

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. The following are excerpts from the Education Commission's Revised Draft Proposal on the Aims of Education.

The Aims of Senior Secondary Education (Form 4 to 7) are to :

- enable students to have all-round and well-balanced learning experience in the academic, vocational, organization, social service, aesthetics and sports domains to prepare them for future employment, studies and lives;
- provide students with a wide variety of choices and experiences to help them understand their abilities and inclination in planning for future employment, studies and lives;
- encourage students to take initiatives to learn and to develop independent and critical thinking, creativity, commitment towards the family, the community and the nation and to develop a global outlook.

- (a) Reflecting on your observations and own experience, discuss to what extent these aims are being fulfilled in Hong Kong's senior secondary education system. (9 marks)
- (b) Suppose you were the principal of your secondary school, what measures would you take to ensure the fulfillment of the above aims in your school? (9 marks)

2. The following are excerpts of the recommendations from *Consultation Paper on the Regulation of Media Intrusion* published by the Law Reform Commission of Hong Kong Sub-Committee on Privacy.

- ◆ We recommend that an independent body to be known as the Press Council for the Protection of Privacy ('the Council') should be created by law to deal with complaints from members of the public about breaches of a press code on privacy-related matters ('the Privacy Code')

We adhere to the following principles when determining the composition, functions and powers of the Council :

- (a) The Council should have jurisdiction over all publications concerning news, which are published in Hong Kong.
- (b) The Council should be autonomous and independent of the Government and other outside interference.
- (c) Its members should be appointed by an independent Appointments Commission.
- ...

- ◆ We recommend that the Chief Executive should invite an independent person, in consultation with the press industry, to appoint the members of the independent Appointments Commission. The independent person should be someone of high standing in the community.

- ◆ We recommend that where the Council has decided on a complaint, it may :
 - (a) declare that the newspaper has acted in breach of the Privacy Code;
 - (b) reprimand the newspaper;
 - (c) require the newspaper to publish on one or more occasions :
 - (i) an apology;
 - (ii) a correction;
 - ...

- ◆ We recommend that the Council may impose a fine on a newspaper which is found to be in serious breach of the Privacy Code. The maximum fine should be \$500,000 for a first offence and \$1,000,000 for a second or subsequent offence.

- (a) Discuss the pros and cons of establishing a Press Council following the recommendations of the Consultation Paper stated above. (10 marks)
- (b) Apart from the establishment of the Press Council, what alternative means of preventing media intrusion of privacy would you propose? (8 marks)

3. The following are excerpts from an article published in June 1999.

For nearly two years, 'two systems' seemed the dominant element of China's famous 'one country, two systems' formula that gave capitalist Hong Kong considerable autonomy within the communist-ruled motherland. But now, Hong Kong is learning the meaning of 'one country'. With Beijing's backing, the Hong Kong Government has challenged the authority of its Court of Final Appeal, resurrecting fears for the territory's autonomy that had been quieted by China's careful nonintervention since the handover.

In May, the Hong Kong Government asked China's legislature to interpret certain provisions of the Basic Law in order to prevent a flood of mainland immigrants. The legislature is expected to effectively nullify a Court of Final Appeal ruling that says all children of permanent residents can settle in Hong Kong.

Many people fear that the Government's action undermines the authority of the court and legal system, and sets a precedent for Beijing to intervene in what should be a local matter. Critics worry that judges, offended, may retire en masse, and that foreign governments and investors will begin viewing Hong Kong simply as an extension of China, rather than a separate entity.

Despite the Hong Kong Government's denial, some also believe that Beijing instigated the request for an interpretation by China's Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, to make clear that the legislature holds ultimate authority.

The dispute over the immigration ruling exposes a fundamental tension at the heart of the 'one country, two systems' formula. The very different Hong Kong and Chinese legal systems may coexist peacefully most of the time, but when the interests of 'one country' are at stake, the mainland system takes precedence.

- (a) Does the above issue show that 'when the interests of "one country" are at stake, the mainland system takes precedence'? Explain. (12 marks)
- (b) Some legislators proposed amending the Basic Law as a solution to the right of abode controversy. As the government spokesperson, explain why this proposal was not accepted by the Government. (6 marks)

SECTION 2

Answer *one* question from this section.

4. Consider the following extract from a newspaper editorial :

Information on value-added efforts of schools must be published

The Education Department (ED) is planning to publish information on all Hong Kong schools' value-added efforts, including their Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE) passing rates, for the reference of parents choosing schools for their children. Many educational bodies are against it. They say that would divide schools and produce a labelling effect.

How well students do in public examinations is undeniably a major indicator of a school's performance, though it is not the sole indicator.

The ED plans to publish not only passing rates of schools but also whatever may indicate their value-added efforts, for example, by comparing the average HKCEE performance of students in secondary five to their average performance in the Attainment Test taken in secondary one.

The ED's move would meet parents' needs and make up for the inadequacy of publishing only HKCEE passing rates. Educational bodies should not oppose it.

We request that the ED protect Hong Kong parents' interests by making schools abandon their old habit of keeping people in the dark. We also hope that educational bodies and school sponsoring bodies will be open-minded and play an active part in the reform so that parents may have sufficient information to choose schools for their children.

- (a) Discuss why the Education Department and educational bodies have different attitudes towards the release of the above-mentioned information. (8 marks)
- (b) What impacts does the release of the above-mentioned information have on the Hong Kong education system? Explain. (10 marks)

5. Consider the following two projects :

Project A :

In 1999, the Hong Kong Government made a deal with a leading US entertainment company to build a large-scale theme park in Hong Kong. The following is the financial structure of the theme park :

Item	% of total cost
Hong Kong Government's investment in infrastructure related to the theme park :	49.1
Hong Kong Government's investment in shares of the theme park :	11.7
Hong Kong Government's low-interest loan to the theme park :	22.0
Commercial loans :	8.3
Entertainment company's investment in shares of the theme park :	8.8

All together, the total cost of the project will be about HK\$27.7 billion.

Project B :

The Hong Kong Government is said to be negotiating with an American corporation regarding the building of a US\$1.2 billion semiconductor factory in Hong Kong. The corporation will put in up to half of the US\$1.2 billion equity needed, and raise the rest through bank loans. In return, the corporation is asking the government for cost and tax concessions for the project.

- (a) What are the potential benefits of these two projects to Hong Kong? Explain. (8 marks)
- (b) Discuss what the Government should and should not do to attract foreign investment. (10 marks)

6. Consider the following information about the Legal Aid Department :

- The Legal Aid Department provides legal representation in committal proceedings in the Magistrates' Court, proceedings in the Family Court, the District Court, the First Instance of the High Court, the Court of Appeal of the High Court and the Court of Final Appeal in Hong Kong.
- Legal aid is available to any person in Hong Kong, resident or non-resident, who is able to satisfy the Director of Legal Aid as to financial eligibility and the justification for legal action.
- Legal assistance is provided either free or with payment of a contribution. Upon granting of legal aid, the cases are assigned either to a lawyer in private practice or to the Department's Litigation Division.
- The Legal Aid Department does not impose any ceiling on the spending on each publicly-funded legal aid case.

Discuss whether the above legal aid arrangement can safeguard the rule of law in Hong Kong. (18 marks)

7. The following are findings of a study conducted in 1999 on local adolescents' television watching habits and their perception of the content of television drama :

Message in television drama	Agree that this is true (%)
'Falling in love and getting married with somebody doesn't guarantee a happy ending. The couple will easily separate because of personality clashes. '	80.5
'People often encounter complicated human relationships in the workplace. For example, somebody will stab you in the back, or frame you. '	69.1
'People will surely plot to harm, even murder the other party when there is a conflict of interests.'	54.7

Interviewees generally have doubts about the more positive aspects of the plots of television drama. The study also reveals that long-term adolescents viewers are more inclined to believe in the depiction of casual male-female relationship.

Message about male-female relationship in television drama	Long-term adolescent viewers agreeing that this is true (%)
'After working together for a long time, some colleagues will easily fall in love with each other. '	67.6
'When adults have a steady relationship, most of them don't resist pre-marital sex.'	57.0
'It is easy to pick someone up in a bar and have a "one-night stand" .'	56.9

- (a) Based on the above research findings, what effects do you think such value orientation of adolescents will have on society? Explain. (8 marks)
- (b) Some people said, 'Although many negative things are depicted in television drama, they do reflect reality of society, and it is the responsibility of the media to reflect reality.' Do you agree with this viewpoint? Explain. (10 marks)

END OF PAPER