

HONG KONG EXAMINATIONS AUTHORITY  
HONG KONG ADVANCED LEVEL EXAMINATION 1994

LIBERAL STUDIES (HONG KONG STUDIES) AS-LEVEL

9.00 am-11.30 am (2½ hours)  
This paper must be answered in English

1. This paper consists of Sections 1, 2 and 3. Sections 1 and 3 both carry 25% of the module marks, and Section 2 carries 50%.
2. Candidates are required to answer ALL questions from Sections 1 and 2, and ONE question from Section 3. They are advised to spend 40 minutes on each of Sections 1 and 3, and 70 minutes on Section 2.
3. The weighting of each question is indicated in brackets. It is a guide to the length of answer required, which may vary from one to several paragraphs.
4. A SEPARATE ANSWER BOOK SHOULD BE USED FOR EACH SECTION. On the front cover of each answer book, the Section and Question Nos. MUST be inserted in the boxes provided. It is NOT necessary to start each sub-question on a new page.
5. Candidates are reminded that this subject emphasises the ability to present and support points of view in a clear, concise and logical manner, rather than the ability to recite facts.

SECTION 1 (Short Questions)

(25% of the module marks)

Answer all the questions in this section.

1. Consider the data in the following table:

Sector	Employment by Major Sectors		Percentage change
	1987	1992	
Manufacturing	875,000	565,000	-35.4
Finance, insurance, real estate & business services	210,000	315,000	+50.0
Wholesale, retail & import/export trade	466,000	680,000	+45.9
Restaurants & hotels	182,000	235,000	+29.1
Construction	71,000	59,000	-16.9
Civil service	182,000	182,000	0
Others	716,000	727,000	+1.5
Total	2,702,000	2,763,000	+2.3

- (a) What change was there in Hong Kong's employment pattern between 1987 and 1992? (3%)
  - (b) How would you explain this change in the employment pattern? (4%)
  - (c) Is this trend likely to change in the near future? Justify your answer. (5%)
2. Consider this quotation on triad activity in schools:

*A survey conducted by the Association of Heads of Secondary Schools on the influence of triad societies in secondary schools showed that about one-fifth of the students in Tsuen Wan, Kwai Chung and Tsing Yi have been harassed (troubled) by triads. It also showed that out of a total of 7,000 students interviewed in 42 secondary schools, about 4% of them were "triad students" - students who had formally joined a triad (49), paid a membership fee (47) or had a triad "big brother" or "sworn brother" (179). The survey found that intimidation (bullying) and extortion (demanding money) were the commonest forms of harassment. Some 27% of the students filling in the questionnaires said that they would not make a report to the authorities for fear of retaliation.*

(The Other Hong Kong Report)

- (a) How would you explain the fact that about 4% of the students in the survey have come under the influence of triads in the way described? (7%)
- (b) Explain what you think can be done to change the traditional beliefs of Hong Kong people so that students who are harassed by triads will be willing to come forward and co-operate with the authorities concerned. (6%)

## SECTION 2 (Data Response Questions)

[50% of the module marks]

Answer *all* the questions in this section.

3. Read the questions on page 4 before studying Table 1 and Extracts A and B.

**TABLE 1: Number of candidates entering for the Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination (HKALE) in 1993 and 1994**

Subject	1994 Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination				1993 Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination	
	A-level		AS-level		No. of candidates	% with respect to the total no. of candidates <sup>1</sup>
	No. of candidates	% with respect to the total no. of candidates <sup>1</sup>	No. of candidates	% with respect to the total no. of candidates <sup>1</sup>		
Use of English <sup>2</sup>	–	–	25,749	98.8	21,868	99.04
Chinese Language & Culture	–	–	22,552	86.6	–	–
Physics	9,709	37.2	1,075	4.1	9,691	43.89
Economics	8,676	33.3	–	–	7,407	33.55
Chemistry	8,381	32.2	471	1.8	7,511	34.02
Pure Maths	6,441	24.7	–	–	5,487	24.85
Geography	6,354	24.4	–	–	5,659	25.63
Biology	5,032	19.3	123	0.5	4,354	19.72
Chinese Literature	4,704	18.0	–	–	6,465	29.28
Chinese History	3,784	14.5	1,956	7.5	4,440	20.11
Principles of Accounts	2,920	11.2	–	–	2,366	10.72
Maths & Statistics	–	–	2,793	10.7	–	–
History	2,413	9.3	1,888	7.3	3,247	14.71
Business Studies	1,992	7.6	–	–	1,915	8.67
Applied Maths	1,748	6.7	1,386	5.3	3,838	17.38
Liberal Studies	–	–	907	3.5	–	–
Computer Applications	–	–	895	3.4	–	–
Psychology	509	2.0	–	–	510	2.31
Ethics & Religious Studies	–	–	351	1.4	–	–
English Literature	236	0.9	90	0.4	303	1.37
GPA	178	0.7	197	0.8	282	1.28
Engineering Science	150	0.6	–	–	–	–
Sociology	121	0.5	74	0.3	152	0.69
Computer Studies	95	0.4	–	–	–	–
Art	40	0.2	22	0.1	36	0.16
Design & Technology	–	–	34	0.1	–	–
Music	10	0.04	–	–	15	0.07
French	4	0.02	–	–	1	0.01
<b>Total subject entries</b>	<b>63,497</b>	<b>Total subject entries</b>	<b>12,262<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>Total subject entries</b>	<b>63,679<sup>4</sup></b>	

Total number of candidates entering for the 1994 HKALE = 26,069  
(including A-level and AS-level examinations)

Total number of candidates entering for the 1993 HKALE = 21,470

<sup>1</sup> This column indicates the percentage of candidates taking each subject with respect to the total no. of candidates taking the HKALE.

<sup>2</sup> Use of English was not classified as an A-level subject in 1993 and before.

<sup>3</sup> This figure does not include Use of English and Chinese Language & Culture.

<sup>4</sup> This figure does not include Use of English.

EXTRACT A – Part of a letter from Leona Ip to a local newspaper dated 20.7.1993:

### Open the examiners to question

.... I would like to draw the Hong Kong Examinations Authority's attention to a few questions.

What is the use of introducing the Advanced Supplementary Level (AS-level) subjects?

The AS-level system makes it harder to study all the subjects well as some schools may even force their students to study six subjects. They are not able to make every effort on all subjects. This could lead to poor academic performance, and this stress may result in adverse psychological effect.

Is that the aim of education?

It is a waste of resources to set two sets of question papers (one A-level and one AS-level) for a single subject.

I sincerely hope that the examination system can be improved as soon as possible.

Leona Ip

EXTRACT B – Part of a reply from the Hong Kong Examinations Authority (HKEA) to the same local newspaper dated 30.7.1993:

### Sixth-form curriculum reforms long overdue

Your correspondent, Leona Ip, wrote to challenge the usefulness of the recently introduced AS-levels which are due to be examined for the first time in the 1994 A-level Examinations.

While there are obviously problems for both teachers and students when they belong to a group pioneering such major changes, the view of most educationalists in Hong Kong is that these reforms to the sixth-form curriculum are long overdue.

Hong Kong for a long time has had a narrow and excessively specialised sixth-form curriculum. Typically, the course patterns have involved concentrating on three A-level subjects in the same discipline together with Use of English.

Moreover, Chinese Language and Literature, the mother tongue of virtually all the candidates, has been ignored by 70% of the A-level candidates.

The second important change was to make Chinese Language & Culture a core subject. In order to make room for this new subject, the subject content of all the A-level examination syllabuses was cut by 20 per cent.

The success of the sixth-form reforms will depend on a number of factors ....

There is a need to encourage the offering of AS-level Liberal Studies as the simplest way to stress the skills and attitudes which are basic to being 'well-educated' and which our approach to the traditional A-level subjects does not sufficiently emphasise.

R.F. King  
Deputy Secretary  
HKEA

The introduction of AS-level subjects, recommended in Education Commission Report No. 2, was an attempt to broaden the curriculum by having the majority of students drop at least one A-level subject in favour of two AS-levels. (An AS-level is meant to be taught in half the number of periods as an A-level but to make the same demands in terms of intellectual rigour.)

- (a) One of the aims of the Education Commission's Report No. 2 was to broaden the sixth-form curriculum by having the typical student take:

Chinese Language & Culture  
Use of English  
2 A-levels  
2 AS-levels

In the light of the data given in Table 1, discuss to what extent this aim has been realized with respect to the entry pattern in the 1994 HKALE. (10%)

- (b) To what extent do the data in Table 1 support Mr King's claim that 'Hong Kong for a long time has had a narrow and excessively specialised sixth-form curriculum' (3rd paragraph of Extract B)? (10%)
- (c) Explain your reaction to Mr King's description of Liberal Studies in the last paragraph of his letter. (15%)
- (d) Explain how you would respond to the third paragraph of Leona Ip's letter. (15%)

### SECTION 3 (Conventional Essay Questions)

(25% of the module marks)

Answer one question from this section.

4. Consider this quotation:

*In the end, real success in fighting corruption will not depend on whether we have a comprehensive set of anti-corruption laws. It will not even depend on how effectively the ICAC pursues all the corruption reports that are made to it, nor even on the severity of the sentences imposed by the courts on those found guilty of corruption. What will finally count is what individuals consider their personal role and responsibility should be in this society, and the extent to which ordinary people respect the rule of law.*

Explain whether you agree with the above view. Illustrate your argument with local examples. (25%)

5. Imagine you are in a position to overhear the following conversation between Mr Fong, a local resident, and his friend John, an Australian who is visiting Hong Kong:

John:	Now that nearly ten years have passed since the signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration, how is the principle of 'one country, two systems' coming along?
Mr Fong:	It seems to me that the chances of that becoming a meaningful reality get less with every passing day.
John:	Really, you are that pessimistic! In Australia we're always told that China needs a prosperous and stable Hong Kong, so any serious problems will be sorted out before 1997. So why be so gloomy?
Mr Fong:	Well, there are lots of reasons. There's the fact that China won't accept that directly-elected members of the 1995 Legislative Council should have the right to ride the through train in 1997; the way that China has linked political issues to economic ones in delaying agreement on vitally important new infrastructure projects like the new airport and Container Terminal No. 9. The list goes on and on....

Explain to what extent you agree or disagree with Mr Fong. Illustrate your argument with examples. (25%)

6. Consider this extract from a local newspaper:

### Rights bill 'helping bad guys' Attack by Lu raises fresh concerns over rule of law

The senior Chinese official handling Hong Kong's future has sparked new fears about China's commitment to the rule of law by suggesting that the Bill of Rights has been harbouring 'bad guys'. Lu Ping said the human rights legislation had already produced 'side-effects'. He claimed that certain bad guys had been able to find safe-haven behind the Bill of Rights provisions.

The bill, passed two years ago with the power to override all other legislation, has been the subject of dispute between China and Britain.

Lu Ping maintained that this power meant that the Bill of Rights had become 'another Basic Law' in the territory.

Independent legislator Christine Loh Kung-wai said the comments were 'a threat to Hong Kong's legal system and the principle of the rule of law, which is an important principle distinguishing the legal systems of the two places'.

'Hong Kong has an authentic rule of law, but in China, law is subject to the rule of the Communist Party,' she concluded.

United Democrat James To Kun-sun said Mr Lu's remarks reflected a substantial gap between the West and China on basic legal concepts.

'One purpose of the Bill is to protect the rights of suspects, who should be presumed innocent until proven guilty,' said Mr To.

Under the mainland legal system, the Government preferred punishing any suspects rather than risking freeing someone who might be guilty.

'I think it will take some time for mainland officials to learn more about the local system,' he concluded.

- (a) Explain whether you would support the strong claims made by Christine Loh and James To about the vital importance of the *rule of law* in Hong Kong. (12%)
- (b) Do you share their fears about the attitudes of senior mainland officials to the Bill of Rights? Explain your position. (13%)

7. Consider this editorial from a local newspaper:

### Freeing up education

Any attempt to reduce the amount of homework given to Hong Kong's students will be welcomed by parents, teachers and pupils alike.

Prompted by the number of child suicides apparently caused by pressures of school, the Education Department has finally woken up to the need for reform by moving away from traditional rote learning.

Today's youngsters have enough to worry about, without having to memorise countless dates, names and other details that add nothing to their understanding or appreciation of the world. Too much pointless homework and cramming, the government believes, stifles creativity and could ruin young lives.

Teachers are being asked to make learning a pleasurable experience and to use textbooks with imagination and discretion.

However, educationalists must tread carefully. Easing pressure and introducing flexibility all too often serve as excuses for tolerating laziness and lack of mental discipline. It would be a great loss to Hong Kong if a more relaxed schooling system led to falling educational standards.

- (a) Explain whether you agree with the editorial's suggestion that there is a possible link between child suicides and learning styles in Hong Kong. (12%)
- (b) What would be the consequences if changes were made so that learning became a pleasurable experience? (13%)

END OF PAPER