions within the Education Bureau to identify and propose solution to issues to support the implementation of the NSS curriculum, including monitoring and reporting progress against major milestones set out in the implementation road map for the 334 reform.

**Job Description
Principal Education Officer (School-based Support Services)**

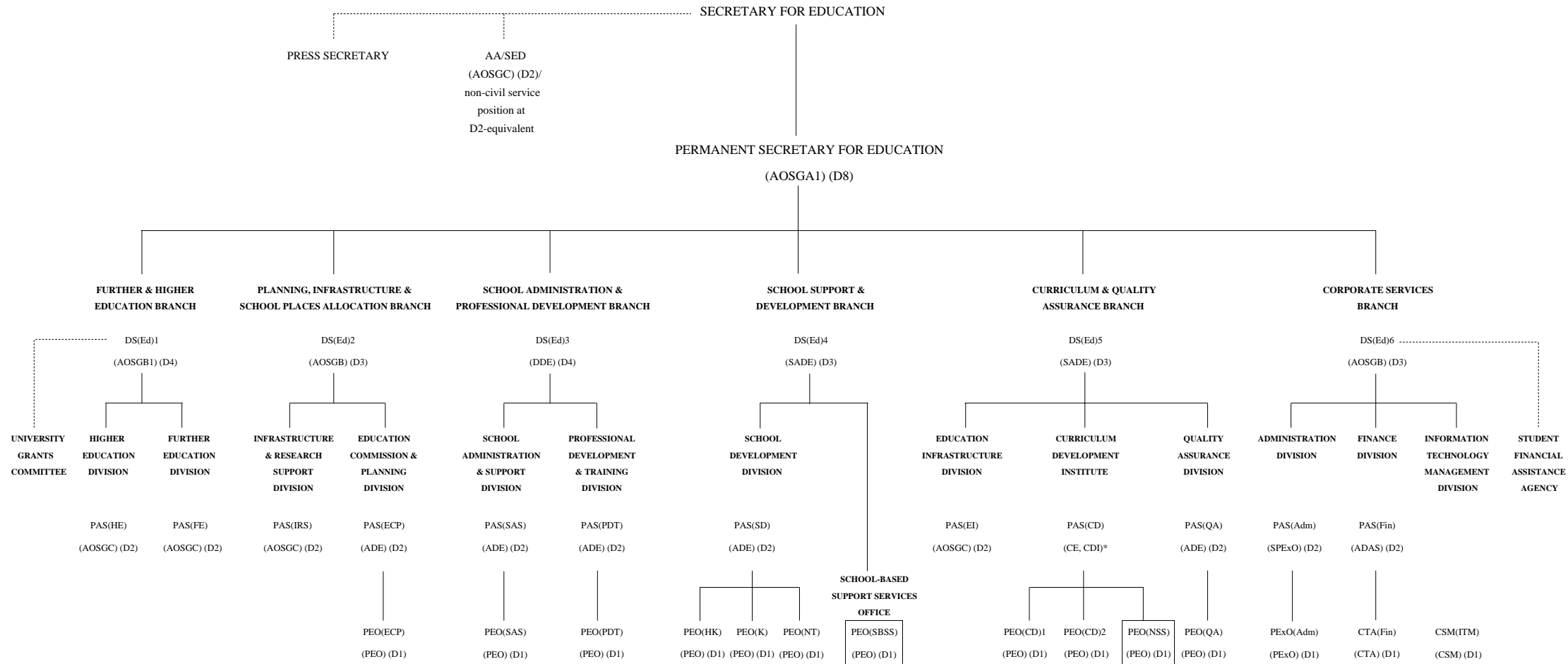
Rank : Principal Education Officer (D1)

Responsible to : Deputy Secretary (Education)4

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To analyse and identify specific needs of schools with regard to the implementation of the new senior secondary (NSS) curriculum and to map out comprehensive plans and strategies for providing on-site professional support on a school, district and regional basis.
2. To set direction, design and strengthen the professional development of school personnel through diversified modes (e.g. site-based consultancy, networking activities, school-based support and seminars, workshops, coaching and supporting teams) on the core themes underpinning the NSS curriculum.
3. To oversee, monitor and evaluate the implementation of the on-site professional support services in schools against the principles and strategies of the new academic structure and the NSS curriculum to ensure coherence between policy intention and perception and implementation of the new curriculum.
4. To forge school partnership through a range of professional support programmes and various networking activities to entail better cooperation and collaboration among schools and facilitate experience sharing in planning for the NSS curriculum.
5. To devise a support mechanism, including the development of resource banks, database, websites and help desks, for analysing and identifying specific needs of schools, and to map out comprehensive plans and strategies for schools to migrate to the new academic structure and NSS curriculum smoothly.
6. To coordinate and collaborate with relevant divisions within the Education Bureau to deliver coherent support services to schools and provide tailor-made support to schools in the implementation of the NSS curriculum.

**Organisation Chart of the Education Bureau
(as at 1.11.2007)**



Legends:

- | | | | |
|----------|---|---------|--|
| DS : | Deputy Secretary | PEO : | Principal Education Officer |
| PAS : | Principal Assistant Secretary | SPEXO : | Senior Principal Executive Officer |
| AA/SED : | Administrative Assistant to Secretary for Education | PEXO : | Principal Executive Officer |
| AOSGA1 : | Administrative Officer Staff Grade A1 | ADAS : | Assistant Director of Accounting Services |
| AOSGB1 : | Administrative Officer Staff Grade B1 | CTA : | Chief Treasury Accountant |
| AOSGB : | Administrative Officer Staff Grade B | CSM : | Chief Systems Manager |
| AOSGC : | Administrative Officer Staff Grade C | CE, CDI | Chief Executive, Curriculum Development Institute |
| DDE : | Deputy Director of Education | * | a non-civil service contract post equivalent to D2 level |
| SADE : | Senior Assistant Director of Education | | Supernumerary PEO posts proposed to be retained up to 30 June 2010 |
| ADE : | Assistant Director of Education | | |