

2007 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">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 major inaccuracies/inconsistencies and important omissions. <i>(Note: Answers in this category need NOT be 'perfect' – they may contain minor flaws in content or approach.)</i>	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

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	Satisfactory
2	Compulsory	Mediocre
3	Compulsory	(a) Mediocre (b) Satisfactory
4	2	Poor
5	12	Mediocre
6	7	Mediocre
7	79	Satisfactory

Section 1

- Q.1 In answering part (a), most candidates were able to describe and explain the pattern of government's expenses on education in 2005-2006. However, some candidates tended to repeat the data provided. Candidates' knowledge and understanding on the major educational issues was limited. Most of them mistakenly pointed out that the system of education voucher was implemented in 2005-2006. Besides, some candidates tried to provide examples and arguments to explain the pattern of the government expenses without considering whether they are to recurrent government expenditure on education. In answering part (b), some candidates just explained the pros and cons of implementing the education voucher/small class teaching in primary schools. Brilliant candidates were able to respond to the word 'should' in explaining their answer in terms of improving the quality of education.
- Q.2 In answering part (a), most candidates were able to point out the key terms 'welfarism' and 'interest of business sector' in the cartoon. Most candidates could point out that the business sector does worry about the 'welfarism' as a result of the election of the Chief Executive by universal suffrage. However, some candidates' explanation was superficial and lacked good elaboration. In answering part (b), a few candidates misinterpreted the question by merely discussing the ways or the methods to promote the national identity of the Hong Kong people. Some candidates could not clearly explain the relationship between the implementation of universal suffrage and the strengthening of national identity. Some candidates mixed up the concepts of the identity as a Hong Kong citizen with national identity. However, a few brilliant candidates could provide a balanced argument.
- Q.3 Many candidates showed a good understanding of the demand of part (a) and showed a conscious effort to address the question on whether they agree with the comment or not. Most candidates could use daily life examples to support their arguments. Some candidates provided a well-balanced answer in part (b). Most candidates not only expressed their views and provided coherent arguments to one of the recommendations they supported, but also commented on the other two. Candidates who did not perform well just listed the pros and cons of the three recommendations and provided no elaboration of their stance on the issue.

Section 2

- Q.4 In general, candidates did not have enough understanding on the term of ‘judicial review’. As a result, some candidates’ arguments were not cogent and effectively supported. Most of the candidates were not able to quote relevant judicial review cases as examples in their answer. Their knowledge about laws and judicial procedures were limited and therefore could only cite the information provided. Some candidates’ answers were not analytical and critical enough.
- Q.5 Candidates generally understood the two legal principles. In general, candidates were able to explain which legal principle can better balance the protection of human rights and maintenance of public order. However, some candidates failed to refer to the situation of Hong Kong. Due to an inadequate understanding of the question and/or weak knowledge of the subject matter, some candidates only cited the information provided without giving enough analysis and elaboration in their answers.
- Q.6 Some candidates could make good use of the key indicators of Hong Kong’s economic freedom to support their arguments and extended their analysis from economic perspective to other perspectives. However, some candidates just described what the government had done to boost the economy without critically assessing the role played by the government as the basis on which Hong Kong’s prosperity has been built.
- Q.7 Candidates generally could point out the pros and cons of counting school-based assessment as a part of the public examination results. For those candidates who just cited the information provided in source A, their analysis was largely narrative in approach and not balanced. Some candidates could not make full use of the information provided in Source B.

General comments

Similar to previous years, candidates’ performance in questions related to political and legal issues was not good. In contrast, candidates performed better in questions related to their daily life, such as educational issues. Candidates tended to recite the information and data provided but lacking of deliberation. Candidates showed little sophistication in their argumentation and analysis. The communication and presentations skills of the candidates kept on improving over the years, but there were still room for improvement. Candidates should have indicated clearly their own stance and paid attention to the key words of the questions.

Environmental Studies

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
1	Compulsory	Satisfactory
2	Compulsory	Fair
3	Compulsory	Good
4	12	Fair
5	59	Quite Good
6	15	Satisfactory
7	14	Good

Section 1

- Q.1 (a) Most candidates were able to delineate the different perspectives of the three major groups with regard to their proposed solutions to combat the problem of air pollution. Quite a number of the candidates, however, were not able to further this discussion in connection with the underlying values that account for the different perspectives of these three social groups. They showed a general understanding of the question but the answers were not well-balanced.
- (b) Many candidates were not able to address the central concern of this question. They commented, in general terms, on the limitations of the proposed solutions to tackling air pollution. They did not, however, respond directly and fully with regard to the question of whether the proposed solutions had sufficiently addressed the primary concerns of green groups and industry.
- Q.2 (a) Many candidates apparently did not fully understand the meaning of these two words in the question: 'issue' and 'nature'. Failing this, they simply provided a matter-of-fact description of the problem depicted in the cartoon. They were not able to identify and discuss the tension and conflict emanating from, as well as the fundamental causes underlying, the problem of over-logging portrayed in the drawing.
- (b) Most candidates simply reiterated, in their answers, most of the information provided in the question. They did not use such information as a basis to elaborate on the linkages between the tropical rainforests and the world's gene pools. Too much attention was paid to the tropical rainforests in answering this question. The focal issue in the question—gene pools—was not given sufficient treatment.
- Q.3 (a) Most candidates were able to provide well-rounded answers to this question. Only a small number of candidates failed to discuss the impact and the underlying causes of the reduction in farmland area.
- (b) Many candidates put forward the concept of sustainable development to substantiate their views on the statement in the question. The arguments contained in some of the answers, however, were too assertive. Specific examples on how to strike a balance between the imperative of economic development and the need to protect the environment were not supplied by the candidates to support their arguments.

Section 2

- Q.4 (a) Quite a number of candidates showed a rather limited understanding of the basic characteristics of the problems of ozone depletion and acid rain. Some of them, for instance, confused the problem of ozone depletion with that of global warming. Many candidates did not lay out clearly the criteria by which they identified one of the two problems as the more urgent one that required international cooperation. Hence, they did not contrast the two problems but simply singled out one problem, without justification, for discussion.
- (b) Most candidates were able to identify and elaborate on the obstacles to effective policy implementation. Only a small number of candidates were unable to identify specific solutions to the problem they had identified.
- Q.5 (a) Most candidates were able to present a comparison of the three options and then argue reasonably for the one they selected. Many of them, however, did not provide in their discussion a clearly stated set of criteria to justify the priority they gave to their choice.
- (b) Some candidates did not fully appreciate the significance of the social and political issues associated with waste management in general and with site selection in particular. Hence, they ended up with a generalised discussion on problems associated with waste management and did not elaborate on the politically sensitive issues linked to the selection of sites for waste management facilities.
- Q.6 (a) Many candidates simply reiterated what was given in the question without further elaboration and deliberation. They did not provide an analytical discussion on the question of whether, and to what extent, bio-fuels are environmentally friendly.
- (b) Most candidates were able to identify the major difficulties in promoting the use of bio-fuels in Hong Kong. Many of them did not, however, separate clearly the discussion of the distinct, but inter-related, problems of development and promotion of bio-fuels.
- Q.7 (a) Some candidates did not seem to fully understand the meaning of the word 'tensions'. They therefore reiterated most of what was stated in the questions and were unable to utilise such material effectively to support an elaboration of the central issue at hand.
- (b) Some candidates did not make full use of the information supplied in the question. Although they were able to identify and discuss the limitations of the guidelines, they were unable to elaborate further on their arguments.

General comments

The overall performance of the candidates fell between satisfactory and good. There was a tendency for a substantial proportion of the candidates to regurgitate information, given in the question or memorised, in writing up the answers to some of the questions. The consequence was that they included material which was marginally relevant or even irrelevant to the issues being examined and failed to address the crux of the problem stated in the question. Candidates should read the questions carefully and focus their discussion on the issues highlighted in the questions. They should also make good use of the information provided in the questions in developing their answers. Such material should not be simply repeated in the answers, but should be used by the candidates as the basis to develop their own arguments.

Human Relationships

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
1	Compulsory	Good
2	Compulsory	Fair
3	Compulsory	Mediocre
4	56	Satisfactory
5	3	Fair
6	17	Good
7	24	Poor

Section 1

- Q.1 (a) Most candidates were able to make reference to the sources and examine the different reactions and the reasons behind them. However, some candidates did not give a balanced treatment of Susan and Kitty.
- (b) Candidates were asked to examine how to help Susan in the role of a career guidance teacher. While many candidates were able to produce reasonable discussions, some failed to grasp the gist of the question. The focus should have been on 'whether or not going to university is the right choice for Susan', instead of the advantages of university education.
- Q.2 (a) On the whole, candidates were able to make reference to the source to analyse the causes of the conflict between Zita and her parents. Some weaker candidates simply provided a general discussion on factors affecting parent-child relations, thus scoring low marks. Better candidates were able to examine the causes in a clear and balanced way.
- (b) Some able candidates answered the question with an analytical approach, suggesting some ways to handle the dilemma – 'persuade her parents to change their minds without harming her relationship with them'. However, some candidates tended to offer brief and vague explanations, without addressing the focal issue.
- Q.3 (a) Candidates' performance was mediocre. The question required candidates to assess the importance of marriage to women in Hong Kong today with reference to the given article. Some weaker candidates merely copied information from the source, or made some vague and superficial explanations. A few outstanding candidates were able to demonstrate their analytical abilities and argue for their conclusion on the basis of the data given.
- (b) Overall performance was not satisfactory. The question required candidates to discuss how far the article reflected the real situation concerning women's status in Hong Kong. Some candidates mistook 'status' for 'marriage' and hence failed to grasp the gist of the question. Some gave general accounts of women's status, without making reference to the article. Only the most outstanding candidates were able to produce evaluative and substantial answers instead of narrative and lop-sided ones.

Section 2

- Q.4 (a) Most candidates made an effort to pinpoint some causes of young people's participation in raves. However, some answers tended to be too general, and could even be applied to activities other than raves.
- (b) A substantial proportion of the candidates were not able to address the key phrase of the question, that is, 'to help them minimise the risks they may encounter there'. Some gave vague and evasive answers on ways to persuade students not to go to raves, thus lowering their scores for this sub-question.
- Q.5 Most candidates managed to correctly interpret the items provided, and explain the extent to which the civic-mindedness of Hong Kong people was reflected. Some answers were either too general or unbalanced, drawing information from the sources only without reference to their own experiences.
- Q.6 (a) Most candidates were able to explain why such columns as The Zodiac were popular with some secondary students. Some answers tended to be superficial and vague.
- (b) In general, candidates were able to suggest some ways to help Wing Yee to become less reliant on such columns. However, some did not address the issue from the perspective of Wing Yee's friend.
- Q.7 (a) Overall performance was not satisfactory. Most candidates failed to grasp the gist of the question, and recited the tips listed in the sources without focus. Very few candidates achieved a certain degree of success in discussing how the two genders were perceived.
- (b) Answers tended to be general. Only a handful of candidates could elaborate on and justify why the chosen tips were considered to be 'very important' and 'not so important' for maintaining a good relationship.

General comments

Candidates' performance was in general satisfactory, demonstrating a proper understanding of issues relating to human relationships. However, some candidates did not fully address the focal issues of the questions. Some merely recited information from the sources, or gave some vague and superficial explanations. 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 information. Candidates should also be more careful in interpreting the questions. They should elaborate their arguments more coherently and systematically, and offer support for their arguments.

The Modern World

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
1	Compulsory	Good
2	Compulsory	Satisfactory
3	Compulsory	Poor
4	16	Satisfactory
5	35	Fair
6	2	Poor
7	47	Good

Section 1

- Q.1 Most candidates were able to identify and to compare the characteristics of the well-being of people in developing and developed countries. Strong candidates were also able to make use of the data in the table to illustrate their observations. The methods suggested by candidates to improve the well-being of people in developing countries were reasonable.
- Q.2 Most candidates were able to identify the different views of the Sino-American relationship represented by the two cartoons. In part (b), some candidates only described current US-China affairs without arguing which of the two cartoons better reflected the Sino-American relationships.
- Q.3 Some candidates described in detail the issue of North Korea's nuclear weapons testing, without generalising the reasons why some anti-American countries develop nuclear weapons. The views of some candidates on whether or not the development of nuclear weapons is an effective way to reduce the risk of war were vague.

Section 2

- Q.4 Candidates provided relevant examples with adequate descriptions. However, some candidates failed to explain in detail how national goals have caused international conflicts.
- Q.5 Candidates were able to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of cultural globalisation. The answers in (b) were innovative as candidates identified various interesting foreign and Chinese cultural practices for promotion in Hong Kong.
- Q.6 Candidates did not give an in-depth analysis on how the balance of power in Europe has changed with the increase of NATO member countries. Candidates failed to discuss the power of NATO and Russia in the European continent. The changing role of NATO in international affairs after the collapse of the USSR was also weakly discussed.
- Q.7 Candidates were very familiar with the advantages of free trade as advocated by the WTO. In part (b), candidates recognised the problems faced by farmers in developing countries, who consequently did not support the WTO free trade.

General comments

Candidates were generally aware of the recent trends and development of the modern world. Most candidates were also familiar with the background of major international issues and they were able to analyse them at a reasonable level.

Nevertheless, candidates should digest and make better use of the data provided to illustrate their answers. Candidates should also organise their paragraphs better so as to present their arguments more clearly.

Science, Technology & Society

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
1	Compulsory	Quite Good
2	Compulsory	Quite Good
3	Compulsory	Good
4	5	Fair
5	67	Good
6	8	Satisfactory
7	20	Fair

Section 1

- Q.1 (a) The main focus of this question concerned the reliability of using the number of patent applications as an indicator of technological innovation. A number of candidates were able to give well-balanced answers by analysing the strengths and the weaknesses of using it as an indicator. Surprisingly, although this was a data-response question, some candidates did not attempt to discuss the issue with reference to the data given. This inevitably weakened the cogency of their answers.
- (b) This question required the candidates to present their analyses in the context of scientific and technological development in Northeast Asia. Good candidates were able to cite relevant examples of their own in support of their views, while outstanding candidates were able to elaborate concretely on the possible ways in which the increases in the number of international patent applications would affect the concerned development. However, most of the answers were of mediocre quality.
- Q.2 (a) In general, candidates were able to point out the differences concerned, and explain the possible reasons in detail. This was a question where candidates' performance was good overall.
- (b) One common problem with the candidates' answers to this question was that they did not present their views succinctly enough. Instead of seeing the European views as an important part of the answer that deserved careful articulation, many candidates essentially concentrated on the statement of their own views on gene therapy. Consequently, the comparison between the candidates' views and the European views, which was essential to the question, became peripheral in quite a lot of the candidates' answers.
- Q.3 (a) Almost all candidates were able to make some use of the source material to provide some explanations from the economic and humanitarian points of view. The majority of them agreed that both points of view are equally important. However, many candidates underestimated the challenge in clarifying the nature and impact of the humanitarian point of view with reference to the data. As a result, quite a lot of them did not provide a fully balanced answer to this question.
- (b) Many candidates were able to give different reasons in support of their answers. This was a question where many candidates displayed their ability to think critically in a commendable manner.

Section 2

- Q.4 Only a small number of candidates attempted this question, and many of these answers were mediocre.
- Q.5 Candidates who attempted this question were able to point out different influences. Many of them expounded the pros and cons as well. Good answers were those that provided a holistic view, covering a wide range of possible influences on Hong Kong people's lives at different levels. Some thoughtful candidates also carefully elaborated on influences from general considerations as well as those derived from their own experiences.
- Q.6 Quite a lot of the answers seemed a bit weak in pinpointing what constituted a moral issue in the concerned technology, or in arguing for their positions.
- Q.7 (a) A large number of candidates attempted this question. However, quite a lot of the answers were a bit shallow and sketchy.
- (b) Most of the answers were of mediocre quality. Outstanding answers to this question were rare.

General comments

With regard to the candidates' performance this year, two points are noteworthy. First, for the data-response questions in Section 1, candidates appeared not to have made good use of the data given in support of their answers. It is hoped that candidates will pay more attention to this respect in future. Secondly, candidates' awareness of certain broad implications of science and technology for society did not seem to be strong enough. For example, as shown in candidates' performance in Questions 2, 3, 4 and 6, they were in general weak in discussing such moral dimensions of science and technology. Sharpening their awareness of this type of issue would be helpful. To conclude, improvement in the aforementioned two areas in future will definitely help enhance candidates' general performance in this paper.

China Today

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
1	Compulsory	Good
2	Compulsory	Poor
3	Compulsory	Fair
4	81	Good
5	10	Satisfactory
6	5	Fair
7	4	Poor

Section 1

- Q.1 Most candidates were able to identify the characteristics of the top ten county level cities. The factors for the rise of these cities were reasonably discussed by most candidates. Candidates were able to fully utilise the information given in the sources to answer the question.
- Q.2 Some candidates did not make full reference to the data given in the sources to answer part (a) of the question. Candidates should have discussed and explained the majority views of the countries selected on China's influence. In part (b), candidates should have elaborated on the concept of balance of power and discussed how China shifted the power balance from a unipolar to a bipolar/multi-polar world.
- Q.3 Most candidates discussed in detail on how the three latest Five Year Plans affected the lives of people in China. Strong candidates were able to discuss various aspects of the influence, for example, those of the economy, education and population, etc. The strategies proposed by candidates to accomplish the 11th Five Year Plan were reasonable and logical.

Section 2

- Q.4 Most candidates were able to suggest and to explain the reasons for relocating peasants to cities. Strong candidates could discuss both the positive and negative influence of relocating peasants to cities on the Chinese economy and society.
- Q.5 Candidates should have explained the reasons for the problems in China's legal system, making reference to the hints given in the source. Some candidates only gave general remarks rather than discussed the specific details of the problems given in the source. The same deficiency was evident in part (b) of the question.
- Q.6 Some candidates just explained and described the importance of the two ways of mobilising national citizenship for the ethnic minorities. They did not further discuss the effectiveness of the two ways in fostering the fusion of ethnic groups. The methods proposed by candidates to foster ethnic fusion were innovative.
- Q.7 Some candidates failed to highlight the theoretical contradiction between socialism and private property. Candidates should have tried to argue whether the introduction of "private property rights" into the constitution signifies that China is abandoning socialism for capitalism.

General comments

Candidates grasped the current development in China today. Candidates were aware of the major changes in the political, economic, and social domains in China. The reasons behind the changes were generally comprehended by candidates. Candidates need to show a more critical and analytical approach in assessing the problems facing China.

Candidates also need to make more reference to the data and information given in the source of each question in order to substantiate their answers. In general, candidates were able to understand the data. However, the skill of using and interpreting the data can be further improved.