

HONG KONG EXAMINATIONS AUTHORITY
HONG KONG ADVANCED LEVEL EXAMINATION 1995

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. Answers to all questions should be written in the same answer book.
4. 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.
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

(25% of the module marks)

Answer *all* the questions in this section.

1. Consider the four press cuttings below, which consist of an extract from an article containing an interview with an Education Department official, a letter to the editor from Simon Wong in response to the article, and then two further letters from Annie Chan and Matthew Kwok opposing Simon's view.

Schools to be forced to teach in Chinese

Schools will be forced to teach pupils in Chinese if Education Department guidelines are not met by 1998, the Sunday Morning Post can reveal.

Until now the Department has only said it will use 'firm guidance' to persuade the majority of schools to change from English medium to Chinese medium teaching. But last week Anthony Poon Hon-hung, a senior education officer, said the Department would 'guarantee' that all the schools it believed should be teaching in Chinese would be by 1998.

He admitted that convincing parents of the benefits of learning through the mother tongue was a difficult task, but added: 'If the schools switch to Chinese, then the parents have no choice.'

Against Chinese as teaching medium

I am concerned schools will be forced to teach in Chinese by 1998. Most teachers give lectures in Chinese nowadays and we can't object. However, we really detest having to use Chinese textbooks. As a science student, I can't imagine what the situation will be like when we are forced to use Chinese names for chemicals in the lab.

Apart from this, should we use Chinese textbooks, we would lose confidence in reading English ones.

I do believe it would be better for us to be taught in English. We are secondary students; we have our own opinions. Why doesn't the Education Department want to hear them? It has already issued booklets telling us the advantages and disadvantages of studying in Chinese, so it can also send messages to us asking for our opinions.

From the students' perspective, the Education Department is ignoring us. We cannot expect such a department to provide us with a good education system.

Simon Wong

SECTION 2

[50% of the module marks]

Answer *all* the questions in this section.

2. The data in the following five tables concern the attitudes of Hong Kong people towards 1997. The data were gathered in surveys conducted in February 1994.

Table 1: Degrees of Worry

Question: 'At present, do you worry about:

	% Worried to varying degrees	% Don't know
<i>the politics of H.K. after 1997?</i>	55	11
<i>personal freedom in H.K. after 1997?</i>	52	2
<i>personal standard of living after 1997?</i>	48	1
<i>H.K.'s prospects after 1997?</i>	47	5
<i>your family prospects in H.K. after 1997?</i>	45	4

Table 2: People's plans to leave or stay in H.K. after 1997

Would leave or seek means to leave if changes after 1997 are unsuitable	46%
Will stay under any circumstances	43%
Plan to leave	5%
Undecided/Don't know	6%

Table 3:

Question: 'What is the major change which you would find so unsuitable as to make you seek to leave?'

Personal freedom	37%
Personal standard of living	24%
Hong Kong's politics	19%
Hong Kong's economic prospects	7%
Family prospects	6%
Others	5%
Don't know	2%

I am appalled by Simon Wong's letter, expressing his dismay at the Education Department's suggestion that Chinese be used as a medium of teaching.

The limitations of using English as the medium of teaching in Hong Kong are apparent enough. This is especially serious for me and those like me who continued their studies abroad.

Speaking from personal experience, our English is not bad, but hardly good enough. Our Chinese is even worse and we find ourselves unable to communicate in the way we want to after a few years abroad.

This is not a proclamation of 'I'm born Chinese and I'll bloody well die as one', but a simple reflection of the fact that using English as a medium of teaching is simply *not* working.

Annie Chan

As a science student, I see little to object to in the use of the mother tongue as a medium of teaching.

Mr Wong said it would be unthinkable for local science students to learn Chinese names for chemicals in the laboratory. But mainland students do it.

We are not reading books just for words; we are learning the knowledge they contain. Therefore, should we continue to learn in English even when, in most cases, we are more proficient in Chinese?

Matthew Kwok

- (a) Do you agree with Simon Wong that students should be consulted about which language medium they are taught in? Explain your view. (9%)
- (b) Explain your reaction to the views expressed in Annie Chan's letter. (8%)
- (c) If you were debating with Matthew Kwok, how would you counter the arguments in his letter? (8%)

Table 4: Fundamental Identity

Question: 'What do you consider yourself to be?'

Hong Kong Chinese	40%
Hong Kong person	30%
Chinese	20%
Hong Kong British	8%
British	1%
Others	1%

Table 5: Fundamental Preferences

Question: 'If you could control history, and determine its outcome, which of the following arrangements concerning H.K. after 1997 would you choose?'

Join H.K. and China under the 'one-country-two-systems' formula	44%
Make H.K. independent	24%
Keep H.K. as a British colony	15%
Make H.K. part of the Commonwealth	10%
Don't know	7%

- (a) When people responding to surveys such as these say they are 'worried about personal freedom in Hong Kong after 1997' (Tables 1 and 3), what kinds of personal freedom do you think they are talking about? Explain how you would rank them in order of importance. (15%)
- (b) Do you consider there are sound reasons for the 'five worries' listed in Table 1? Explain your answer. (15%)
- (c) How would you account for the pattern of responses in Table 3? (6%)
- (d) To what extent do you consider the data in Table 4 explain the responses in Table 2? Explain your answer. (7%)
- (e) Table 5 indicates that only 44% of those responding to the survey welcomed the official 'one-country-two-systems' formula. How would you explain this phenomenon? Do the data in Table 4 help to explain this figure? (7%)

SECTION 3

(25% of the module marks)

Answer *one* question from this section.

3. Consider the following data concerning the course patterns of day-school students who have entered for the 1995 Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE).

(Note: The data below assume that the candidates are all sitting the three core subjects of Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics.)

Course Pattern	% with respect to the total number of day-school candidates ¹
● Science Stream Candidates taking science subjects including: Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Additional Mathematics, Computer Studies Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Additional Mathematics Physics, Chemistry, Biology Physics, Chemistry, Additional Mathematics Science candidate subtotal	6.7% 18.1% 11.7% 2.0% 38.5%
● Humanities Stream Candidates taking 4 humanities subjects ² Candidates taking 5 humanities subjects ³ Humanities candidate subtotal	20.4% 3.7% 24.1%

¹ Total number of day-school candidates = 72,740

² The four subjects are chosen from:

- Chinese History
- Chinese Literature
- Economic and Public Affairs
- Economics
- English Literature
- Geography
- Government and Public Affairs
- History

³ These are candidates who, in addition to taking four humanities subjects from among those listed in note 2, take a further subject from the following:

- Buddhist Studies
- French
- Religious Studies
- Social Studies
- Travel and Tourism

Note:

The number of candidates in the science and humanities streams add up to 62.6%. The remaining 37.4% include mainly those who take commercial or technical subjects and some of those who enter for 6 subjects or less. (There are very few candidates who offer a mix of 4 or 5 science and humanities subjects.)

(a) Explain why this level of subject specialization in Secondary 4 and Secondary 5 has happened. (8%)

(b) What are the consequences of this level of specialization both for Hong Kong students and for the Hong Kong community? Explain whether or not you think this over-specialization is likely to change in the near future. (17%)

4. Consider this conversation:

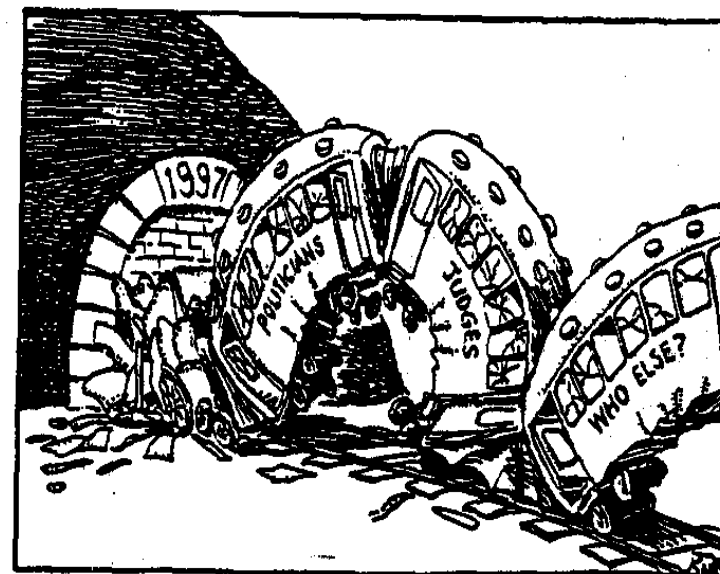
Mrs Lung: 'It's good to see work on the new airport going ahead at full speed. You know, I've read several times that so far as this decade is concerned, it's the largest construction project going on anywhere in the world. And have you seen the new Tsing Ma bridge across the Ma Wan channel recently? It's really impressive! To me it's a marvellous symbol of Hong Kong's place in the world and its faith in the future.'

Mr Yuen: 'I'm sorry, but I don't share your enthusiasm. In my view, the whole thing has been a disaster from beginning to end! The pressure it is putting on Hong Kong's financial and labour resources is so great that it's going to twist our economy completely out of shape and take resources away from areas that really need them. The decision to go ahead with the airport despite fierce opposition from China was politically very poor timing. If the decisions had been left to the mainland Chinese side, we could have made use of a larger airport at Shenzhen. Now, as well as the financial and political mess we've got ourselves into, there is the question of the enormous damage that is being done to our environment. No, it's all been a terrible mistake.'

Mrs Lung: Now come on, you can't be serious!...

Mrs Lung and Mr Yuen hold opposing views about the new airport project. Explain your reactions to their views. (25%)

5. Consider the cartoon below:



In Hong Kong, different people have different ideas about what democracy is and the kind of 'environment' that is necessary to ensure that *their* kind of democracy functions effectively.

(a) What are your views on democracy in Hong Kong? (13%)

(b) Explain whether you share the pessimistic view of the cartoonist with regard to recent developments on the political scene. (12%)

6. Consider the following extract from a press report and a related letter to the editor (October 1994):

Police granted increase in power

Police were last night granted new powers to fight organised crime with the passage of new laws that have been two years in the making.

Attempts by Martin Lee Chu-ming, chairman of the Democratic Party, to introduce changes which he said were needed to protect individuals from police abuse, drew objections from most members and the administration.

Secretary for Security, Alistair Asprey, said the legislation represented a right balance between the police's need to crack down on triad activities and the protection of civil rights.

The new law will, among other things:

- give the police increased powers to compel witnesses to answer questions;
- give the courts the power to confiscate all the proceeds of crime for the offences listed in the bill;
- make money laundering an offence;
- increase the penalties for loan-sharking;
- allow a judge to consider more of a criminal's past record when deciding the appropriate sentence.

Must protect basic freedoms

....When the Administration first presented legislators with the Organised and Serious Crime Bill more than two years ago, we too were hopeful.

Drafted specifically to attack the problem of organised crime, the bill contained many effective provisions that we thought would help the police in their battle.

But there were many problems. The police demanded powers that could only be called unacceptably harsh in a community that has time and time again voiced its support for the protection of civil liberties. When the police are granted powers that are unnecessarily broad, they become sloppy.

Dangerous abuses of power then threaten the very heart of our way of life, as criminal investigations turn into uncontrolled manhunts, with our rights to privacy, to the liberty and security of persons, and to a fair trial tossed into the gutter.

When faced with a problem as difficult as triads, we never think about police abusing their powers until it is too late. And if there is an abuse, it will not be the criminals but the innocent who will suffer.

Hon Martin Lee Chu-ming, Q.C.

Give your views on the new police powers outlined in the press report. Explain whether you share the concerns expressed by Martin Lee in his letter. (25%)

END OF PAPER