

## ADVANCED SUPPLEMENTARY LEVEL

## Hong Kong Studies

Question Number	Popularity	Performance in General
1	Compulsory	Satisfactory
2	Compulsory	Good
3	Compulsory	Poor
4	39.69	Satisfactory
5	16.03	Satisfactory
6	2.29	Poor
7	41.98	Satisfactory

Candidates' performance on individual questions

**Section 1**

- Q.1 Many candidates who answered part (a) of this question mixed up the question of evaluating the achievement of the present system against the aims of education suggested by the Education Commission, as required by the question, with that of how to achieve the suggested aims of education. Their answers to part (b) were superficial, reflecting that they seldom thought about the measures that were required to fulfill the suggested aims of the said proposal.
- Q.2 Candidates could list the pros and cons of establishing a Press Council, but further elaboration was rare. When suggesting alternative means of preventing media intrusion into privacy, candidates could advance some viable means. This might be due to their familiarization with the entertainment news.
- Q.3 As happened in the past, candidates were found to have difficulties in answering questions concerning constitutional or political affairs. Many candidates were not familiar with the right of abode issue. As a result, very few could put forward solid arguments to defend the Government's decision not to amend the Basic Law.

## Section 2

- Q.4 Some common reasons were advanced to account for the different attitudes adopted by the Education Department and educational bodies, but detailed discussion was rare. Furthermore, not many candidates knew exactly what was meant by 'value-added' efforts, so their answers to what impact the release of information on value-added efforts of schools may have on the education system were largely limited to what they had been exposed to so far. Thus, they seldom took an analytical point of view towards the question.
- Q.5 While many candidates could identify the potential benefits of the projects, few of them directly addressed the role of government in attracting foreign investment. Candidates only presented the general economic factors that were favourable to investment, but not the action the government should or should not adopt in order to attract foreign investment. Candidates also failed to discuss the trade-offs between the concessions made to foreign investors and the consequences of the decline of government revenues.
- Q.6 Very few candidates attempted this question. Those candidates who answered this question showed that they were not that familiar with the legal aid arrangement and its relationship to the rule of law. It was noted that candidates seemed to be ill-prepared for questions of political and legalistic nature.
- Q.7 Most candidates treated the opinion of the survey respondents who expressed their agreement to the messages that appeared in the television drama to be true, according to whether the candidates believed them or not. Candidates then presented their own judgements when they answered the question. Candidates also failed to discuss the functions of the media in different contexts, such as news reporting, television drama, and so on.

### General Comments

The overall performance of candidates was satisfactory. There was a tendency for those who answered in English to perform better than those who answered in Chinese, in terms of the thoroughness of their answers and their communication skills. Nevertheless, most, if not all, of their answers heavily relied on the information provided in the questions, and very few candidates put forward their own perspectives or views in their answers. It seemed that candidates were not well-equipped with analytical power.

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## Environmental Studies

Question Number	Popularity	Performance in General
1	Compulsory	Satisfactory
2	Compulsory	Fair
3	Compulsory	Satisfactory
4	9.82	Good
5	66.07	Good
6	10.71	Fair
7	13.39	Good

Candidates' performance on individual questions

### Section 1

- Q1. (a) This question was quite straightforward and candidates were able to cite the decisive factors for the development of electric vehicles. However, most of them did not know the oil crisis was a political issue and they focused their discussion on the shortage of oil resources. Only a few of them could point out that the government's policy and the concerns of citizens are the decisive factors.
- (b) Some candidates just listed the pros and cons of using electric vehicles and failed to come up with a clear standpoint. They did not assume the role of the minibus drivers in considering the issue. Many of them did not know the meaning of 'torque' and mistook 'emission free' to mean 'emission fee'.
- (c) This question was poorly answered. Many candidates were not aware that air pollution will become worse as electric power plants are required to produce more electricity for electric vehicles. Only a few candidates were able to point out that disposal of batteries would lead to a leakage of toxic chemicals and that this would harm the environment in the end.
- Q2. (a) Candidates performed very well in analysing the data shown in the question and drew reasoned conclusion. Many candidates were able to provide the factors that potentially contribute to nuclear accidents, such as war, earthquake, human error and workers' sense of safety, etc.

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- (b) Candidates performed well in discussing the advantages and disadvantages of nuclear power plants, but they failed to discuss whether nuclear power was particularly suitable for China.

Q3. Candidates' performance was not good. The biased information provided by the question made candidates think that the recycling of waste paper was not environmentally friendly. Obviously, candidates were unable to analyze the issue from different perspectives. Some candidates just copied the information from the question provided and were reluctant to elaborate their viewpoints. The following important viewpoints were neglected by most of the candidates:

- (i) Paper recycling could reduce the burden on landfill sites and incinerators;
- (ii) Polluted water produced during the process of paper making should be treated by a water treatment plant before being discharged;
- (iii) Paper making processes, whether using coniferous softwoods or waste paper as the raw material, would require large quantities of water and bleaching agent.

## Section 2

Q4. Candidates' performance was quite good. Many candidates were able to point out that the proposed green towns lack of waste-recycling facilities, sewage treatment plants, energy conservation facilities, etc. Better candidates could point out that the citizens' sense of environmental conservation and willingness to take necessary action would be important for the building of a green town.

Q5. This was the most popular question and was quite straightforward. In discussing why people in Hong Kong litter, most of the candidates could give detailed answers. In discussing measures to improve the littering situation, many candidates simply mentioned education in schools and of the public should be strengthened. Many of them failed to propose sensible measures to enhance civic education and a sense of community ownership.

Q6. (a) Candidates' performance was poor. It was found that candidates lacked sufficient basic knowledge to analyze the issues. In-depth discussion and sound arguments were not evident.

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- (b) Candidates failed to discuss how the amendment of the building ordinance could help to resolve the issue of global warming.
- Q7.
- (a) Candidates performed very well in drawing a sensible conclusion from the information provided. Many candidates were able to deduce that the extinction of species was caused by the activities of people, such as the exploitation of nature, economic development and urban development.
  - (b) Some candidates cited measures such as education and law enforcement to prevent illegal trade in threatened species. However, these measures were not effective to protect all threatened species. Some better candidates were able to point out some sensible measures like the setting up of protected regions, cloning of threatened species, and the discharge of effluent.

#### General comments

The overall performance was satisfactory. However, it was found that candidates were quite weak in considering problems from different perspectives and were unable to provide in-depth discussions for the issues concerned. It was also discouraging to find that many candidates copied information and viewpoints from the given sources. Critical thinking and innovative ideas were seldom found in candidates' answers.

## Human Relationships

Question Number	Popularity	Performance in General
1	Compulsory	Quite Good
2	Compulsory	Good
3	Compulsory	Satisfactory
4	27.59	Satisfactory
5	25.00	Good
6	28.45	Good
7	18.97	Fair

Candidates' performance on individual questions

### Section 1

- Q.1 The question was related to the daily life experience of the candidates and was quite well answered. In (a), some candidates did not identify correctly which three of the four items chosen by most respondents were related to family life and school curriculum. Many did not read the question carefully enough and explained all four items. Those who understood the question correctly were able to give reasoned answers. In (b), many candidates simply went over the five ways listed one by one, giving a 'yes' or 'no' answer supplemented with a rather general explanation. They also focused more on relieving 'pressure' rather than 'boredom'. This might be a reflection of what they are facing in real life. A small number of candidates did very well, challenging the effectiveness of the ways listed with logical arguments.
- Q.2 This question was well answered. In (a), it was not difficult for candidates to identify the main causes of the event. Many candidates were able to point out other possible causes inferred by the information provided. Some candidates listed as many causes as they could and thus failed to focus on what the question required - the 'main' causes. In (b), the answers were a bit general. Most candidates chose 'to improve communication with parents' and 'to study in the library' as a better way to solve the problem, yet few candidates could fully justify this choice. A small number of candidates did not read the question carefully and they suggested a number of ways instead.

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- Q. 3 This question was satisfactorily answered. In (a), the majority of candidates were able to point out the relationship between age and drug abuse but the explanation was superficial. Some candidates had an incorrect understanding of 'avoid discomfort of its absence' and 'for self medication'. A small number of candidates tried to explain each item, which showed that they were a bit weak in interpreting and using statistical data. In (b), the majority of candidates were able to suggest three measures. In explaining which measure was most effective, they tended to concentrate on the one they had chosen and spent too little time comparing the three measures.

## Section 2

- Q. 4 This question was satisfactorily answered. In (a), the majority of candidates tended to agree with the views of Mr. Justice Wong but were unable to give strong supportive arguments for their stand. Only a small number of candidates touched on the influence of violent comic books and the mass media and discussed whether they supported the view of Mr. Justice Wong or not. Candidates' performance in (b) was much better. They were able to point out a number of other factors. A small number of candidates, however, confused 'family education', 'moral education in the family' and 'parental modelling' with each other.
- Q. 5 This question was well answered. In (a), argument on 'respect for others' was good. A few candidates were creative, but the arguments seemed applicable to very few people in reality. Candidates' performance in (b) was not as good as in (a). Most candidates were able to explain the effectiveness of the measures to make people stop having loud phone conversations in the cinema while not 'teaching' the people to 'respect others'.
- Q. 6 This question was well answered. In (a), the majority of candidates were able to suggest two rules and justify their importance. In (b), a high proportion of the candidates did not attempt to compare the rules. Thus, they were only able to justify that the rule chosen was important without addressing the key word 'most'.
- Q. 7 The answers to this question were barely satisfactory. In (a), about half of the candidates did not make reference to the data provided and their answers became imaginative rather than reasoned. In (b), many candidates had difficulty in understanding the meaning of 'factors' in the context of the question and tended to put down whatever they knew about managing their finances.

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### General comments

The overall performance was quite good. The paper was designed to assess candidates' abilities in (a) processing and analysing information given; (b) viewing issues from different perspectives and drawing inferences; and (c) organising ideas, developing arguments and solving problems. There was no significant difference in scores between the Chinese and English scripts.

The scripts revealed that some candidates had problems with empathetical understanding. This year, some candidates were rather careless in studying the questions. They overlooked the key words and thus failed to tackle the most important aspects, or focused on the wrong aspects altogether despite the fact that the questions were straightforward.

Some candidates had problems communicating effectively. A small number of candidates did not organise their ideas well enough before they started to write. This resulted in unnecessarily lengthy answers. Some candidates also needed to improve on time management in order to leave sufficient time for the question they attempted last. In general, candidates were weaker in handling statistical data.



### The Modern World

Question Number	Popularity	Performance in General
1	Compulsory	Good
2	Compulsory	Fair
3	Compulsory	Quite Good
4	39%	Satisfactory
5	21%	Quite Good
6	6%	Satisfactory
7	34%	Good

### Candidates' performance on individual questions

#### Section 1

- Q.1 In part (a), the main problem with candidates was that they tended to give a mere description of the world-order model which they thought best reflected the current situation, with little explanation of the factors which have led to the emergence of that model. Answers to part (b) were quite creative. In predicting the world-order model that would prevail in the coming decade, candidates showed much imagination and produced well-argued answers.
- Q.2 In part (a), some candidates failed to see the implications of the data and therefore came to invalid conclusions about the peacekeeping role of the United Nations. Apart from summarising the various peacekeeping activities of the United Nations, candidates were expected to discern the 'trend' of its increasing involvement and expanded operations. In part (b), candidates were asked to discuss whether the data adequately reflected the effectiveness of the United Nations' peacekeeping efforts. However, many candidates wrongly focused on evaluating the role of the United Nations.
- Q.3 Some candidates only repeated the views put forward in either extract without explaining which extract provides a more appropriate explanation of the sources of economic problems encountered by the African states. It should be pointed out that, if a candidate takes the view that Extract A provides a more appropriate explanation, he should not only explain how Extract A truly reflects the roots of the

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economic plight of the African states, but also elaborate on why he thinks the arguments in Extract B are invalid.

## **Section 2**

- Q.4 Part (a) was very well answered. Candidates were able to explain how electronic communications contribute towards the development of the 'global village'. However, in part (b), little supporting evidence was used in explaining the extent to which electronic communications contribute towards the advancement and protection of human rights.
- Q.5 Candidates' comments on the validity of the views of Students A, B and C were logical and reasonable, reflecting a good understanding of the balance of power in Europe.
- Q.6 In part (a), candidates gave a reasonable discussion of how the characteristics of member states of the European Union (EU) would affect the role of the EU in international relationships. Answers to part (b) were, however, less satisfactory. Candidates should have identified and elaborated on the effects of 'other characteristics' such as military spending, political stability, and foreign policy orientations.
- Q.7 Performance in this question was good. Both the positive and negative impact of foreign aid on the developing countries were adequately discussed.

## **General comments**

Most candidates demonstrated a good understanding of recent developments in the modern world. Their scope of knowledge was reasonably wide, ranging from international politics to domestic socio-economic developments. In answering the questions, most of them could make good use of the given data to support their arguments. Nonetheless, there was still room for improvement in terms of providing an analytical and logical answer based on sound interpretation of given data and critical evaluation of different views.

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### Science, Technology & Society

Question Number	Popularity	Performance in General
1	Compulsory	Good
2	Compulsory	Unsatisfactory
3	Compulsory	Fair
4	17%	Good
5	10%	Satisfactory
6	70%	Satisfactory
7	3%	Fair

### Candidates' performance on individual questions

#### Section 1

- Q.1 (a) Candidates were able to select appropriate information from the data provided by the question. Most of them held the view that Hong Kong has a greater potential for developing into a global information and communications technology centre. Their arguments included: Hong Kong is free-market oriented and so it possesses advantages such as flexibility, openness and vitality; the people of Hong Kong use a greater number of telephone lines, indicating that its telecommunication infrastructure is better than that of Singapore; the number of Internet service providers in Hong Kong is many times greater than in Singapore, which results in keen competition and therefore the enhancement of the quality of service and the import of new technology.
- (b) Candidates were able to suggest some reasonable factors, e.g. it is easy for information technology companies to raise capital to develop high technology as a result of the possession of high-quality information technology personnel, the community's higher level of education and high receptiveness to innovations, and economic stability.

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- Q.2 (a) Many candidates failed to identify major changes that occurred in people's lives as a result of the scientific discoveries and innovations listed. Answers tended to be superficial and very restricted in scope. For example, when they mentioned the atomic bomb, they only thought of wars; and when they mentioned contraceptive pills, they only thought of contraception. This indicates that their basic understanding of the scientific innovations concerned was inadequate and narrow. In fact, all the items listed in the question have had important effects on various aspects of people's lives, including communications, transport, medical treatment, and sources of energy.
- (b) Some candidates were able to offer reasonable arguments. However, some simply rambled indiscriminately.
- Q.3 (a) Most candidates pointed out that head transplant surgery cannot really benefit paralysed people due its high cost, and the fact that after the surgery the patients would still be paralysed.
- (b) Candidates' arguments in connection with the use of resources and moral questions were very weak.

## Section 2

- Q.4 (a) Most candidates were able to conclude from the given data that, globally speaking, both piracy rate and money losses incurred showed a trend of decline. Some stronger candidates went further and said that in developing countries piracy rate and money losses had decreased drastically compared with those in developed countries. Candidates were also able to discuss factors that brought about such trends, such as developing countries undertaking strict measures to crack down on software piracy under pressure from the United States, and the falling price of authentic software.

- (b) Most candidates pointed out that the problem of pirated software would reduce investors' interest in developing high technology in Hong Kong. They also suggested that the government should strengthen the enforcement of law by the customs office, crack down on software pirating activities, enact laws to punish software pirates, strengthen civic education, and enhance the civic awareness of the people of Hong Kong.
- Q.5 (a) Candidates were able to offer reasonable arguments in their discussion on factors prompting various nations to participate in the space-flight competition, e.g. to facilitate the development of technology for national defence and as a display of national strength; to conduct astronomical research; and to develop space factories and satellite communications.
- (b) Candidates failed to provide a comprehensive discussion on whether China should invest its limited resources in developing space technology or in improving people's livelihood.
- Q.6 (a) This was the most popular question, but candidates' performance was only average. When discussing the effects of genetically modified foods on humans, candidates were able to cite and elaborate on views from the extract. However, few mentioned beneficial effects such as increasing food production and improving food quality. When discussing whether the government should support genetic engineering research, the better candidates offered some insightful opinions, e.g. if genetic engineering research were not carried out, technology in this area would lag behind other nations; genetic engineering research could contribute immensely towards medical treatment and medicine production.

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- (b) Most candidates took the view that strict laws should be passed to require genetically modified foods to be labelled. The arguments they put forward were often well substantiated. Such arguments included: consumers have the right to know and the right to choose; if accidents occurred, the labels on the food could help medical personnel to conduct follow-up investigations.

Q.7 This was the least popular question, and candidates' performance was unsatisfactory. When discussing whether humanoid robots would improve the quality of our lives, candidates often copied from the extract without offering their own standpoint and opinions.

### **General comments**

As a whole, candidates' performance was mediocre. Their basic knowledge of society and of science and technology was rather inadequate. Some candidates merely rambled on using cliché-ridden arguments, providing vague, superficial and unreasonable answers. For many candidates, there is room for improvement in their analytical and communication skills.