



# Main functions of the Legislative Council

## Objectives

By the end of the session, students will be able to recognize the main functions of the Legislative Council and better understand how the work of the Legislative Council affects members of the public.

## Overall duration

60 minutes

## Activity 1 – Focus: Powers and functions of the Legislative Council

- (a) Commence by asking students about the articles of the Basic Law that they are familiar with;
- (b) Go through with students Article 73 of the Basic Law, which stipulates the powers and functions of the Legislative Council; and
- (c) Conclude the functions of the Legislative Council with three main functions [enact laws; approve public expenditure; and monitor the work of the Government].

### Time needed:

5 minutes

### Online resources:

- (a) *Quick Information*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → [Quick Information](#)
- (b) *Legislative Council in Brief*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Understand → [Legislative Council in Brief](#)
- (c) *The Basic Law (Chapter IV Political Structure—Article 73)*  
[www.basiclaw.gov.hk/en/basiclaw/index.html](http://www.basiclaw.gov.hk/en/basiclaw/index.html)

## Activity 2 – Focus: Enact laws

- (a) Ask students to list laws that they are familiar with;
- (b) Introduce the terms "bill" and "ordinance";
- (c) Split your class into groups. Ask each group to choose one law and discuss the following:
  - Why was the law made?
  - Why is the law essential?
  - Who will be affected by the law?
- (d) Ask the question: "who make the laws?" [legislative proposals may be introduced by the Government or Legislative Council Members into the Legislative Council, and pass through three readings at Legislative Council meetings];
- (e) Back in their groups. Ask students to discuss "what would be the consequences if the Legislative Council had not made the law?";

- (f) Give examples of laws passed by the Legislative Council, briefly explain their objectives [see the long title stated in the Ordinance, i.e. "An Ordinance to..."] and the dates the bills went through the various stages of the law-making process;
- (g) Identify two or three bills currently being debated/recently debated at the Legislative Council. Lead a discussion about "why and how were the bills introduced?", "who will be affected?", and "what is their current status?"; and
- (h) Ask students to vote on the bills.

**Time needed:**

20 minutes

**Online resources:**

- (a) *Quick Information*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → [Quick Information](#)
- (b) *Legislative Council in Brief*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Understand → [Legislative Council in Brief](#)
- (c) *Animations and videos*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Understand → [Animations and videos](#)
- (d) *Exhibition panels*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Understand → [Exhibition panels](#)
- (e) *PowerPoint slides*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Teach → [PowerPoint slides](#)
- (f) *Bills*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → LegCo Business → Council → [Bills](#)

**Activity 3 – Focus: Approve public expenditure**

- (a) Introduce the Budget of the Government;
- (b) Split your class into groups. Ask each group to choose one item set out in the Budget [see [Budget website of the Government](#)] that they disagree most and discuss how they would amend it. Ask each group to explain the reasons of the proposed amendment;
- (c) Ask the class to vote on each proposed amendment. The amendment(s) is(are) considered accepted if the majority of the class votes for it;
- (d) Ask the question: "who approve the Budget?" [the preparation of the estimates of the Government's revenue and expenditure for the upcoming financial year is the responsibility of the Financial Secretary while the approval of the Budget rests with the Legislative Council];
- (e) Explain the role of the Legislative Council in relation to the approval of the Budget. Show a video footage of the Financial Secretary delivering the annual Budget Speech outlining the Government's budgetary proposals at a Legislative Council meeting and Members scrutinizing the proposals at a special meeting of the Finance Committee; and

- (f) Other activity ideas (may be conducted in a separate session): Elect a student as the public officer and assign the rest of the class to play the role of Legislative Council Members. The public officer formulates a financial proposal (e.g. to provide a subsidy of \$XXX for each secondary student to buy his or her own tablet computer) and makes a speech to explain the purpose of the financial proposal. Legislative Council Members may speak in favour of or against the proposal and then vote on it.

**Time needed:**

15 minutes

**Online resources:**

- (a) *Quick Information*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → [Quick Information](#)
- (b) *Legislative Council in Brief*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Understand → [Legislative Council in Brief](#)
- (c) *Animations and videos*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Understand → [Animations and videos](#)
- (d) *PowerPoint slides*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Teach → [PowerPoint slides](#)
- (e) *Webcast*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → [Webcast](#)
- (f) *Budget website of the Government*  
[www.budget.gov.hk](http://www.budget.gov.hk)

**Activity 4 – Focus: Monitor the work of the Government**

- (a) Make use of the database on the Legislative Council Website to prepare a list of contemporary issues currently being discussed at Legislative Council meetings (e.g. through questions raised and/or motions moved by Members) and/or the Legislative Council committees (e.g. Bills Committees, Panels). Select a few video footages of the relevant meetings to illustrate the discussion process; and
- (b) Use the above contemporary issues to demonstrate how the Legislative Council monitors the work of the Government [(i) raising questions and moving motions for debate at Council meetings; (ii) considering the Director of Audit's reports on the Government's accounts and the results of value for money audits by the Public Accounts Committee; and (iii) monitoring and examining government policies by Panels].

**Time needed:**

15 minutes

**Online resources:**

- (a) *Quick Information*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → [Quick Information](#)
- (b) *Legislative Council in Brief*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Understand → [Legislative Council in Brief](#)

- (c) *Animations and videos*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Understand → [Animations and videos](#)
- (d) *PowerPoint slides*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Teach → [PowerPoint slides](#)
- (e) *Issues in particular policy areas*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Teach → [Issues in particular policy areas](#)
- (f) *Committees*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → LegCo Business → [Committees](#)
- (g) *Webcast*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → [Webcast](#)

## Conclusion

Make use of the "FAQs" under the "Education" section of the Legislative Council Website to test students' understanding of the main functions of the Legislative Council.

### Time needed:

5 minutes

### Online resources:

- (a) *FAQs*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Understand → Facts and FAQs → [FAQs](#)

## Extension activities

Extend classroom teaching to the Legislative Council by:

- (a) Participating in a guided tour of the Legislative Council Complex to enhance students' understanding of the work of the Council. For details, please visit the "Visiting" section of the Legislative Council Website at [www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk); and
- (b) Observing a Council meeting (usually held on Wednesdays while the Council is in session) at the Public Gallery of the Legislative Council Chamber. Please call 3919 3399 for seat reservation.



# Law-making process

## Objectives

By the end of the session, students will better understand how a bill is scrutinized and passed by the Legislative Council, and the role of Legislative Council Members in the legislative process.

## Overall duration

Two 45-minute sessions

## Session 1

### Activity 1 – Focus: Why are laws made?

- Refer to the database on the Legislative Council Website and select a bill that students are interested in (e.g. National Anthem Bill passed in June 2020);
- Show the video footage of a public officer giving a speech at the Legislative Council meeting to move the motion on Second Reading of the bill and explain the main purpose of the bill;
- Whole class discussion: "what is the purpose of the bill?", and "how different members of the public are affected by the bill?";
- Split your class into groups. Each group to suggest a new law to be made; and
- Each group presents its suggestion and explains what problems the suggested law will solve.

### Time needed:

15 minutes

### Online resources:

- Exhibition panels*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Understand → [Exhibition panels](#)
- Bills*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → LegCo Business → Council → [Bills](#)
- Webcast*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → [Webcast](#)

### Activity 2 – Focus: How laws are made?

- One of the functions of the Legislative Council is enacting laws. Make use of the animation and PowerPoint slides under the "Education" section of the Legislative Council Website to give students a general introduction;
- Ask students to name the stages of the law-making process; and
- Further introduce the law-making process using a diagram of the process and examples of bills passed [see exhibition panels on "Enact laws" and "Law-making process" under the "Education" section of the Legislative Council Website].

**Time needed:**

10 minutes

**Online resources:**

- (a) *Legislative Council in Brief*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Understand → [Legislative Council in Brief](#)
- (b) *Animations and videos*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Understand → [Animations and videos](#)
- (c) *Exhibition panels*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Understand → [Exhibition panels](#)
- (d) *Powerpoint slides*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Teach → [Powerpoint slides](#)

**Activity 3 – Focus: Voting on bills**

- (a) Ask students where they prefer to go on the next Picnic Day. Write their suggestions on board;
- (b) Ask students how they prefer to make the decision [*randomly select a student to decide; select a few (two to three) students to decide for the class; discuss until a consensus is reached; majority rule*]. Ask students to explain their preferences;
- (c) Ask the question: "what form of decision making does the Legislative Council use for passing bills?" [*majority rule*]; and
- (d) Compare the procedures for voting on bills introduced by the Government and individual Members.

**Time needed:**

5 minutes

**Online resources:**

- (a) *Legislative Council in Brief*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Understand → [Legislative Council in Brief](#)
- (b) *PowerPoint slides*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Teach → [PowerPoint slides](#)

**Activity 4 – Focus: Create a bill**

- (a) Ask students to work in groups. Each group to deliberate on the new law that the group suggested to be made earlier in Activity 1 and work out the short title and the long title of bill [*a long title sets out the purposes of the bill in general terms*], and one/two clause(s) outlining how the bill will achieve its purposes. An example which is just a mock bill is given as follows:

### Electronic Books Bill

*long title of bill*

A BILL

To

Provide for limiting the number of hours per day primary and secondary school students may spend on using electronic books at school.

Enacted by the Legislative Council.

#### 1. Short title

This Ordinance may be cited as the Electronic Books Ordinance.

#### 2. Interpretation

In this Ordinance —

**electronic books** (電子課本) means electronic textbooks, internet textbooks, online textbooks or digital textbooks, which is the digital version or electronic version corresponds to conventional printed textbooks, and the teaching materials system conveys information to students through electronic mode;

**secondary school** (中學) means a school which provides secondary education;

**primary school** (小學) means a school which provides primary education.

#### 3. Maximum number of hours of using electronic books

The maximum number of hours per day a student may spend on using electronic books is five hours.

- (b) Each group presents its bill; and
- (c) The class votes and decides which bill should be submitted to the Legislative Council [using majority rule].

#### Time needed:

15 minutes

#### Online resources:

(a) Bills

Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → LegCo Business → Council Meetings → Bills

## Session 2

### Activity 5 – Revision: Law-making process

- (a) Revise the law-making process with students; and
- (b) Ask students to name in sequence the different stages of the law-making process.

#### Time needed:

5 minutes

**Online resources:**

- (a) *Exhibition panels*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Understand →  
[Exhibition panels](#)
- (b) *PowerPoint slides*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Teach →  
[PowerPoint slides](#)

**Activity 6 – Focus: Role-play on law-making process**

- (a) Refer to DIY role-play on the law-making process under the "Education" section of the Legislative Council Website. Follow the instructions and choose a mock bill and its corresponding script to go through the law-making process [alternatively, teacher can choose to use a bill developed by students in the previous session];
- (b) Select a President of the Legislative Council, a Clerk to the Legislative Council and a public officer;
- (c) Divide the rest of the class into (i) the Election Committee; (ii) functional constituencies; and (iii) geographical constituencies through direct elections [(i) Members returned by the Election Committee broadly represent different sectors and classes of the community; (ii) Members returned by functional constituencies represent sectors which are substantial and important to the development of the community; and (iii) Members returned by geographical constituencies through direct elections represent different territories of Hong Kong]. Students may work in groups and decide which constituency they represent;
- (d) Brief students on the rules of role-play which have been set out in reference to the Rules of Procedure of the Legislative Council;
- (e) Brief students on the stages of the law-making process that are to be covered during the role-play;
- (f) Allow time for groups to prepare their speeches and determine their position. Students are encouraged to express their own views freely in accordance with the roles of stakeholders they represent, not just following scripts; and
- (g) After the role-play, ask students to research and identify bills that are currently undergoing the three-reading procedure at the Legislative Council.

**Time needed:**

40 minutes

**Online resources:**

- (a) *PowerPoint slides*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Teach →  
[PowerPoint slides](#)
- (b) *DIY role-play on the law-making process*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Teach →  
[DIY role-play on the law-making process](#)
- (c) *Bills*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → LegCo Business → Council → [Bills](#)



## Extension activities

Extend classroom teaching to the Legislative Council by:

- (a) Participating in a guided tour of the Legislative Council Complex to enhance students' understanding of the work of the Council. For details, please visit the "Visiting" section of the Legislative Council Website at [www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk); and
- (b) Observing a Council meeting (usually held on Wednesdays while the Council is in session) at the Public Gallery of the Legislative Council Chamber. Please call 3919 3399 for seat reservation.



# How do Members perform their duties?

## Objectives

By the end of the session, students will be able to identify how Legislative Council Members perform their duties and better understand the main items of business dealt with at a Council meeting, the Legislative Council committee system, and the Redress System.

## Overall duration

60 minutes

## Activity 1 – Focus: How do Members perform their duties?

- (a) Commence by listing the powers and functions of the Legislative Council as provided for in Article 73 of the Basic Law; and
- (b) Discuss how Legislative Council Members perform their duties in order to deliver the functions of the Legislative Council [by attending Council meetings; participating in the work of the Legislative Council committees; handling complaints from the public; and taking part in liaison activities].

### Time needed:

10 minutes

### Online resources:

- (a) *Legislative Council in Brief*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Understand → [Legislative Council in Brief](#)
- (b) *Exhibition panels*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Understand → [Exhibition panels](#)
- (c) *LegCo today*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → About LegCo → The Legislative Council → [LegCo today](#)
- (d) *The Basic Law (Chapter IV Political Structure—Article 73)*  
[www.basiclaw.gov.hk/en/basiclaw/index.html](http://www.basiclaw.gov.hk/en/basiclaw/index.html)

## Activity 2 – Focus: Attend Council meetings

- (a) Show a photograph of the Legislative Council Chamber and ask the questions: "what meetings are held in the Chamber?", "when are the meetings held?", and "who attend the meetings in the Chamber?";
- (b) By making reference to Agenda of a Legislative Council meeting, ask students to name the main items of business dealt with at a Council meeting;
- (c) Select topics of public interest and show a few video footages of Council meetings at which Members speak on such topics under agenda items "Questions", "Bills" or "Members' Motions";

- (d) Ask students to suggest items that they would like to discuss at a Council meeting, e.g. to debate merits of a new bill, ask the Government to provide information on the work of the Government, debate issues concerning public interest;
- (e) List the suggestions and draw up a mock Council meeting agenda; and
- (f) Conclude how Legislative Council Members perform their duties at Council meetings [by raising questions on the work of the Government; enacting laws; and debating issues concerning public interest].

**Time needed:**

20 minutes

**Online resources:**

- (a) *Legislative Council in Brief*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Understand → [Legislative Council in Brief](#)
- (b) *Exhibition panels*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Understand → [Exhibition panels](#)
- (c) *PowerPoint slides*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Teach → [PowerPoint slides](#)
- (d) *Schedule of Council meetings*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → LegCo Business → Council → Council meetings → [Schedule](#)
- (e) *Webcast*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → [Webcast](#)

**Activity 3 – Focus: Participate in the work of Legislative Council committees**

- (a) Introduce the Legislative Council committee system [see "Committees" under the "LegCo Business" section of the Legislative Council Website];
- (b) Introduce what roles Members perform through the committee system [scrutinizing bills and subsidiary legislation; examining and approving public expenditure; and monitoring the work of the Government]; and
- (c) State a few issues concerning public interest and ask students what Panels/committees will handle the issues. Examples are given as follows [for reference only. Teachers are advised to see the Legislative Council Website for contemporary issues discussed by Panels/committees]:

Issue	Panel/committee
1. To monitor the implementation progress of measures to enhance the quality of the coastal waters of Victoria Harbour	Panel on Environmental Affairs
2. To scrutinize a bill in detail	Bills Committee
3. To scrutinize and approve a public expenditure proposal put forward by the Government	Finance Committee
4. To consider the Director of Audit's Report on the accounts of the Government	Public Accounts Committee

**Time needed:**

15 minutes

**Online resources:**

- (a) *Legislative Council in Brief*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Understand → [Legislative Council in Brief](#)
- (b) *PowerPoint slides*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Teach → [PowerPoint slides](#)
- (c) *Committees*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → LegCo Business → [Committees](#)

**Activity 4 – Focus: Handle complaints from the public**

- (a) Introduce the Legislative Council Redress System, including the roles of Duty Roster Members [see Legislative Council in Brief on "How does the Legislative Council handle complaints from the public" under the "Education" section of the Legislative Council Website];
- (b) Illustrate the operation of the Redress System using examples of complaint cases handled under the System [see "Redress System—Statistics of cases" under the "LegCo Business" section, and the chapter on Redress System in "The Legislative Council—Annual reports" under the "About LegCo" section of the Legislative Council Website];
- (c) List a few contemporary issues and ask students to play the role of Duty Roster Members who should also decide to which Legislative Council committees the issues are to be referred. Examples of issues referred by Duty Roster Members to the Legislative Council committees in the past are given as follows:

Subject	Panel
1. Issues relating to formulation of homeless-friendly policy	Panel on Welfare Services
2. Policy issues relating to home learning support for cross-boundary students	Panel on Education
3. Issues relating to unemployment support measures	Panel on Manpower
4. Policy issues relating to animal welfare	Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene

- (d) Other activity ideas: Identify a contemporary issue and draw up a hypothetical complaint, with supporting information, from members of the public who are aggrieved by government actions or policies. Ask students to study the issue and consider whether the case is justified for further actions as if they were Duty Roster Members [ask the Government to take remedial action; and/or refer the issue to the relevant Legislative Council committee or raise the issue at a Legislative Council meeting, if a change in policy or law is considered necessary]. Ask students to write a short essay (around 200 words) to state and explain their decisions.

### Time needed:

10 minutes

### Online resources:

- (a) *Legislative Council in Brief*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Understand → [Legislative Council in Brief](#)
- (b) *PowerPoint slides*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Teach → [PowerPoint slides](#)
- (c) *Redress System*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → LegCo Business → [Redress System](#)
- (d) *LegCo annual reports*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → About LegCo → The Legislative Council → [Annual reports](#)

## Conclusion

- (a) Discuss: how is the work of Legislative Council Members related to members of the public? and
- (b) Ask: state a few issues that were discussed at Council meetings and/or Legislative Council committee meetings that you/your families were most concerned.

### Time needed:

5 minutes

## Extension activities

Extend classroom teaching to the Legislative Council by:

- (a) Participating in a guided tour of the Legislative Council Complex to enhance students' understanding of the work of the Council. For details, please visit the "Visiting" section of the Legislative Council Website at [www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk); and
- (b) Observing a Council meeting (usually held on Wednesdays while the Council is in session) at the Public Gallery of the Legislative Council Chamber. Please call 3919 3399 for seat reservation.