



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部教育局  
Education Bureau  
Government Secretariat, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region  
The People's Republic of China

本局檔號 Our Ref. : QED/QEF/CR 10/5

電話 Telephone : 2123 6030

來函檔號 Your Ref. :

傳真 Fax Line : 2530 4451

1 June 2009

Ms Serena Chu  
Public Accounts Committee  
Legislative Council  
Legislative Council Building  
8 Jackson Road  
Hong Kong

Dear Ms Chu,

**The Director of Audit's Report on the  
results of value for money audits (Report No. 52)**

**The Quality Education Fund (Chapter 7)**

Thank you for your letters of 14 and 20 May 2009 on the above subject. Our responses to questions set out in the two letters are enclosed for consideration by the Public Accounts Committee, please. A Chinese translation of the responses will follow.

Yours sincerely,

(Ms Yolanda ONG)  
for Secretary for Education

c.c. Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury  
Director of Audit

網址 : <http://www.edb.gov.hk> 電子郵件 : [edbinfo@edb.gov.hk](mailto:edbinfo@edb.gov.hk)  
Web site : <http://www.edb.gov.hk> E-mail : [edbinfo@edb.gov.hk](mailto:edbinfo@edb.gov.hk)

**Responses to the request for additional information by the  
Public Accounts Committee at the public hearing on 7 May 2009**

**Part I : Responses to questions set out in the letter dated 14 May 2009**

- (a) Subject to the endorsement of the QEF Steering Committee (SC) at the coming meeting in July 2009, the recommendations in paragraph 2.8(a) to (c) of the Audit Report will take effect as from then with details as follows:
- (i) the QEF Investment Committee (IC) and the Dissemination and Promotion Sub-committee (DPS) should conduct meetings three and four times respectively in each 12-month period;
  - (ii) the IC, DPS and the Assessment and Monitoring Sub-committee (AMS) would document and observe the existing practice whereby the quorum should be constituted by at least 50% the membership of the Committee or Sub-Committees concerned; and
  - (iii) the discussion papers for respective Committees and Sub-committees should be available to members five working days before the meetings.
- (b) The number and percentage of projects approved as well as the amount and percentage of funding granted for each of the 11 project themes adopted from April 2008 to February 2009 referred to in Note 3 in paragraph 1.7 of the Audit Report are listed in the table at **Annex I**.
- (c) (i) We recognize the importance of increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of project monitoring, which are mainly achieved by ensuring the grantees' timely submission of the progress reports and financial reports every 6 months, as well as administering the reminder systems for non-compliance cases. We also wish to take the opportunity to address two issues that some schools may encounter difficulties. First, in the actual implementation of the

projects, there are always school-specific circumstances that may result in some unavoidable delay of their original working schedules. Such circumstances may include change of team membership because of staff turnover, need to re-deploy staff from the project team to address changes of priorities of the school during the school year, etc. Second, the projects are normally led by serving teachers who have to deliver their daily teaching services in addition to the administration of the projects. There is room for improving the reporting system so that the workload to teachers in taking forward the QEF projects can be minimized while an effective monitoring of the project can be maintained.

Against the above background, to maintain the balance between the need to tighten the reminder system and the actual circumstances, the QEF will examine *whether it is appropriate to refine the existing arrangements under which all grantees, irrespective of the background (including the levels of grants they receive, scale of projects and their track record, etc), should follow the same 6-month reporting requirement.* We will examine the feasibility for requiring some types of grantees that are of lower-risk or meet certain specified conditions to submit progress reports and financial reports every 9 or 12 months instead. For those grantees in which 6-month requirement should apply, we will enforce the prevailing monitoring mechanism. Besides, as an overall strategy, we will enhance the monitoring mechanism by spelling out clearly the consequences of late submission in our correspondence with grantees from the early stage.

- (ii) The QEF will consider the feasibility of holding up 5 to 10% of the non-staff-cost subsidy to be released after the grantee has submitted project-end final report and final financial report.

The QEF Secretariat will consult the QEFSC on the proposed arrangements in item (i) and (ii) above.

- (d) The Operation Manual was last reviewed in April 2008. Apart from the review, the Manual is also updated from time to time on a need basis, the last time being in July 2008. The next annual review has been

scheduled for July 2009.

(e) Since the establishment of the QEF in 1998, 99 projects have been granted to corporate organizations registered under the Company Ordinance, accounting for 1.3% of the total number of QEF projects approved over the years. The 99 projects are from 54 organizations, 30 of which are of charitable organization status, including three non-governmental organizations.

(f) (i) and (ii)

To take forward the QEF's policy intent to disseminate extensively QEF products for sharing and promotion among stakeholders such as teachers and parents, as well as the general public, QEF is the exclusive owner of the ownership and copyright of all deliverables so created as a result of the projects funded by the QEF. That arrangement aims to facilitate editing, repackaging or commercialization of QEF products for wider dissemination purposes, avoiding any users from infringing the copyright with possible legal liability.

Since the QEF Secretariat's implementation of the copyright policy, there has been no request from project applicants and grantees to retain the copyright of the project deliverables.

Notwithstanding the above copyright arrangement, QEF Secretariat has been implementing the following measures to facilitate the adaptation, distribution and further development or research relating to the QEF deliverables by different genuine users. These measures include: (1) allowing grantees to use any project materials beyond the project period as long as the use is in step with the project objectives stated in the project agreement; and (2) granting relevant parties the right to use the copyright of QEF project deliverables for other purposes subject to the individual merits of respective proposals. In the past, QEF had granted licenses to an organization for the redevelopment of the teaching resources derived from two QEF projects with royalty payable to QEF from the sale of the two teaching packages thus redeveloped. Besides, the QEF had also granted an EDB-commissioned contractor the right to use the QEF deliverables for producing free Chinese

Language bridging course materials for non-Chinese speaking children.

We will continue to implement the above measures to facilitate users in using the copyright of QEF deliverables as the case merits.

- (g) (i) The project proposal was supported in view of its innovative ideas relating to the development of e-resources, overall benefits to the education sector and its potential to sustain by commercial means the use of state-of-the-art technology in that new area of development. Extract of the QEFSC meeting minutes concerning this project is at **Annex II**.

It is noteworthy that the QEFSC has endorsed the Objectives and Plans of the QEF for 2006-8 in which partnership with the private sector is one of the objectives (i.e. Objective 3 - “To encourage collaboration amongst schools, Government, non-government organizations and the private sector in the furtherance of quality education”). Under this objective, it was agreed that priority would be given to applications that encouraged or resulted in closer and more varied collaboration.

- (ii) The proposed service fees charging plan from the grantee would be vetted by the QEF Secretariat and circulated to the QEFSC for endorsement. Any proposal should be considered with due regard to the contextual background of individual cases against the requirements of affordability and sustainability of the service.
- (iii) The main purpose for commercialization is for wider dissemination of QEF deliverables, not for profit making. All business proposals for commercialization of QEF project deliverables will be deliberated by the DPS considering the reasonable pricing of the items to be commercialized and the benefits of the commercial activities will bring for the wider dissemination of QEF project deliverables. Moreover, the QEF Secretariat in general uses the formulae as set out in Note 13 of the Audit Report for determining the retail prices of products sold via commercial outlets. Taking into account of the latest development of commercialization, the DPS will consider taking further measures to ensure that the

pricing strategy of QEF products will facilitate the availability of products to schools at a reasonable and affordable price. Proposed measures will be presented for discussion in the DPS meeting scheduled for October this year.

- (h) A copy of the membership list of the QEFSC is attached at **Annex III**.

## **Part II : Responses to questions set out in the letter dated 20 May 2009**

- (a) “Use of New Technology for School Administration Work” is one of the annual project themes of QEF project applications and it is not a mandatory requirement for all schools to apply for projects under this theme. It is noteworthy that QEF projects are school-based initiatives that meet the development needs and interest of schools concerned. It is not expected that all schools will adopt such new technology in view of the different needs of individual schools.

Since the introduction of this project theme in March 2007, the QEF Secretariat has organized various activities to promote the theme, including annual briefing sessions for schools, seminars for school sponsors and education bodies, etc. Moreover, proposals of successful applications are posted on the QEF Cyber Resource Centre for reference of other schools.

The number of applications for this project theme is amongst the highest of all the project themes. The number of applications progresses steadily and the latest number of applications under this project theme has increased to about 500 in May 2009. The QEF Secretariat will continue to encourage schools to consider applying for funding under this project theme through further briefings and dissemination activities.

- (b) (i) The recurrent costs vary depending on the choice of system installed and vendors. The average yearly recurrent cost is about \$8,000 per school.
- (ii) The application procedure for applying for funding under this

project theme is generally the same as that for other project types. In view of the nature of this project theme, the information details required from applicant schools have been simplified to facilitate applications. Relevant application form and guideline are attached at **Annex IV**.

- (iii) Informal exchanges with schools revealed that some school heads have generally found the existing administrative and management computer system (i.e. Web-based School Administration and Management System) developed by EDB adequate in serving the needs of their schools and thus a new system with additional functionalities is not required. Some have expressed concerns over various administrative issues such as loss of the smart cards or students' misuse of the Octopus cards. We will continue to address concerns of schools during our briefings and dissemination seminars.

(c) (i) and (ii)

The general policy of granting QEF projects is that all deliverables generated from QEF projects shall remain the exclusive property of the QEF and be made available to beneficiaries concerned free of charge. However, if the grantee or a third party wishes to invest on the redevelopment of QEF deliverables for commercial distribution subsequent to the project period, the existing policy is that QEF could grant the right to use the copyright of the QEF deliverables and charge royalty amounting to 10% of the proceeds of the commercial deliverables.

For Case 6 in the Audit Report, the AMS and the QEFSC deliberated the case and developed the agreement on QEF project deliverables with reference to the general policy of granting QEF projects and policy on commercialization of QEF deliverables. It has been stipulated in the agreed project proposal attached to the agreement that the organization should, among others, continue to provide users free-of-charge access to the 50 e-books; levy an annual service fee that is to be formulated on a balanced

income and expenditure basis for using the additional functionalities of the e-platform; pay to QEF a royalty amounting to 10% of the gross proceeds in respect of schools' use of the new e-books to be developed and the e-platform functions. We will continue to monitor the service fee to be charged by the grantee ensuring the agreed basis of charging is followed. A copy of the agreement of the case is attached at **Annex V**.

**\*Note by Clerk, PAC: Annexes II and V not attached.**

<b>Quality Education Fund</b>						
<b>Statistics on Projects Approved and Funding Granted for each of the 11 Project Themes</b>						
April 2008 to February 2009						
<b>Project Theme</b>	<b>No. of Applications</b> (a)	<b>No. of Approved Projects</b> (b)	<b>Percentage of Approved Projects (%)</b> (b/a)	<b>Grants Sought (HK\$M)</b> (c)	<b>Approved Grants (HK\$M)</b> (d)	<b>Percentage of Approved Grants (%)</b> (d/c)
<b>1. Effective Learning</b>	149	95	64%	101.9	37.9	37%
<b>2. Support for the New Senior Secondary Education Reform</b>	45	20	44%	95.6	20.6	22%
<b>3. Moral and Civic Education</b>	26	9	35%	26.3	3.2	12%
<b>4. National Education</b>	33	15	45%	30.7	12.0	39%
<b>5. Creative Arts Education</b>	34	13	38%	11.3	2.7	24%
<b>6. Healthy Campus</b>	16	7	44%	10.2	5.5	54%
<b>7. Supporting Youth Development</b>	19	6	32%	33.5	9.6	29%
<b>8. Care for Pre-primary Children</b>	14	5	36%	10.1	3.1	31%
<b>9. Wellness Programmes for Teachers</b>	7	2	29%	9.3	1.4	15%
<b>10. Review of School Administrative Work</b>	3	1	33%	0.9	0.5	56%
<b>11. Use of New Technology for School Administrative Work</b>	128	126	98%	14.3	13.3	93%
<b>12. Others</b>	26	13	50%	10.5	3.0	29%
<b>Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>354.5</b>	<b>112.9</b>	<b>32%</b>

**Quality Education Fund Steering Committee  
Membership List**

	Category	Since	Latest Term	
			From	To
<b>CHAIRMAN</b>				
Mr PANG Yiu-kai, SBS, JP Chief Executive, Hongkong Land Ltd	EC Ex-officio Member	16.1.2006 (as Chairman) 16.1.2003 (as Member)	1.7.2007	30.6.2009
<b>MEMBERS</b>				
Mr CHAN Kwok-wai, Patrick Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer, Hang Seng Bank Ltd	Business Sector	16.1.2006	16.1.2008	15.1.2010
Prof IP Ho-shing, Horace Chair Professor, Department of Computer Science, City University of Hong Kong	Tertiary Sector	1.7.2005	16.1.2009	15.1.2011
Mr IP Sing-piu, Antony Headmaster, Shak Chung Shan Memorial Catholic Primary School	Schools Sector	16.1.2007	16.1.2009	15.1.2011
Dr LAM Chi-kit, Lawrence, MH Dental Surgeon	Professionals Sector	16.1.2009	16.1.2009	15.1.2011
Ms LEUNG Chi-kin, Gloria Service Head, Pre-school Education and Child Care Service Caritas – Hong Kong	Pre-primary Sector	16.1.2009	16.1.2009	15.1.2011
Miss Jane Curzon LO Barrister	Professionals Sector	16.1.2006	16.1.2008	15.1.2010

	Category	Since	Latest Term	
			From	To
Mrs MANSUKHANI AU Hay-lun, Rita Chairman, Hong Kong Special Schools Council	EC Member	16.1.2006	1.1.2008	15.1.2010
Mr NG Sui-kou, MH Principal, Ho Fung College (Sponsored by Sik Sik Yuen)	Schools Sector	16.1.2009	16.1.2009	15.1.2011
Mr PAK Fu-hung, Frank Managing Director, Home of Swallows Ltd	Business Sector	16.1.2009	16.1.2009	15.1.2011
Ms POON Suk-han, Halina, MH Principal, Christian & Missionary Alliance Sun Kei Secondary School	Schools Sector	16.1.2009	16.1.2009	15.1.2011
Mr WONG Chun-nam, Duffy Partner (Solicitor), Ho, Wong & Wong, Solicitors & Notaries	Professionals Sector	16.1.2006	16.1.2008	15.1.2010

## **EX-OFFICIO MEMBER**

Deputy Secretary for Education (4)

## **SECRETARY**

Principal Education Officer (School-based  
Support Services)

# Quality Education Fund Electronic Application Form

**Project Number**  
(To be assigned by the EPMS)

Please read the 'Guide to Applicants' and the 'Explanatory Notes for completing the Quality Education Fund Application Form' (Explanatory Notes) at the Quality Education Fund (QEF) web-site (<http://qef.org.hk>) before completing this form. One application form should be completed for each project theme and submitted through the Electronic Project Management System (EPMS).

## Part A Project Particulars

### 1. (a) Project Theme *(Please select one.)*

#### *Learning and Teaching*

- Effective Learning and Teaching of Languages
- Assessment for Learning
- National Education
- Educational Exchange

#### *Support for Students and School Ethos*

- Healthy Lifestyle
- Wellness Programmes for Teachers

#### *Management and Organization*

- Effective School Management
- Review of School Administrative Work
- Use of New Technology for School Administrative Work

#### *Others*

- Other Theme (please specify.) \_\_\_\_\_

### (b) Project Sub-category *(Please select an appropriate one.)*

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### 2. Title of Project

<b>English</b>
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<b>Chinese</b>
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### 3. Grant Sought: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ *(Please round up to the nearest hundred dollar.)*

**4. Project Period:**

From 1st day of \_\_\_\_\_ (month/year) to last day of \_\_\_\_\_ (month/year)  
Commencement date End date

**5. Beneficiary Sector:** Pre-primary Primary Secondary Special Education

**6. Applicant Sector:** Pre-primary Primary Secondary Special Tertiary Education  
Others

**7. Particulars of Applicant**

**(a) Name of School / Organization / Individual**

English: \_\_\_\_\_

Chinese: \_\_\_\_\_

For school applicant, please provide:

# School Number: 

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Session: AM/PM/Whole Day

**(b) Name of Head of School / Organization**

Title: Mr/Ms/Prof/Dr/ \_\_\_\_\_

Name in English: (Surname) \_\_\_\_\_ (Given Name) \_\_\_\_\_

Name in Chinese: (Surname) \_\_\_\_\_ (Given Name) \_\_\_\_\_

**(c) Correspondence Address**

English: \_\_\_\_\_

Chinese: \_\_\_\_\_

**(d) Tel. No. (Office Hours)** \_\_\_\_\_ **(Outside Office Hours)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Fax No:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**8. Particulars of Project Leader**

Title: Mr/Ms/Prof/Dr/ \_\_\_\_\_

Name in English: (Surname) \_\_\_\_\_ (Given Name) \_\_\_\_\_

Name in Chinese: (Surname) \_\_\_\_\_ (Given Name) \_\_\_\_\_

Post in School / Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. No. (Office Hours) \_\_\_\_\_ (Outside Office Hours) \_\_\_\_\_

Fax No: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**9. Information of previously funded QEF projects**

Please list the three latest QEF approved projects undertaken by the applicant:

Project No.	(1)	(2)	(3)

# Please refer to the EDB website: <http://www.edb.gov.hk/index.aspx?nodeid=510&langno=1>

## **Part B Project Summary**

Please use the format at Annex in the Explanatory Notes to provide in **one A4 size page at font size no smaller than 11 a summary of the project. The file submitted should be saved in .pdf format. Applications will not be accepted if the project summaries are found to have exceeded the page limit.**

(For details, please refer to paragraph 3 of the Explanatory Notes.)

## **Part C Project Details**

**Please provide details of the proposed project in no more than 15 A4 size pages with single line spacing at font size no smaller than 11 and submit the file saved in .pdf format through the EPMS. Applications will not be accepted if the project details are found to have exceeded the page limit.**

The project details should cover the goals and objectives, conceptual framework, needs assessment, applicant's capability, targets and expected number of beneficiaries, extent of teachers' and principals' involvement in the project, implementation plan with time-line, budget with detailed breakdown, evaluation parameters and method, expected deliverables and outcomes, dissemination / promotion activities and sustainability of the outcomes of the project.

(For details, please refer to paragraphs 4 to 32 of the Explanatory Notes.)

## **Part D Details of Collaborating / Participating Organizations**

Please provide a list of schools and organizations which has / have agreed to collaborate / participate in the proposed project. **The nominated schools and organizations should be requested to confirm their collaboration / participation through the EPMS within 14 days from the date of submission of the application.** Should no confirmation be made, the schools and organizations concerned will not be counted as valid collaborators / participants.

## **Part E Declaration**

- (a) I confirm that the applicant organization is not undertaking any QEF projects of the same theme as at the commencement date of the project under application.
- (b) I confirm that the proposed project does not duplicate those I have been conducting / will conduct using other government funding.
- (c) If the project is funded or subsidized by the QEF, I pledge to participate actively in all the promotion, dissemination and publicity activities in respect of the project.
- (d) I understand that all products / deliverables, including the records, database and materials developed in the proposed project shall remain the exclusive property of the QEF.
- (e) I confirm that in implementing the proposed project, I will not infringe any copyright or other intellectual property rights of any party.
- (f) I certify that all the information given in this application is true and accurate. I understand that if I wilfully give any false information or withhold any material information, the application

will become void. Any grant approved will be withheld and any payment made must be refunded to the QEF.

***Additional Declaration for School Applicant:***

- (g) I understand that upon approval of the project, I shall be required to produce documentary proof of endorsement by the School Management Committee / Incorporated Management Committee that the project aligns with the needs and development of the school and the project is supported by teachers.

**Note:**

**All applications for the QEF should be submitted via the EPMS. If the applicants are schools or organizations, these applications, once submitted, are regarded as already endorsed by the head or supervisor of the school / the head of the organization on behalf of the school / organization.**

Quality Education Fund Secretariat  
April 2009

*Supplementary Guide on  
“Use of New Technology for School Administrative Work”  
Matching Grant Applications*

### **Scope of Projects**

1. All public sector secondary and primary schools (i.e. government, aided, caput and DSS schools) are eligible to apply for funding under this category. These projects should aim to utilize new technology to streamline administrative work in schools and to reduce workload of teachers. Examples of new technologies concerned include but are not limited to smart card system which will help in handling students' attendance, fee collection, library services, door access, etc. Installation of a new system or improvement of the existing system will both be considered. This funding will only be granted once.

### **Funding Arrangements**

2. The Quality Education Fund (QEF) will support such projects on a **one to one matching fund** basis for the installation of a new system or upgrading of the existing system to a maximum of 50% of the cost.
3. For proposed systems utilizing readily available solutions in the market such as smart card or similar technology with the functions of handling students' attendance, fee collection, library services and/or door access, **the QEF will commit a ceiling of \$115,000 with two components.** The QEF will sponsor 50% of the set-up cost, i.e. \$75,000. A matching fund for the remaining 50% should be borne by the applicant school. Applicant schools will be responsible for paying the remaining sum and the recurrent costs, if any with their school funds, such as the Operating Expense Block Grant (OEBG), and Composite Furniture and Equipment Grant (CFEG) for aided schools or their own private funds. **The QEF will not bear any recurrent costs.**
4. Moreover, it is recognized that additional manpower will be required for the preparation work for installation of the system, such as drafting of specifications and liaison work within school and with the contractor. The QEF will also contribute to a ceiling of \$40,000 which is 100% subsidy for the additional manpower required. Matching fund from the applicant schools for the staff cost is NOT required.
5. For proposed systems to utilize technologies with other functionalities other than the abovementioned ones, the \$115,000 ceiling grant will NOT apply. However, the **one to one matching fund** for the set-up cost will still apply.

### **Project Application and Proposal**

6. Applicant schools are required to follow the application procedures as other

categories of projects and provide information on project summary and project details under Parts B and C respectively in the application form. **Each proposal is restricted to 15 pages plus a one-page project summary with single-line spacing and font size no smaller than 11. Applications will not be accepted if the proposals are found to have exceeded the allowable page limits in various sections.** In view of the special nature of the projects, for Part C – Project Details, applicants are simply required to provide the following details:

- Background of the school
- Needs assessment
- Expected functionalities of the new technology system
- Implementation plan, e.g. installation time-line, layout plan of card readers and access points in the case of a smart card system, etc.
- Budget plan (please refer to the template below)
- Evaluation plan
- Maintenance plan

### Budget Plan

(examples related to a smart card system are included in the table)

<b>Facilities / Service Cost</b>			
	Unit Price	Qty	Amount (\$)
(a) e.g. attendance reader			
(b) e.g. payment reader			
(c) e.g. server			
(d) e.g. computer			
(e) e.g. installation fee			
<b>Sub-Total</b>			

<b>Staff Cost (Post: _____)</b>	
\$ _____ per month x _____ month(s) + \$ _____ MPF (if any)	
<b>Sub-Total</b>	

<b>Contribution Breakdown</b>			
	<i>School Contribution</i>		<i>QEF Grant Sought</i>
	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Source</i>	
Facilities / Service Cost			<i>Note 1</i>
Staff Cost			<i>Note 2</i>
<b>Total grant requested from the QEF</b>			<i>Note 3</i>

- Notes :
- 1) 50% of the total facilities/service cost or \$75,000, whichever the less
  - 2) \$40,000 maximum
  - 3) \$115,000 maximum