

Candidates interested in applying for A0, EOII, ALOII, ATOII and TOII posts reminded to apply for Common Recruitment Examination and Basic Law Test

The Government announced today (July 31) that the next round of recruitment exercises for the posts of Administrative Officer (A0), Executive Officer II (EOII), Assistant Labour Officer II (ALOII), Assistant Trade Officer II (ATOII) and Transport Officer II (TOII) will begin in September 2019.

As part of the entry requirements, applicants for these posts will need to have obtained:

- (a) Level 2 in the two language papers (Use of Chinese and Use of English) in the Common Recruitment Examination (CRE) or equivalent results; and
- (b) a Pass in the Aptitude Test (AT) paper in the CRE.

In addition, candidates' performance in the Basic Law Test (Degree / Professional Grades) (BLT) will be one of the considerations to assess their suitability.

The CRE and BLT will be held respectively in Hong Kong, and Beijing and six overseas cities. The details are set out below:

Location	Application Period (Hong Kong time)	Examination Date
Hong Kong	August 2 to August 15 (5pm)	October 5 and 12
Beijing and six overseas cities (namely London, San Francisco, New York, Toronto, Vancouver and Sydney)	September 21 to October 4 (5pm)	December 7

Details relating to the CRE and BLT and an on-line application system will be made available on the website of Civil Service Bureau (www.csb.gov.hk/eng/cre.html) during the said application periods, while details of the 2019-20 A0, EOII, ALOII, ATOII and TOII recruitment exercises will be separately announced in September.

Candidates who later submit an application for these posts will not automatically be given places at the CRE. Therefore, candidates who wish to apply for these posts in the 2019-20 recruitment exercises but do not possess the requisite CRE results or equivalent results, as well as those who would like to attempt the BLT, must file a separate application to take the relevant CRE paper(s) and/or BLT during the relevant application periods. All CRE and/or BLT applicants may apply to take the examination in either Hong Kong or any one of the above-mentioned cities outside Hong Kong (i.e. Beijing and six overseas cities), but not both.

Applications for Common Recruitment Examination and Basic Law Test in Hong Kong open from August 2

Prospective applicants for civil service posts at degree or professional level can apply from August 2 to sit the Common Recruitment Examination and Basic Law Test (CRE and BLT) scheduled to be held on October 5 and 12 in Hong Kong.

A spokesman for the Civil Service Bureau (CSB) today (July 31) said that valid CRE results are required of applicants for civil service posts at degree or professional level, unless applicants possess equivalent results in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination or other specified public examinations (the relevant details are available on the CSB webpage). Persons interested in applying for civil service posts at degree or professional level in the near future may wish to consider sitting the coming examination so as to be eligible to apply for these posts, which may become available before another CRE is held.

In addition, applicants for civil service posts will be assessed on their Basic Law knowledge. The result of the BLT will be one of the considerations to assess the suitability of a candidate.

Applicants for the coming CRE and BLT should be holders of a degree, or a qualification meeting the entry requirement on professional qualifications for civil service degree or professional posts, or university students who will have attained a degree in the 2019-20 academic year. Applicants may choose to take any of the CRE papers and/or the BLT paper in the coming examination.

Persons interested in taking the examination may apply from August 2 through the online application system on the CSB webpage at www.csb.gov.hk/eng/cre.html; or by using the CRE and BLT application form (CSB31 (7/2019)), which can be downloaded from the CSB webpage or obtained from any Home Affairs Enquiry Centre of the Home Affairs Department or Job

Centre of the Labour Department. Applications must be made before 5pm on August 15 (Hong Kong time).

For the convenience of those studying or residing outside Hong Kong, the CRE and BLT is also scheduled to be held on December 7, 2019, in seven other cities, namely Beijing, London, San Francisco, New York, Toronto, Vancouver and Sydney. Applications for taking the examination outside Hong Kong will be open from September 21 to October 4, 2019. Persons applying to sit the examination in Hong Kong will not be allowed to apply again for sitting the examination outside Hong Kong.

More details about the coming CRE and BLT to be held in Hong Kong will be available on the CSB webpage from August 2. General enquiries may be directed to the Civil Service Examinations Unit by phone at 2537 6429 or by email to csbcseu@csb.gov.hk.

Exchange Fund Abridged Balance Sheet and Currency Board Account

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) announced today (July 31) that the total assets of the Exchange Fund amounted to HK\$4,137.0 billion as at June 30, 2019, HK\$53.7 billion higher than that at the end of May 2019. Foreign currency assets increased by HK\$59.0 billion while Hong Kong dollar assets decreased by HK\$5.3 billion.

The rise in foreign currency assets was mainly due to income from foreign currency investments and an increase in unsettled purchases of securities. The decline in Hong Kong dollar assets was mainly due to withdrawals of placements by Fiscal Reserves and Hong Kong Special Administrative Region government funds and statutory bodies, which were partly offset by an increase in market value of Hong Kong equities.

The Currency Board Account shows that the Monetary Base at the end of June 2019 was HK\$1,634.5 billion, increased by HK\$10.9 billion, or 0.7 per cent, from the end of May 2019. The rise was mainly due to the increase in the outstanding amount of Certificates of Indebtedness.

The amount of Backing Assets increased by HK\$9.4 billion, or 0.5 per cent, to HK\$1,816.4 billion. The increase was mainly attributable to the issuance of Certificates of Indebtedness. The backing ratio decreased from 111.29 per cent at the end of May 2019 to 111.13 per cent at the end of June 2019.

At present, four press releases relating to the Exchange Fund's data are issued by the HKMA each month. Three of these releases are issued to disseminate monetary data in accordance with the International Monetary Fund's Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS). The fourth press release, on the Exchange Fund's Abridged Balance Sheet and Currency Board Account, is made in accordance with the HKMA's policy of maintaining a high level of transparency. For the month of July 2019, the scheduled dates for issuing the press releases are as follows:

July 5 (Issued)	SDDS International Reserves (Hong Kong's Latest Foreign Currency Reserve Assets Figures)
July 12 (Issued)	SDDS Analytical Accounts of the Central Bank (Analytical Accounts of the Exchange Fund)
July 31	SDDS Template on International Reserves and Foreign Currency Liquidity
July 31	Exchange Fund Abridged Balance Sheet and Currency Board Account

Residential Mortgage Survey Results for June 2019

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority announced the results of the residential mortgage survey for June 2019.

The number of mortgage applications in June decreased month-on-month by 27.1 per cent to 12,732.

Mortgage loans approved in June decreased by 14.6 per cent compared with May to HK\$44.7 billion. Among these, mortgage loans financing primary market transactions decreased by 8.2 per cent to HK\$11.5 billion and those financing secondary market transactions decreased by 27.7 per cent to HK\$18.9 billion. Mortgage loans for refinancing increased by 4.8 per cent to HK\$14.3 billion.

Mortgage loans drawn down during June increased by 14.8 per cent compared with May to HK\$38.5 billion.

The ratio of new mortgage loans priced with reference to HIBOR increased from 88 per cent in May to 88.3 per cent in June. The ratio of new mortgage loans priced with reference to best lending rates increased from 8.6 per cent in May to 8.9 per cent in June.

The outstanding value of mortgage loans increased month-on-month by 1.4 per cent to HK\$1,370 billion at end-June.

The mortgage delinquency ratio remained unchanged at 0.02 per cent and the rescheduled loan ratio remained unchanged at nearly 0 per cent.

Suspension of “A Symphony of Lights”

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations,

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

The Tourism Commission announces that due to the Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 8 will be issued by the Hong Kong Observatory, "A Symphony of Lights" will be cancelled tonight (July 31).