

Circular No : URA/PB/2016/04-DCG
Our Ref : DC/ADMIN/CIRCULAR/PB_16
Date : 24 Mar 2016

CIRCULAR TO PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTES

Who Should Know

Business operators, property owners, tenants, real estate agents and Qualified Persons

Effective Date

24 March 2016

REVISIONS TO PLANNING (USE CLASSES) RULES

1. URA has revised the Planning (Use Classes) Rules for Offices, Commercial Schools, Amusement Centres, Massage Establishments and Gyms/Fitness Centres. A planning application is now required for proposals involving a change of use:
 - i. From Office to Commercial school and vice versa; and
 - ii. Among any three of the following uses – Amusement Centre, Massage Establishment, and Gym/Fitness Centre.

Need for planning approval for change of use

2. To ensure that the use of properties aligns with the planning intention for an area, a planning application is required when the use of properties is proposed to be changed from one Use Class to another Use Class. Essentially, building uses with similar mode of operations or impact on surroundings are grouped together in the same Use Class. When the building use is proposed to be converted to another Use Class, URA will assess the proposed use to ensure that it is compatible with the surrounding area. Any uses that do not fall under these 18 Use Classes are considered as “Unclassified” Use. The detailed definition and explanations on each of the Use Classes can be found on [URA's website](#).
3. Applicants should note that planning approval is required for the change of use:
 - i. From one Use Class to another Use Class; or
 - ii. From one Use Class to an Unclassified Use and vice versa; or
 - iii. Between two Unclassified Uses.
4. There is no need to apply for planning approval from URA if the change is from one use to another use within the same Use Class, unless there are special planning conditions imposed for the sites.

Key revisions to the Planning (Use Classes) Rules

5. The table below sets out the key revisions to the Planning (Use Classes) Rules.

No.	Use Class	Key Revisions
Class 1	Shop	Nil
Class 2	Office or a Commercial School	Commercial School is now excluded from this Use Class to form a new one. This is to address feedback on the need to be more transparent about defining Office use and to enable Commercial Schools to be separately assessed as they have different impact on the surrounding area as compared to Offices.
Class 3	Restaurant	Nil
Class 4	Health Centre or Amusement Centre	Health Centre is now excluded from this Use Class. This is to address feedback on the need to draw a distinct line between the Health Centre and Amusement Centre use in view that the impact on the surrounding area is different for the 2 types of uses. Health Centre will be re-termed as Massage Establishment ¹ . It will be considered as "Unclassified" Use.
Class 5	Motor Vehicle Showroom	Nil
Class 6	Theatre	
Class 7	Light Industrial building	
Class 8	General Industrial building	
Class 9	Special Industrial building	

Class 10	Warehouse	
Class 11	Convalescent Home	
Class 12	Child Care Centre	
Class 13	Community building	
Class 14	Sports and Recreation building	
Class 15	Nightclub	
Class 16	Pet shop	
Class 17	Community Sports and Fitness building	
Class 18 (new)	Commercial School	This is a new Use Class. Commercial Schools are premises used for the purpose of teaching, training or imparting knowledge or skill; and includes a tuition centre, language school, computer school, art school, music school, dance school, acting school, speech and drama school, child development centre or play school.

6. These revisions ensure that the planning approval process remains relevant to changing circumstances and concerns. They allow URA to better regulate the change of uses in developments. In this way, we can safeguard the specific planning intention set out for the sites and the amenity of the surroundings.

Implementation

7. The revised Use Class definitions will apply to new change of use applications submitted on or after 24 March 2016. Existing Office, Commercial School, Amusement Centre, Health Centre (Massage Establishment), Gym/Fitness Centres which are in operation and were converted prior to the revision in the Planning (Use Classes) Rules are allowed to remain. Further planning permission is not required for the use.

8. I would appreciate it if you could convey the contents of this circular to the relevant members of your organisation. If you or your members have any queries concerning this circular, please call our Development Control Group (DCG) Enquiry Line at Tel: 6223 4811 or email us. For your information, past circulars and guidelines are available at our website <http://www.ura.gov.sg>.

Thank you.

HAN YONG HOE
GROUP DIRECTOR (DEVELOPMENT CONTROL)
for CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY