

HONG KONG DIPLOMA OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

INTRODUCTION

The assessment of this subject is based on the New Senior Secondary Curriculum and Assessment Guide for English Language (Secondary 4 to 6) jointly prepared by the Curriculum Development Council and the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority. The overall aim of the assessment is to evaluate candidates' achievement of the learning targets and objectives of the curriculum. Candidates have to refer to the Curriculum Framework for the forms and functions, skills and strategies, and attitudes that they are expected to achieve at the end of S6.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

To assess candidates' achievement with respect to the following broad learning outcomes as stated in Chapter 2 of the Curriculum and Assessment Guide:

Reading

To assess the ability of candidates to:

- identify the main theme and key details of a broad range of texts
- determine the purpose and meaning of a broad range of texts
- identify the contextual meaning of words and phrases
- interpret the tone and mood of a writer
- distinguish and evaluate views, attitudes or arguments in fairly complex texts
- understand the use of a range of language features in fairly complex texts
- interpret, analyze, select and organize ideas and information from various sources

Writing

To assess the ability of candidates to:

- write texts for different contexts, audiences and purposes with relevant content and adequate supporting details
- convey meaning using varied vocabulary, linguistic devices and language patterns appropriately and accurately
- plan and produce coherent and structured texts with ideas effectively presented and developed
- write texts using appropriate tone, style and register and the salient features of different genres
- draft and revise written texts

Listening

To assess the ability of candidates to:

- understand and interpret the purpose and meaning of a range of spoken texts
- identify the key details of a range of spoken texts
- interpret speakers' feelings, views, attitudes and intentions
- understand speakers with a variety of accents and speeches delivered at a moderate pace
- understand the use of a range of language features in fairly complex spoken texts

Speaking

To assess the ability of candidates to:

- express information and ideas (e.g. personal experiences, feelings, opinions, imaginative ideas and evaluative remarks) with suitable elaboration
- convey meaning using a range of vocabulary and language patterns appropriate to the context, purpose and audience

- establish and maintain relationships/spoken exchanges using formulaic expressions and appropriate communication strategies (e.g. making an appropriate opening and closing, negotiating meaning, making suggestions, using appropriate degrees of formality)
- develop and link ideas using suitable organizing techniques (e.g. sequencing and developing ideas, using discourse markers, summarizing)
- pronounce words clearly and accurately
- support communication using delivery techniques (e.g. pace, volume, intonation, stress, eye contact, gesture)

MODE OF ASSESSMENT

The assessment will consist of a public examination component and a school-based assessment component as outlined in the following table*:

| Component | | Weighting | Duration |
|--|--|-----------|------------|
| Public Examination | Paper 1 Reading | 20% | 1½ hour |
| | Paper 2 Writing | 30% | 2 hours |
| | Paper 3 Listening & Integrated Skills | 30% | 2 hours |
| | Paper 4 Speaking (for private candidates only) | 20% | 20 minutes |
| School-based Assessment (for school candidates only) | | 20% | |

PUBLIC EXAMINATION

Paper 1 Reading (1½ hour) (20%)

This paper will be divided into 3 sections, each worth 10% of the subject mark. All candidates must do Section 1 and then choose *either* Section 2, the easiest section, *or* Section 3, the most difficult section. Candidates attempting Sections 1 and 3 will be able to attain the full range of possible levels, while Level 4 will be the highest level attainable by candidates attempting Sections 1 and 2.

Candidates will be required to respond to a variety of written texts of different lengths and levels of difficulty. A range of question types will be used, including multiple-choice items, short responses and more extended open-ended responses.

Paper 2 Writing (2 hours) (30%)

There will be two parts in this paper.

Part A (10%)

The task in this part will be a short, guided one (about 200 words). Candidates will be provided with the situation and the purpose for writing, as well as some relevant information.

Part B (20%)

The task in this part will be longer and more open-ended (about 400 words). Candidates can choose one out of eight questions, each based on one of the eight modules in the Elective Part of the curriculum.

* *Details regarding the public assessment will be confirmed following a further round of consultation in early 2008 in the light of experience in implementing the 2007 HKCE English Language Examination, including the school-based assessment component.*

Paper 3 Listening and Integrated Skills (2 hours)**(30%)**

There are 3 sections in this paper, each worth 15% of the subject mark. All candidates must do Section 1 and then choose *either* Section 2, the easiest section, *or* Section 3, the most difficult section. Candidates attempting Sections 1 and 3 will be able to attain the full range of possible levels, while Level 4 will be the highest level attainable by candidates attempting Sections 1 and 2.

Section 1, the compulsory section, will consist of a variety of listening tasks.

Sections 2 and 3 will comprise integrated listening / reading and writing tasks of different levels of difficulty based on the same theme. Candidates will be required to process information by selecting and combining data from spoken / written sources in order to complete various listening / writing tasks in a practical work or study situation. All the information necessary to complete these tasks will be provided. At least one of the writing tasks will require candidates to produce an extended piece of writing (100 – 200 words).

Paper 4 Speaking (for private candidates only)**(20%)****Part A Group Interaction** (preparation: 10 minutes; discussion: 8 minutes per group of four candidates)

Four candidates will be grouped together and will take part in a group discussion based on a given short text. These texts may include advertisements, book synopses, film reviews, letters, short news reports and so on. Candidates may be required to make suggestions, give advice, make and explain a choice, argue for and/or against a position, or discuss the pros and cons of a proposal.

Candidates will be given ten minutes for preparation and will be allowed to make notes. During the discussion they may refer to their notes.

Part B Individual Response (one minute per candidate)

Each candidate will respond individually to an examiner's question(s), which will be based on the group discussion task. Candidates may be required to make and justify a choice, decide on and explain a course of action, argue for or against a position, and so on.

Different types of items will be used to assess students' performance in a broad range of skills and abilities. These types of items are similar to those currently adopted in the Hong Kong Certificate of Education and Hong Kong Advanced Level Examinations. When the curriculum content and the learning outcomes are finalised, specimen papers will be provided to schools to illustrate the format of the examination and the standards at which the questions are pitched.

SCHOOL-BASED ASSESSMENT (SBA; for school candidates only)**(20%)**

This will consist of two parts.

Part A (15%)

This part will comprise a reading / viewing programme where students will need to read / view six texts over the course of three years (at least one each from the following four categories: print fiction, print non-fiction, non-print fiction and non-print non-fiction), write up some comments and personal reflections, and then take part in a discussion with classmates on the texts they have read / viewed, or make an individual presentation and respond to their teacher's questions, which will be derived from their written personal comments. The assessment will be based on the student's oral performance. The reading / viewing / writing will only serve as the means to this end and will not be assessed.

Teachers need to conduct three assessments in S5 and S6, and report three marks, with at least one mark based on a group interaction and one on an individual presentation.

Part B (5%)

This part will consist of a group interaction or an individual presentation based on the modules in the Elective Part of the curriculum. The focus will be on the ability of candidates to reflect on, make use of and speak about the knowledge, skills and experience gained in the Elective Module(s). The assessment will be based on the student's oral performance.

Guidelines on suitable assessment tasks and assessment criteria will be provided for both parts, as well as samples of performance to illustrate assessment formats and standards.

The detailed requirements, regulations and guidelines will be provided in the SBA Handbook for HKDSE English Language to be published by the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority.