

LIBERAL STUDIES (HONG KONG STUDIES) AS-LEVEL

8.30 am – 11.00 am (2½ hours)

This paper must be answered in English

1. This paper consists of **Section 1** and **Section 2**. Section 1 carries 75% of the module marks, and Section 2 carries 25%.
2. **Section 1** consists of three questions, *all* of which are to be answered. **Section 2** consists of four questions, of which candidates may attempt any *one*.
3. Each question is worth 25 marks : 18 marks are allocated for content and 7 marks for effective communication.
4. The maximum content marks are indicated in brackets at the end of each question and sub-question. They are 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

Answer *all* questions in this section.

1. Consider the following extract from a newspaper dated 11 November 1998 :

A newspaper showed Mr Chan posing in bed with two mainland prostitutes, while the funeral of his wife and children was taking place in Hong Kong. He was then described as 'human scum', an intense debate about media ethics was sparked off.

Mr Chan said in a television interview that he was paid by a newspaper reporter to do so. 'I did it to get the media off my back.' He admitted accepting the cash, saying 'I was greedy for the money. I was surrounded by the media, leaving me no space for thought. I became a puppet which they could manipulate.'

Grass roots groups later started a campaign to boycott unethical media outlets. The Society for Truth and Light, which is co-ordinating the campaign, said it had received support from about 850 individuals and groups, representing 2,300 people.

What remains unexplained is why Mr Chan should have created so much apparent reader interest, with both TV stations and newspapers feeling compelled to send teams to follow him from dawn until midnight.

- (a) Explain how the action of the newspaper reporter in the story could be said to threaten freedom of the press. (7 marks)
- (b) Discuss the role of the media in this case. (11 marks)

2. Consider the following extract from a newspaper dated 8 December 1998 :

Appointment system of District Boards takes SAR's democracy backwards

Introduced in 1982, the district administrative scheme took a major leap forward in the 1994 polls when the appointment arrangement was abandoned. A total of 346 representatives were then democratically elected, though the 27 rural committee chairmen were allowed to remain as *ex officio* members on the nine New Territories boards.

Prior to the 1994 reform, the directly elected members and the rural committee chairmen had to rub shoulders with Government appointed members. Those endorsed by the electorate accounted for less than two-thirds of the total membership in 1991.

After the takeover, Chief Executive Tung Chee-hwa took immediate steps to dilute the influence of the elected representatives in the Provisional District Boards. While allowing all incumbents to straddle the transition, Mr Tung appointed 95 additional members to the 18 Provisional District Boards. The measure reduced the ratio of elected members to about three-quarters.

The aim of the Government to re-constitute the District Boards was to make the government unpopular policies more acceptable. As the Government's plan to introduce appointed members has unfolded, the democratic elements at the board level are to be eroded.

The Government unexpectedly enlarge the District Boards. The number of elected members will rise by about one-tenth, while the 27 *ex officio* seats are to be retained for the rural committee chairmen. The number of appointees, on the other hand, will go up to about 100. As a result, those without the blessing of the 2.8 million-strong electorate will still be able to command about a quarter of the votes on the future District Boards.

The Basic Law fails to specify that the District Boards should be democratically elected. Article 98 of the Law only stipulates that 'The powers and functions of the district organisations and the method for their formation shall be prescribed by law.'

The proposed District Board package will have to be approved by the Legislative Council. The democrats tried in vain in 1994 to bar the rural committees chairmen from retaining their seats on the District Boards. Given the current make-up of the assembly, their attempt is bound to fail again.

- (a) Discuss the relationship between the Basic Law and the proposed re-constitution of the District Boards. (6 marks)
- (b) Argue whether the re-introduction of appointed members onto District Boards is compatible with the ultimate goal of returning the Chief Executive and all Legislative Councillors by universal suffrage as stated in the Basic Law. (12 marks)

3. Consider the following table :

Recurrent Expenditure on Education	\$ million			
	1988/89	1992/93	1994/95	1996/97
<i>Education Department</i>				
Pre-primary services	56	128	216	427
Primary	2,847	4,698	5,769	6,880
Secondary	3,648	6,618	8,491	10,654
Teacher training (1)	125	233	131	—
Administrative (non-allocated)	220	396	606	842
<i>Vocational Training Council</i>				
Technical and vocational	539	1,037	1,544	2,048
<i>University Grants Committee (UGC) (2)</i>				
Subvention to UGC - funded institutions	2,308	5,614	8,050	10,723

Source : *Hong Kong Annual Digest of Statistics*, 1998 Edition, pp.222–223.

- Notes : (1) No expenditure in 1996/97 due to transfer of the College of Education and the Institute of Language in Education to the Hong Kong Institute of Education on 1.9.1994.
- (2) Grants to the UGC-funded institutions are included. Lingnan College and The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology started to receive recurrent grants in 1991. The Hong Kong Institute of Education started to receive recurrent grants in 1996.

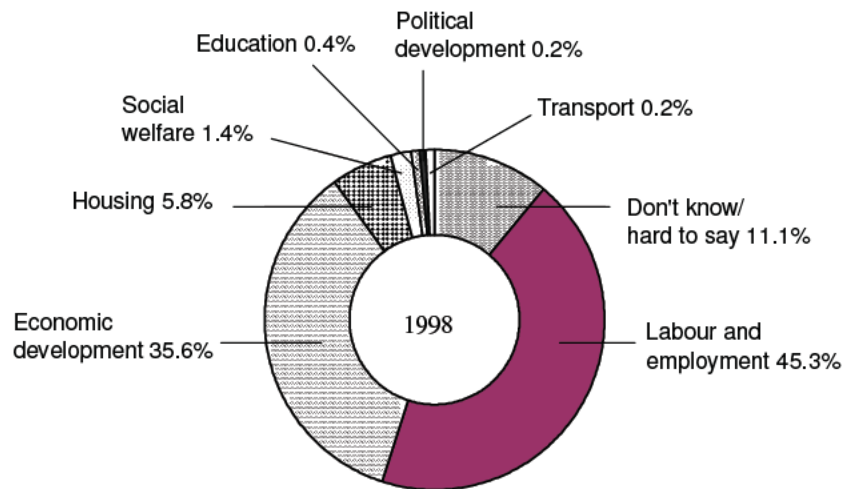
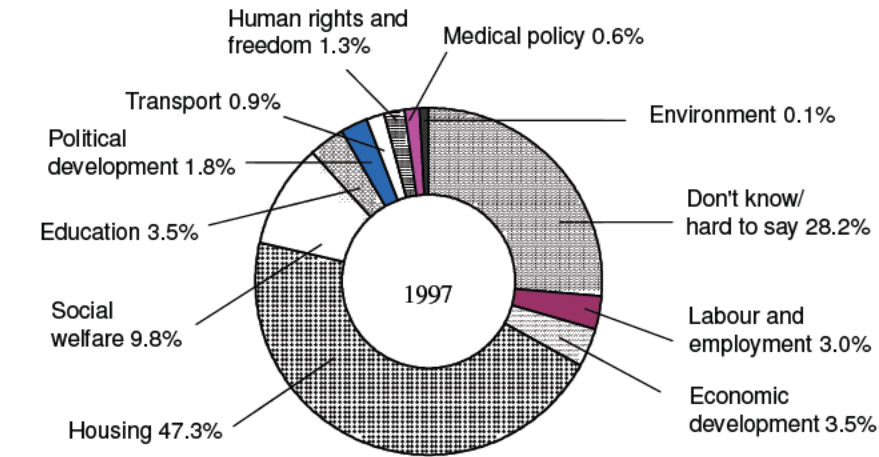
- (a) Identify the trends in recurrent education expenditure. (8 marks)
- (b) Discuss what outcome you would expect from the expenditure patterns shown above. (10 marks)

SECTION 2

Answer *one* question from this section.

4. The data below refer to public opinion expressed just before the Chief Executive's Policy Speeches in 1997 and 1998 respectively (extracted from a newspaper in October 1998):

WHAT THE PEOPLE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT?



Data charted not exactly to scale

By reporting the results of the opinion polls above, do you think the newspaper may be leading rather than reflecting public opinion? Why? (18 marks)

5. Consider the following points from a teacher's perspective on class streaming[#] :

The evidence from countless studies shows that good students will do well whatever the situation, but low-achieving students will perform even worse in a streamed school environment.

How is this possible?

The placement of students of similar ability into the same classes increases the competitiveness between them, whereas low achievers do not perform at all well in a competitive environment.

'Oh, but streamed classes are so much easier to teach,' one of my colleagues argues. 'Besides, the students prefers it.'

Again, overwhelming educational evidence says otherwise.

The deliberate streaming of classes, and therefore streaming of students, is morally indefensible and extremely socially divisive.

: 'Class streaming' is an arrangement in which students are streamed into different classes according to their ability.

- (a) Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of adopting a class streaming arrangement. (8 marks)
- (b) Discuss the changes which you consider could be made to the Hong Kong school system, to answer the teacher's criticism that 'deliberate streaming..... is morally indefensible and extremely socially divisive.' (10 marks)

6. Consider the following extract from a newspaper dated 8 November 1998 :

SECRETARY for Security Regina Ip Lau Shuk-ye yesterday defended the mainland trial of a Hong Kong resident, a gang member whose alleged crime was said to have been committed only in Hong Kong.

She said the gang member was being charged with plotting and financing the smuggling of explosives in Shenzhen, and it was therefore justified that he be tried on the mainland.

Mrs Ip emphasized that Hong Kong would press for the return of the gang member for trial once the mainland's legal proceedings came to an end. Previous news reports alleged that the gang member had been involved in transporting explosives from Kowloon to New Territories North.

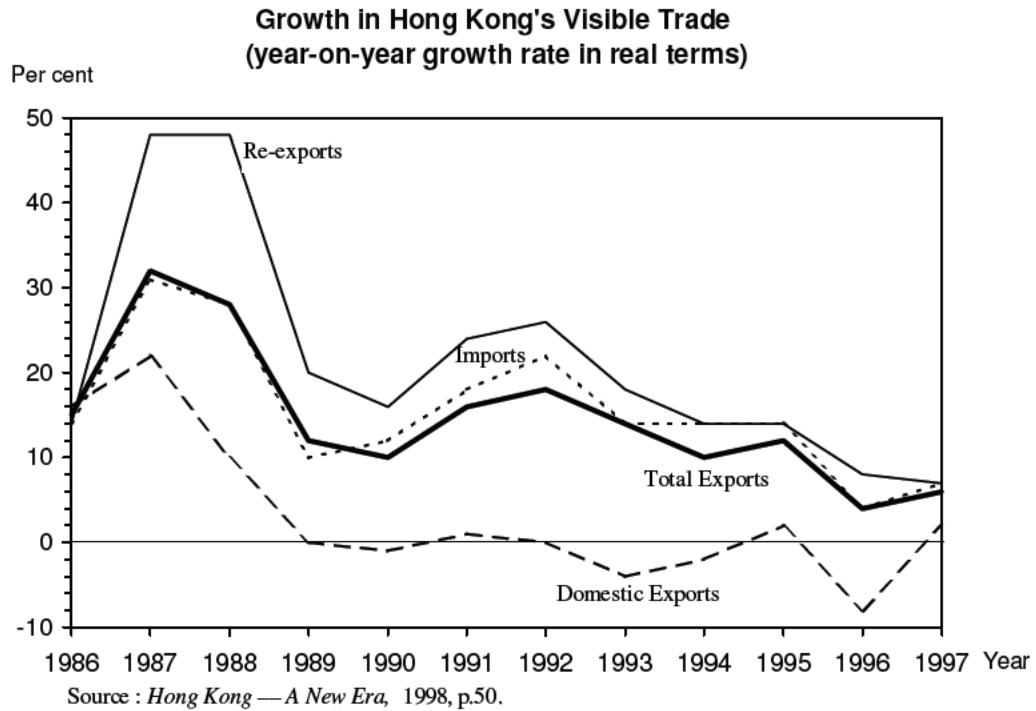
Democratic Party Chairman Martin Lee Chu-ming said this gang member should not be tried across the border as he committed the alleged offence in Hong Kong.

Mr Lee criticized the government for failing to exercise its rights as guaranteed under the Basic Law to ask for the transfer of fugitives back to Hong Kong.

Mrs Ip refuted Mr Lee's criticism, however, saying that the Basic Law never granted Hong Kong the power of exclusive jurisdiction and that concurrent jurisdiction was a common international practice. 'I find it hard to accept that people who committed crimes in Hong Kong can only be tried in Hong Kong. I don't believe that the Basic Law was drafted with the sole intention of granting Hong Kong the right to dictate jurisdiction.'

- (a) Identify the concerned parties or groups in this case. (5 marks)
- (b) Elaborate the arguments of these parties or groups concerning the trial. (13 marks)

7. Consider the following chart :



- (a) Discuss and account for the trends of visible trade in Hong Kong. (8 marks)
- (b) If you were responsible for trade promotion, which of the Government's existing trade related strategies do you think could be improved and what new strategies could be implemented? Explain your answers. (10 marks)

END OF PAPER