

2003 AS Liberal Studies

Marking Criteria

Marking Criteria are provided for the reference of students and teachers only. They should not be treated as model answers.

(Note: In the assessment process, markers should first determine an appropriate grade for an answer based on 3 factors, viz. understanding of the question, content and approach, and then convert that grade into a corresponding mark according to the following table.)

Criteria	Grade
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-balanced answer which shows a full understanding of the demands of the question. • Analytical in approach and critical in the use of supporting evidence. • Arguments are cogent and effectively supported. • Free from <i>major</i> inaccuracies/inconsistencies and important omissions. <p><i>(Note: Answers in this category need NOT be 'perfect' – they may contain minor flaws in content or approach.)</i></p>	A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptably balanced answer which shows a good understanding of the demands of the question. • Predominantly analytical in approach. • Arguments are mostly coherent and well substantiated. • Contains occasional inaccuracies and minor omissions. 	B
	C
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows a general understanding of the demands of the question and a conscious effort to address the question, but the answer lacks balance. • Shows some attempt to analyse the relevant issues, but the scope and depth of analysis are rather limited. • Arguments tend to be inadequately sustained and exemplified. • Marred by inaccuracies, omissions and inconsistencies. 	D
	E
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows inadequate understanding of the question and/or a weak knowledge of the subject matter. • Unduly narrative and weak in analysis. • Arguments tend to be assertive and not substantiated. • Containing fundamental errors/major inconsistencies/gross irrelevancies. 	E/F
	F
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows a total misunderstanding of the question and a failure to distinguish between relevant and irrelevant material. • Narrative in approach and lacking in analysis. • Overwhelmingly assertive and fragmentary. • Totally inadequate, containing little that is accurate, relevant or worthwhile. 	U

Candidates' Performance

Hong Kong Studies

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
1	Compulsory	Satisfactory
2	Compulsory	Good
3	Compulsory	Mediocre
4	13	Mediocre
5	81	Good
6	4	Poor
7	2	Mediocre

Candidates' performance on individual questions

Section 1

- Q.1 Many candidates were able to identify the author's viewpoints, and the relationships among electoral system, power balance of the legislature, and distribution of interests and burdens in society. Nevertheless, not many candidates were able to comprehend the real meaning of balance participation and the equality of the right to vote. Therefore, candidates usually failed to point out the inconsistency between the author's view of "balance participation" and equal representation.
- Q.2 As required by part (a), many candidates rightly identified the problems of existing education reforms as reflected in the cartoon. Candidates also rightly pointed out the incompatibility between the aims of education reforms as reflected in the cartoon and the burden generated by such reforms on the teachers. Most candidates thought that the solutions to the problems identified in part (a) hinged on whether the government could provide additional resources or not. Not many candidates suggested the government should reorganize the education reform measures as a solution to the problems identified.
- Q.3 Many candidates rightly described the relationship between the principal officials and the media as suggested by the author, but gave little detailed comments on the author's views on such a relationship, as required in part (a). Although candidates could list the pros and cons of the close relationship between the principal officials and the media, their analyses lacked depth and were too narrow. They only regarded the relationship as a static and linear one, without putting the issue into the right context, nor did they take into consideration the dynamic interaction between the principal officials and the media.

Section 2

- Q.4 Candidates were able to identify the main points which the cartoonist wished to bring out. Candidates were weak at articulating their views on the question of political and legal nature, as required in part (a). For part (b), candidates seemed not to fully comprehend the pros and cons of the proposed legislation in accordance with Article 23 of the Basic Law. The lack of understanding of the issue prevented them from advancing sound and solid arguments for the said legislation from the perspective of the Chief Executive.
- Q.5 Many candidates attempted this question. It was very obvious that candidates were more familiar with education issues than other issues because it was close to them. Mother tongue teaching has been debated for years and candidates were fully aware of the pros and cons of mother tongue teaching. Candidates offered detailed but very similar answers to part (b).

- Q.6 In answering part (a), candidates were capable of describing the trend of unemployment in each major economic sector, but they seldom attempted to compare and contrast the situations in different sectors. Candidates did not seem to be very sensitive to figures and numbers. For part (b), candidates were able to generally outline the characteristics of the structural economic change in Hong Kong, but usually without much elaboration and analysis.
- Q.7 Candidates were able to identify the viewpoints and positions of the parties involved in the SSPA controversy, and offered a general comment on each party involved. For part (b), candidates seemed not to know exactly the operation of the SSPA system and the implication of the High Court's ruling on it. Therefore, it was very difficult for them to assess the degree of improvement in terms of fair treatment brought by the ruling of the High Court.

General comments

In general, the performance of candidates was satisfactory. Like previous years, candidates seemed to have difficulties in handling questions of political nature. In contrast, candidates performed well in questions related to their daily life, such as issues of education reform and mother tongue teaching. Candidates showed little sophistication in their analysis and argumentation. Their writing and presentation skills seemed to be stronger this year, but there is still room for improvement.

Environmental Studies

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
1	Compulsory	Good
2	Compulsory	Fair
3	Compulsory	Fair
4	29	Satisfactory
5	19	Poor
6	15	Fair
7	36	Satisfactory

Candidates' performance on individual questions

Section 1

- Q.1 (a) Most candidates were able to highlight the key issue illustrated in the newspaper cutting. However, many candidates simply repeated some of the statements quoted in the newspaper cutting without much further elaboration on their significance and implications. Most candidates rightfully identified the key symptom as littering, but only a small number were able to continue by pointing out that the underlying issue was the lack of enforcement of existing anti-littering regulations.
- (b) Most candidates were able to suggest two useful approaches to help address the problems raised in the newspaper cutting. However, only a smaller number of candidates attempted to provide further details on how these approaches could be or should be implemented. Some candidates apparently did not understand the meaning of the word “justify” and failed to provide justifications for their suggestions.
- Q.2 (a) This part was poorly answered. Many candidates provided only the popular but simplistic definition of the term “sustainable development” without pointing out the inherent conflicts underlying and major debates pertaining to this ambiguous and somewhat controversial concept. Due to this failure in providing a sophisticated development of the idea of sustainable development, most candidates were not able to provide a critical interpretation of the data presented in the table within a cross-country comparative framework. Quite a number of candidates misunderstood the meaning and implication of the “energy use efficiency indicator”.
- (b) While most candidates were able to identify specific measures that could be introduced to help Hong Kong to move toward the larger societal goals of sustainable development, almost all of such suggestions were limited to technical fixes such as energy saving and pollution reduction methods. Non-technical measures were seldom mentioned. Many candidates, moreover, failed to interpret correctly the second part of the question. This meant that they were not able to identify and elaborate on the need to debate and reach consensus among the public on existing societal perceptions and normative values toward man-nature relationships as one of the major pre-conditions to allow Hong Kong to achieve the goals of sustainable development.
- Q.3 (a) This question was poorly handled by most candidates. Many candidates simply repeated the information provided in the tables in a descriptive manner without attempting to identify any overall pattern or provide an analysis that would have helped explain the nature of the relationship, or the lack of such, between population change and the expansion of nuclear power-based electric generating capacity.

- (b) Most candidates, in their discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of nuclear power, limited their arguments to those pertaining to the technicalities of the generation and utilization of nuclear power *per se* and failed to frame and focus such arguments in relation to the natural environment. In addressing the second part of the question, a number of candidates even mistook nuclear power as being the equivalent of nuclear weapons. Many arguments against the expansion of nuclear power as an appropriate alternative were put forth without convincing rationales.

Section 2

- Q.4 (a) While almost all the candidates were able to describe in general terms the similarities and differences in terms of the *reasons* why different groups of people go to the protected areas, many failed to focus their discussion clearly on the environmental values between and among such social groups. A smaller number of candidates still succeeded in identifying the specific circumstances under which these groups may come into conflict with each other.
- (b) Most candidates focused their attention on legislative and regulatory measures as the primary means that could be adopted by the government to resolve potential conflicts between users of protected areas. Many failed to address the first part of the question and did not elaborate on the issue of the extent to which the government should be the only party responsible for resolving such conflicts.
- Q.5 (a) Candidates choosing this question mostly fell into two distinct categories: those who demonstrated a fairly good understanding of the mechanism of the emissions trading scheme and those who did not. Unfortunately, around half of those who attempted this question belonged to the latter group.
- (b) Those who knew how an emissions trading scheme should operate generally had no problem in outlining the essential requirements for such a scheme to be implemented successfully. Nevertheless, they had some difficulties in relating such a discussion to the emerging opportunities and inherent constraints associated with the specific political and institutional framework in the Pearl River Delta that may help or hamper the successful implementation of an emissions trading scheme to tackle the region's area-wide air pollution problem.
- Q.6 (a) This part of the question was poorly handled by many candidates. Many failed to conduct an intelligent discussion on how the structure and activities of international trade relate to and impact on the larger issue of biodiversity conservation. While most candidates were able to identify certain types of economic activities that would affect the gene pools in tropical rainforests, such a discussion tended to be narrowly focused on the technicalities and neglected the social, political and institutional contexts. Not surprisingly, then, many were not able to pinpoint and elaborate on the kind of ethical issues that would arise from such activities.
- (b) The answers to this part of the question reflected a poor understanding of the importance of wetlands, particularly at the global level. While many candidates correctly pointed out the significance of preserving the Mai Po Nature Reserve within the local context, albeiting a somewhat restricted fashion, focusing on certain utilitarian concerns (e.g., tourism promotion), most did not offer to explain its significance in terms of the need of doing so to help preserve the integrity of the ecological system, particularly on a global scale.
- Q.7 (a) Most candidates were able to handle this question with confidence, describing and discussing how the different sources of open-water pollution affect the environment. The discussion on how technology could be used to deal with open-water pollution problems was, however, mostly focused on aspects of treatment. The application of technology in reducing, recycling, collecting, and monitoring polluted water was only mentioned by a smaller number of candidates.

- (b) While most candidates succeeded in identifying non-technical factors that were required to be incorporated into a comprehensive solution to deal with the problem of open-water pollution, quite a few have failed to relate such a discussion to the spatial information provided in the map.

General comments

The overall performance fell between fair to satisfactory. Many candidates tended to be largely descriptive in their discussion of the issues at hand and narrowly focused their deliberation on the technicalities. The answers could be strengthened if the candidates were able to go beyond the facts and provide in-depth analysis of the issues in terms of how they relate to the larger social, political and institutional contexts, at both the local and global levels. For some questions, it is necessary to link the arguments to some of the major underlying philosophical perspectives and associated beliefs that trigger the debates in environmental studies in the first place. The candidates also need to sharpen their skills in constructing their answers in a concise, coherent and organized manner.

Human Relationships

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
1	Compulsory	Not Satisfactory
2	Compulsory	Mediocre
3	Compulsory	Mediocre
4	25	Satisfactory
5	12	Satisfactory
6	52	Quite Good
7	11	Quite Good

Candidates' performance on individual questions

Section 1

- Q.1 (a) In general, candidates were unable to pinpoint the strengths and weaknesses of each speaker's opinions. Some responded to the question wrongly by merely writing about whether they agreed or disagreed with the speakers, while some gave superficial analysis of the speakers' opinions. Some candidates offered inadequate explanations for their choice and some appeared to have failed to understand what 'strengths' and 'weaknesses' meant. There were also candidates who rephrased the speakers' opinions without explaining why such opinions were more convincing.
- (b) In most cases candidates were unable to correlate the impact of the speakers' views on the school's culture in relation to sexuality. Many failed to address various aspects concerned: likely impact on the school's culture, students' developing sexuality, and the fact that teachers and students could hold conflicting viewpoints. Some candidates failed to understand what 'school's culture in relation to the students' developing sexuality' meant and offered rather general answers.
- Q.2 (a) Many candidates were unable to analyse the data given and to present them in an organised manner. Some showed difficulties in handling the data, and some misunderstood the differences among the four parenting styles. Some candidates only analysed the data for the groups at age 14 and not at 17.
- (b) Many candidates suggested factors that were either irrelevant or not measurable. Some failed to explain why the factor suggested was measurable.
- Q.3 (a) In general, candidates were weak at categorising and at explaining their choice and classification. Some candidates failed to identify the irrelevant paragraph and this affected their categorisation of the relevant paragraphs.
- (b) Many candidates failed to discuss the good and bad aspects related to the phenomenon mentioned in the specified text. Some failed to recognise that the question required them to restrict their discussion to text 6 only. In some cases, the answers lacked creativity and included few analytical points.

Section 2

- Q.4 Some candidates either failed to identify the relevant factors or to thoroughly discuss them in relation to the three periods mentioned in the question. Instead of comparing the various factors, some paraphrased the ideas given or even merely copied sentences from the sources and treated

them as explanations.

- Q.5 (a) Some candidates labelled the axes wrongly. Some were unable to transform the written words into graph form.
- (b) Many candidates were unable to refer to the hypothesis they chose and pinpoint how the researcher could observe and measure the generation gap specified in the chosen hypothesis. Some merely stated the factors that they thought would result in a generation gap, while some others failed to choose a hypothesis for a specific discussion and merely described generally how one could measure generation gap. In some cases, candidates neglected the 'observe' part of the question.
- Q.6 (a) There were many good answers to this part. However, some candidates failed to relate parents' actions and attitudes to certain aspects of children's development into maturity. Many a candidate failed to read the question carefully and so, while both 'actions' and 'attitudes' needed to be addressed, only 'actions' or 'attitudes' were referred to in the answers.
- (b) Some candidates failed to make a choice between 'parents' and 'people outside the family' in their discussion. Some failed to discuss students' different needs in the two transitions and how such different needs would make either group (parents or people outside the family) be more effective in helping them cope with changes during a specific transition.
- Q.7 (a) In general, candidates were able to identify and discuss relevant factors. A small number of candidates did not discuss the factors adequately.
- (b) Most candidates performed well in answering this part.

General comments

As in past years, many candidates missed the key words in the questions and consequently focused their answers wrongly. In general candidates were weak at analysing non-textual information and at handling textual information in a non-textual way.

Modern World

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
1	Compulsory	Good
2	Compulsory	Satisfactory
3	Compulsory	Good
4	35	Fair
5	7	Poor
6	20	Fair
7	38	Satisfactory

Candidates' performance on individual questions

Section 1

- Q.1 Most candidates were able to identify from the table the major problems faced by less developed countries and to convert quantitative data into qualitative answers. Many gave concrete suggestions to reduce the scale of the problems.
- Q.2 When answering the question, some candidates did not make full use of the information given in the table. The question should be approached by first discussing the magnitude of economic and military challenges facing the USA presented by different countries and how that would affect its position in the global balance of power, and then proceed to argue how effective such a role would be in maintaining peace in the modern world.
- Q.3 Most candidates did well in this question. Excellent candidates were able to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of the multinational corporations in developing their arguments and conclusion.

Section 2

- Q.4 Most candidates were able to grasp the essence of the question and noted the limitations of sports in promoting international understanding and peace. Some candidates thought that sports could overshadow nationalism to a certain extent.
- Q.5 Some candidates were not able to explain clearly how the selected issues led to wars. They merely described the wars related to the issues. Better candidates were able to treat these issues as the causes of conflicts leading to wars when answering the question. The solutions suggested by candidates were logical and reasonable.
- Q.6 Most candidates were able to note the existence of the opposing trends of globalisation and fragmentation in the present world. The better candidates were able to provide reasons to support their argument that globalisation or fragmentation would dominate the development of the modern world.
- Q.7 Many candidates offered good discussions on whether the preconditions for peacekeeping could be easily met, and the preconditions were well analysed. When answering part (b), some candidates wrongly discussed how the United Nations should be reformed instead of suggesting additional conditions to enhance the chances of success, e.g. the military strength of the UN peacekeeping forces and the effectiveness of the peacekeeping plans.

General comments

Most candidates had a broad understanding of the current and major issues faced by human beings in the present era. They are well aware of the various forces that shape the development of the modern world. The aim of the module in promoting the understanding of the changing world has generally been achieved.

Candidates have developed a world vision in understanding and analysing local issues. Nevertheless, further development of the data interpretation skills would be advantageous so that the information given can be fully manipulated and exploited to answer the questions. The reasons for and against an argument should also be fully considered in providing an analytical and objective answer.

Science, Technology & Society

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
1	Compulsory	Quite good
2	Compulsory	Good
3	Compulsory	Quite satisfactory
4	12	Quite satisfactory
5	9	Good
6	3	Satisfactory
7	76	Quite satisfactory

Candidates' performance on individual questions

Section 1

- Q.1 (a) Most candidates were able to identify the contradictions between the two sources. However, not many of them offered clear elaborations on how the public should react to the contradictory views, and some even ignored the latter part of the question.
- (b) Less than half of the candidates argued for their own positions. In answering this type of questions, comparative evaluation of the parties concerned would help to add persuasive power to candidates' conclusions.
- (c) Candidates' performance was very good in this part. Most of them were able to explain clearly how other variables could have contributed to a longer life span for people in Hong Kong over the specified period.
- Q.2 (a) Around a third of the candidates were able to clearly identify the gender differences reflected in most data items. Some outstanding candidates offered very thorough analyses.
- (b) Many candidates were able to answer this part well by elaborating on their views adequately.
- (c) Candidates' performance in this part was reasonably good. Some approached this part of the question with sound views delineated by suggestions of different measures and methods.
- Q.3 (a) Not many candidates spelt the factors out clearly, and few attempted to elaborate on their answers.
- (b) In general, candidates' performance in this part was weak. Many of them simply repeated the measures already stated in the question, without contributing their own analyses. It appeared that issues about Hong Kong transport were one of the areas where candidates needed to make improvement.

Section 2

- Q.4 Not many candidates attempted this question. For those who did, many gave quite superficial analyses.
- Q.5 (a) Not many candidates attempted this question. Answers given were in general reasonable.
- (b) Many candidates provided well-balanced and plausible analyses.
- Q.6 (a) Very few candidates attempted this question. Those who did demonstrated an effort in listing the similarities.
- (b) In general candidates' arguments were quite weak in this part.
- Q.7 This was the most popular question in this Section. However, many candidates underestimated the challenge posed by the question. Many of them merely repeated almost *verbatim* the comments, without doing the required analysis. A good answer to this question should lay out an analysis on *the pros and cons* of each of the three selected comments, and relate them to the broader contexts of science in general, scientific thinking and science education for a Secondary 3 student.

General comments

In general, candidates' performance was reasonably satisfactory. Compared to last year, candidates' time management seemed to have improved in terms of answering all the questions required. Yet, similar to last year, still there was room for improvement in the use of critical thinking and argumentative skills in analysing data and presenting views.

統計資料 Examination Statistics

1. 考生考獲成績級別的百分率 Percentages of candidates awarded each grade

	出席人數 No. sat	出席考生考獲各級的百分率 Percentage awarded each grade based on no. sat							缺席百分率 Absentee rate (%)
		A	B	C	D	E	F	UNCL	
首次應考日校考生 Day school first attempters	1179	6.1	8.0	12.2	26.9	26.8	14.1	5.9	1.2
日校考生 Day school candidates	1206	6.1	7.9	12.1	27.1	26.9	13.9	6.0	1.1
全體考生 All candidates	1318	5.7	7.3	11.8	26.6	27.0	15.0	6.6	2.2

2. 中文及英文卷考生出席人數 Attendance statistics of the two language versions

	出席總人數 Total no. sat	以英文應考百分率 Percentage sitting English version	以中文應考百分率 Percentage sitting Chinese version
首次應考日校考生 Day school first attempters	1179	14.0	86.0
日校考生 Day school candidates	1206	13.7	86.3
全體考生 All candidates	1318	12.9	87.1

3. 日校男女考生成績統計 Day school candidates' results statistics by gender

考生類別 Candidate category	性別 Gender	出席人數 No. sat	A		A-B		A-C		A-D		A-E	
			人數 No.	百分率 %								
首次應考日校考生 Day school first attempters	男生 Male	308	9	2.9	21	6.8	38	12.3	114	37.0	204	66.2
	女生 Female	871	63	7.2	145	16.6	272	31.2	513	58.9	739	84.8
	總人數 Total	1179	72	6.1	166	14.1	310	26.3	627	53.2	943	80.0
日校考生 Day school candidates	男生 Male	318	9	2.8	21	6.6	39	12.3	119	37.4	213	67.0
	女生 Female	888	64	7.2	147	16.6	275	31.0	522	58.8	753	84.8
	總人數 Total	1206	73	6.1	168	13.9	314	26.0	641	53.2	966	80.1

4. 日校考生選考本科情況 Statistics on day school candidates sitting this subject

	男生 Male		女生 Female	
	首次應考日校考生 All day school first attempters	全體日校考生 All day school candidates	首次應考日校考生 All day school first attempters	全體日校考生 All day school candidates
香港高級程度會考應考人數 No. of candidates sitting HKALE	11557	12045	14832	15254
應考本科人數(百分率) No. (%) of candidates sitting this subject	308 (2.7)	318 (2.6)	871 (5.9)	888 (5.8)