



# 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. Conclude the functions of the Legislative Council with three main functions [enact laws; approve public expenditure; and monitor the work of the Government];
- (b) Show examples of daily work of a Legislative Council Member [see exhibition panel on "What Members do" under the "Education" section of the Legislative Council Website]; and
- (c) 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) *Animations and videos "Learning about the Legislative Council (animation)"*  
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) *LegCo today*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → About LegCo → The Legislative Council → [LegCo today](#)
- (e) *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

- 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?";
- 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;
- Ask students to deliver the following speeches as if they were Legislative Council Members attending a Council meeting;

### Speech One

President, I speak in support of the Air-conditioning System Control Bill. Many students and teachers agree that during the cooler days in autumn and winter, it is indeed unnecessary to turn on the indoor air-conditioning systems in schools. Actually, all we need to do is open the windows after turning off the air-conditioning system of the classroom. In addition to allowing air ventilation and bringing in fresh air for teachers and students, so doing can also save energy and help to achieve environmental and economic effects.

### Speech Two

President, a small increase in radioactivity was observed in the reactor cooling water at Daya Bay Nuclear Power Station earlier this year. Following the disclosure of the incident by the media, one of the shareholders of the nuclear power station, issued a statement stating that the incident was "a minor operational incident" with no impact on public safety, public health or the environment. As the incident was not significant enough to be classified as belonging to any of the levels under the International Nuclear Event Scale adopted by the International Atomic Energy Agency, it was not necessary to activate the reporting system. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council: when and through what channel the Government learnt about the aforesaid incident; how the Government has assessed the impact of the incident.

### Speech Three

President, while I appreciate the Government's efforts to improve cross-border air pollution in the past, it must do more to alleviate the problem, i.e. polluting vehicles and power plants as well as inadequate alternative energy sources. At present, the regional monitoring network system operated by Guangdong and Hong Kong governments tackles the level of pollution, but not the source of the pollution. The most important thing is to reduce the pollutant emission and to develop alternative energy sources. In view of this, I support the motion.

- After the speeches, ask the class whether the speeches are made under "Questions", "Bills" or "Members' Motions" [Speech One: Bills; Speech Two: Questions; Speech Three: Members' Motions];
- 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;

- (f) List the suggestions and draw up a mock Council meeting agenda; and
- (g) 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](#)

**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]; and
- (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

**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) *PowerPoint slides*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Teach → [PowerPoint slides](#)

- (d) *Redress System*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → LegCo Business → [Redress System](#)
- (e) *LegCo annual reports*  
Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → About LegCo →  
The Legislative Council → [Annual reports](#)

## Conclusion

Discuss: how is the work of Legislative Council Members related to members of the public?

### 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.