

# 2006 AS Liberal Studies

## Marking Scheme

These documents were prepared for markers' reference. They should not be regarded as sets of model answers. Candidates and teachers who were not involved in the marking process are advised to interpret their contents with care.

### Content

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

### Effective Communication

- The criteria for awarding markings for effective communication are :
  - whether the argument is logically and systematically set out;
  - whether it is easy to understand the arguments relevant to the question; and
  - whether the language is effectively deployed in the communication of relevant idea and viewpoints.*(Note : Grammar and spelling are only important insofar as they enhance or hinder communication.)*
- Markers are advised to use the following grade-mark equivalence scale when awarding marks for effective communication:

Grade	A	B	C	D	E	F	U
Mark	5	4	3	2	2	1	0

## Candidates' Performance

### Hong Kong Studies

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
1	Compulsory	Mediocre
2	Compulsory	Mediocre
3	Compulsory	Mediocre
4	65	Mediocre
5	13	Satisfactory
6	3	Poor
7	19	Satisfactory

Candidates' performance on individual questions

### Section 1

- Q.1 In part (a), many candidates tended to describe the data given and offered little analysis. Some candidates just focused on the 'drawbacks' or 'weaknesses' of the questionnaire design and/or the research method without giving detailed explanations. As a result, they failed to focus on the discussion of whether the findings reflected the views of Hong Kong citizens on the Basic Law. In part (b), only a few candidates were able to explain the meaning of the word 'contradictory' and present their arguments from different perspectives. Those candidates who argued that the findings were not contradictory were able to provide convincing arguments. Candidates' knowledge and understanding of the major political and social issues since the handover was good and therefore they were able to cite relevant issues to support their answer.
- Q.2 In part (a), candidates managed to describe the message communicated in the cartoon. However, some of them tended to explain how instead of why the Central Authorities and/or the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government put pressure on RTHK. In part (b), some candidates just focused on the professionalism/code of conduct of the mass media and the status of RTHK instead of proposing what roles RTHK should play in Hong Kong.
- Q.3 In part (a), some candidates just argued the usefulness of attending tutorial classes instead of commenting on the views of Ms Judy Cheung and Mrs Fanny Law. Some candidates tended to summarise the views of Ms Cheung and Mrs Law. Only a few candidates were able to define the term 'effectiveness' in terms of examination results and learning outcomes, and provide more balanced arguments. In part (b), some candidates were not able to distinguish the public examination system from the whole education system and consequently gave irrelevant answers. Though most candidates were able to identify some shortcomings of the public examination system, they failed to argue whether the popularity of tutorial schools in Hong Kong was entirely due to the shortcomings.

## Section 2

- Q.4 In part (a), some candidates misinterpreted the question and discussed the benefits of small-class teaching without detailed explanation of why the teaching methods should also be changed. In part (b), most candidates were able to point out the status or importance of language subjects in the community, but only a few candidates were able to present their argument with reference to the characteristics of language learning.
- Q.5 In part (a), some candidates just explained how far they agreed with the message communicated by the cartoonist without making reference to Source A and Source B. Some candidates did not answer the question directly but just explained their own views on the proposal for political development. In part (b), a few candidates' analysis lacked depth and were too narrow.
- Q.6 In discussing what problems would occur if moral controversies were ruled upon in court, some candidates just discussed the issue of homosexuality. In part (b), some candidates only discussed how the problem raised in the question could be solved instead of evaluating what role could be played by the Legislative Council in this issue. However, as candidates did not know much about the implications on the ruling by the High Court on moral controversies, they were only able to cite the information provided.
- Q.7 A few candidates mechanically described the figures given industry by industry. They failed to group the industries into sectors to make the explanation more precise. In part (b), candidates generally had no problem explaining what direction Hong Kong's economy should be going in.

### General comments

This year, candidates performed better when answering questions about political issues. However, issues related to candidates' daily life, such as education, were more popular. Candidates should have understood the data given and used them for deliberation in answering questions. Some candidates did not read the questions carefully, and so neglected the key words. For a few candidates, time management was still a problem. The writing and presentations skills of the candidates continues to improve.

## Environmental Studies

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
1	Compulsory	Satisfactory
2	Compulsory	Fair
3	Compulsory	Good
4	50	Quite good
5	18	Fair
6	26	Quite good
7	6	Unsatisfactory

Candidates' performance on individual questions

### Section 1

- Q.1 (a) Many candidates were able to identify that Mrs Chan had adopted the consumers' point of view and the position of a caring mother, respectively. But most of them failed to spell out the values embedded in her positions—value of human life versus value of money. Most of them provided answers that were primarily descriptive and rudimentary, translating the two pictures into words.
- (b) Many candidates had a general understanding of the present mechanism for testing vegetables and fruit imported to HK. However, quite a number of candidates misunderstood the question, which demanded an evaluation of the work of the government rather than a list of expected measures. Only a few candidates were capable of pointing out the government departments responsible for doing this job.
- Q.2 (a) In general, candidates did not have any problems drawing conclusions, from the source, on whether recycling was 'starting to take hold' in homes. However, some of them did not substantiate their evaluation of the effectiveness of waste sorting with evidence. They were quite weak in explaining whether the source reflected the attitudes of Hong Kong people towards recycling.
- (b) Many candidates were able to discuss the feasibility of developing a culture of recycling metals and glass in Hong Kong. But most of them failed to go beyond their comments on the information provided in the source and explore the problems of the existing recycling practices and measures taken by the government to promote the recycling industry. It seems that candidates could not distinguish between recycling and waste-sorting, and so failed to analyse the issue of recycling culture.
- Q.3 (a) Quite a number of candidates did not understand the real role of the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau and mistook it for three separate departments. Candidates lacked awareness of the difference between facts and opinions, which is essential in the discussion of a survey result. The suggestions made by candidates were clichés and not planned at the policy-making level.
- (b) The majority of candidates were able to discuss whether the replacement of plastic bags with paper ones is feasible and environmentally friendly. The depth of discussion nevertheless varied. Some candidates were able to exemplify their answers with situations in daily life.

## Section 2

- Q.4 (a) Most candidates managed to interpret the data provided correctly and to relate their discussion to the respective strengths and limitations of the law in maintaining good indoor air quality and protecting children from passive smoking. Candidates with higher ability were able to identify other factors that may also affect indoor air quality.
- (b) Answers given by candidates were not very satisfactory. Many of them discussed the problems in a superficial manner. The relatively weak performance in this part suggested that candidates in general did not know how to respond to non-conventional questions and lacked understanding of the spatial extent of the indoor environment.
- Q.5 (a) Many candidates were capable of pinpointing the conflicting views of the professor and the property companies—the contention between social and economic development. Some candidates nevertheless explained such conflicting views in a clumsy narrative style, and were not sufficiently analytical.
- (b) Many candidates were able to put forward ideas to create a more sustainable environment. However, some of them failed to relate the suggestions to the conflict that they mentioned in part (a).
- Q.6 (a) Many candidates were able to point out the major factors threatening the survival of endangered/rare species provided in the data. However, most answers were divorced from the local context and the answers provided by them reflected a lack of general knowledge of issues pertaining to endangered/rare species in Hong Kong. Their answers reflected weakness in formulating arguments to justify the relative importance of the factors.
- (b) Many candidates showed that they did not know how to differentiate between education ‘in’ the environment and education ‘about’ the environment. As a consequence of this confusion, they explained what could be learnt from lessons about environmental protection in school and from government propaganda.
- Q.7 (a) Some candidates were familiar with the definition of sustainable development. However, most of them focused on the evaluation of the effectiveness of the ‘Kyoto Protocol’ rather than the ‘newly formed partnership’ stated in the source. Because of this, they failed to critically discuss the ‘newly formed partnership’ in relation to sustainable development.
- (b) The majority of candidates did not understand the concept of ‘values with respect to the environment’ and merely focused on the attitude of the United States towards the problems of global warming. Their answers, in general, failed to demonstrate an analytical ability to discuss the issue from a global perspective.

## General comments

In general, candidates demonstrated a basic understanding of some common environmental issues. However, most of them were weak in articulating their conceptual understanding in relation to the local context. Candidates should improve on their analytical and evaluative skills so that they do not simply describe the source data.

Furthermore, candidates should be taught how to formulate arguments and do comparative analysis of the values of different parties in society.

## Human Relationships

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
1	Compulsory	Good
2	Compulsory	Fair
3	Compulsory	Satisfactory
4	6	Fair
5	11	Satisfactory
6	61	Fair
7	22	Satisfactory

### Candidates' performance on individual questions

#### Section 1

- Q.1 (a) Most candidates were able to make reference to the source, categorise its content, and analyse various factors that attracted youngsters to 'cosplay'. Candidates' performance reflected their attention to current culture.
- (b) Performance was good. Candidates were able to do analysis as a whole from various perspectives and offer discussions. Only a small number of candidates failed to touch upon the considerations of the teacher advisors and the executives of the student union. The factors suggested by some candidates were rather unbalanced. There were also candidates who listed more than ten considerations without any discussion.
- Q.2 (a) Candidates spent plenty of time analysing the problems faced by Mango and yet overlooked the ways to solve the problems. Some candidates listed only one problem and therefore did not meet the requirement of the question. Some failed to make appropriate suggestions in the role of a classmate.
- (b) Many candidates, neglecting the demands of the question, failed to respond by focusing on good relationships among teenagers and merely explained the effects of information technology on the development of family relationships. Some candidates did not make reference to the information in the electronic conversation or to their personal experience.
- Q.3 (a) On the whole, candidates were able to make use of the source to analyse and discuss Mary's personality and her relationship with John. A few candidates made contradictory conclusions when using the source in their discussions.
- (b) Most candidates were able to explain John's feelings, but failed to fully explain the advice they gave.

## Section 2

- Q.4 (a) Candidates did not make good use of the content of Source A in answering the question. Some candidates merely focused on discussing the positive and negative impacts of Disneyland, and failed to discuss how its spirit influenced the personal growth of teenagers.
- (b) Candidates' answers indicated that they had rather high creativity and ability to design activities. However, some candidates failed to explain how such activities would achieve their objectives.
- Q.5 (a) Candidates in general were able to fully discuss the pros and cons of finding a gay partner with "The Gayda".
- (b) Some candidates failed to analyse, with respect to the characteristics of matchmaking websites, how such websites would benefit or harm the development of stable and harmonious relationships. Some offered superficial discussion.
- Q.6 (a) Most candidates were able to discuss the potential problems between fathers and sons/daughters, but their answers were poorly organised. Candidates should first organise and categorise the information before doing an analysis of it.
- (b) Some candidates failed to suggest appropriate and concrete activities in the light of the characteristics and limitations of the fathers. Some of the activities were hardly feasible.
- Q.7 (a) Candidates' performance was satisfactory. Most candidates were able to make comprehensive suggestions and engage in insightful discussion with respect to Mary's personality and the nature of the two jobs.
- (b) Candidates were able to discuss properly the reactions of the parents and the classmates. However, some candidates failed to explain their answers in detail.

## General comments

Candidates' performance in general was satisfactory. Most candidates were able to grasp the gist of the questions and offer reasonable discussions and analyses. However, only a few were able to make good use of all the information provided in the questions and offer comprehensive and in-depth discussions from various perspectives. Candidates should be more careful in interpreting the questions. They should elaborate their arguments more accurately and systematically, and offer support for their arguments.



## The Modern World

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
1	Compulsory	Unsatisfactory
2	Compulsory	Satisfactory
3	Compulsory	Fair
4	68	Good
5	11	Fair
6	11	Quite Good
7	10	Satisfactory

### Candidates' performance on individual questions

#### Section 1

- Q.1 Some candidates were not able to highlight the issue of ideological conflicts in world politics, as implied in the cartoon. Candidates should have analysed the implications of the collapse of communist regimes in Eastern Europe, as signified by the fall of the Berlin Wall, for world politics. Candidates should have focused on the theme of whether the ideological struggle between liberal democracy and communism is the main cause of world conflicts and instability.
- Q.2 Some candidates did not read the data in Table 1 carefully and therefore made mistakes in identifying the stages of population development in Figure 1. Some candidates mixed up the answers in (a) and (b). In (a), candidates should have used only the numbers in Table 1 to justify their answers. In (b), candidates should have suggested reasons to explain the trend of development as indicated by the numbers in Table 1 and the graph in Figure 1.
- Q.3 Some candidates did not make use of the suggested dimensions (demographic, industrial, and military) to account for the changes in the National Power Indices of the four countries. In (b), candidates were able to identify the inadequacy in calculating the National Power Index only by the three dimensions.

#### Section 2

- Q.4 Candidates answered very well in (a) by discussing the benefits and drawbacks brought about by MNCs. In (b), candidates should discuss the question in the specific political, economic, and social contexts of Hong Kong. Unfortunately, some candidates only repeated the information they gave in (a).
- Q.5 Candidates were able to explain the conflicts between and within nations caused by ethnic hostility. Ethnic hostility can lead to conflicts in a number of ways, such as misunderstanding and discrimination. These are the result of political, religious, economic and cultural differences between different ethnic groups. Some candidates were able to suggest reasonable solutions to reduce ethnic conflicts.
- Q.6 Candidates answered quite well in (a) by discussing the successes and failures of the United Nations in attaining its purposes. In (b), some candidates focused too much on the domination of the developed countries in the UN, while suggesting too few reforms to redress the problem. They should have given more emphasis to the reforms in their answers as far as the meaning of the question is concerned.



Q.7 The question of how China is becoming a global power broker was answered reasonably well by most candidates. They were able to discuss the influence of China on various issues in world politics such as the Middle East crisis, and to see China as a global player in the world balance of power.

#### General comments

Candidates demonstrated a reasonable understanding of the modern world. They were able to grasp the basic concepts and theories underlying international conflicts and peace. Their answers showed that they were fully aware of the recent issues and events in the modern world.

Time management is very important. Candidates should divide their time evenly for each question. It is a pity that many candidates were not able to write up full answers for the last question, although they seemed to know the answer. Candidates should also pay attention to data reading skills. Some candidates wrongly read the data and figures and therefore suffered in the data response questions.

## Science, Technology & Society

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
1	Compulsory	Satisfactory
2	Compulsory	Satisfactory
3	Compulsory	Fair
4	6	Fair
5	4	Fair
6	44	Quite Good
7	45	Satisfactory

### Candidates' performance on individual questions

#### Section 1

- Q.1 (a) Quite a lot of candidates were able to point out and elaborate on some of the basic differences in position between the two speakers, but not many candidates succinctly summarized the contrasting points in their own words. Those who did so were the outstanding candidates.
- (b) Many candidates were not able to fully articulate the methods related to biological processes, nor consider the economic aspects of the suggested methods.
- Q.2 (a) Most of the candidates were able to suggest three relevant technological applications. However, only a few outstanding candidates were able to spell out both the pros and cons of using the suggested technologies.
- (b) A substantial number of candidates were able to point out some ways of making improvements. However, quite a few candidates elaborated their answers on the basis of all the photos given as data. Not many candidates mentioned any measures related to the safety of the scaffolding near busy roads.
- Q.3 (a) A key term in the question was "extent," which signified that a well-balanced answer had to show consideration of the extent to which the candidates agreed or disagreed. Many candidates only gave one-sided answers without adequate analysis.
- (b) Superficial answers abounded for this sub-question, and very seldom did candidates outline in concrete terms the circumstances/conditions under which the new technology might be widely used in Hong Kong.

## Section 2

- Q.4 (a) Most candidates were able to list some of the relevant considerations.
- (b) This sub-question required some familiarity with the local situation (e.g. the government's emphasis on technological development in society and technological applications research in universities) and the understanding of the constant tension between theoretical science and research in technological application as embodied in the role of a scientist. In general, candidates did not answer this sub-question satisfactorily.
- Q.5 (a) Candidates' performance in general was mediocre.
- Q.6 (a) Some students did not fully follow the instructions to discuss the development of the four countries' space exploration on the basis of the data given. As a result, superficial answers were given.
- (b) Most candidates did not have any problem pinpointing some possible impact of the U.S.A.'s strategic policy on space exploration. However, not many candidates dealt adequately with the impact on the future development of space exploration of *the world as a whole*.
- Q.7 (a) In general, this question elicited satisfactory answers from some of the candidates.
- (b) Quite a number of candidates who attempted this sub-question seemed not to focus on the implications for schooling and learning in the light of the specific effects on *memory* by the brain prosthesis. However, many candidates were able to elaborate on the adverse effects on the development of students' creativity in school.

### General comments

Several points are noteworthy concerning the candidates' methods (or skill) in answering the questions this year. First, not many candidates adopted a critical, argumentative approach in their answers, which was considered essential for this paper. Secondly, in responding to the data given, there was definitely room for improvement, especially where the candidates did not maximize their use of the given data. Because of this, some of their answers did not meet the basic requirements of the questions. Finally, some candidates did not understand the questions, which led them to answer wrongly.