

## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

### **AIMS**

1. To impart knowledge and cultivate understanding of personal growth and contemporary society.
2. To develop the practical and intellectual skills necessary for the study of personal development problems and contemporary social issues.
3. To encourage the formation of considered attitudes towards social and moral values, and inter-personal relationships.

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. Candidates are expected to have a knowledge and understanding of:
  - (a) the characteristics of adolescent growth,
  - (b) the social environment in which the adolescent grows, e.g. the family, peer groups and society,
  - (c) the interaction between adolescents and their social environment, as reflected in their study, work and participation as members of the community.
2. Candidates are expected to have developed basic skills in:
  - (a) gathering, interpreting and applying information, presented in words or in the form of statistics and diagrams,
  - (b) identifying issues, formulating hypotheses, evaluating evidence and drawing conclusions,
  - (c) selecting and using ideas in the presentation of logical arguments and reasoned comments.
3. Candidates should be able to apply what they have learnt to analyse major current events and social issues.

### **THE EXAMINATION**

The examination will consist of two papers.

Paper 1 (1 hour) will consist of short-answer questions. Candidates will be required to answer 5 questions out of 6. (This paper will carry 40% of the marks.)

Paper 2 (1¼ hours) will consist of essay questions. Candidates will be required to answer 3 questions out of 5. (This paper will carry 60% of the marks.)

## THE SYLLABUS

<i>SYLLABUS CONTENT</i>	<i>EXPLANATORY NOTES</i>
I. Adolescence	
(a) Characteristics and development of the adolescent	(i) Physical development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– physical changes, sexual maturity</li><li>– its social and psychological effects</li><li>– the effects of early and late maturation</li></ul> (ii) Emotional characteristics e.g. fear of failure, frustration, anxiety, jealousy, instability
	(iii) Identity development e.g. self-esteem, conformity, idol worship, sex role development, imitation
	(iv) Development in social behaviour e.g. joining peer groups, dating and courtship, the influence of parents, peers and schools
(b) Achieving independence at adolescence	Some lifeskills to be learnt at adolescence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– decision making</li><li>– goal setting</li><li>– assertiveness and relationship skills</li></ul>
II. The Family	
(a) Functions of the family	(i) Biological: channelling of sexual desires and procreation
	(ii) Psychological: providing affection, love, care and security

*SYLLABUS CONTENT*

*EXPLANATORY NOTES*

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|  | (iii) Economic: provision of basic needs such as food and shelter  |
|  | (iv) Socialization: gender role socialization, educating the young in matters such as discipline and social skills |
| (b) Family patterns and changes in family size                 | (i) Family patterns: the extended family, nuclear family, single-parent family                                     |
|  | (ii) Changes in family size and their effects  |
| (c) Setting up a family  | (i) Changing expectations of marriage in modern society  |
|  | (ii) New roles to be taken on in setting up a family   |
|  | (iii) Family budgeting: the balance between income and expenditure   |
|  | (iv) Family planning: readiness for having children, birth control and the size of the family                      |
| (d) Roles and relationships of different members of the family | (i) Responsibilities of different members of the family  |
|  | (ii) The need to accept each other, respect each other's needs and have a sense of belonging in the family         |
|  | (iii) The relationship between parents and children  |
|  | (iv) Ways and means that can help strengthen family relationships and achieve unity                                |

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*EXPLANATORY NOTES*

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| (e) Family problems and the ways of coping with them | (i) Conflicts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– conflicts between the parents</li><li>– conflicts between the parents and their teenage children</li><li>– sibling rivalry</li></ul> (ii) Divorce  |
|  | (iii) Single-parent family  |
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| III. Social Control and Deviance                     |   |
| (a) Social order versus social change                | (i) The concept of social order <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– the need for rules</li><li>– the need for conformity to social roles</li></ul> (ii) The concept of social change <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– the need for social change</li><li>– factors leading to social change</li></ul>  |
| (b) Formal and informal social controls              | (i) Formal social control: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– the rule of law and principles of justice</li><li>– types of law in Hong Kong, criminal and civil laws</li><li>– regulations</li></ul> (ii) Informal social control: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– the role of customs and social norms</li><li>– the influence of Chinese values on Hong Kong society</li></ul> |
| (c) Deviance   | (i) The concept of deviance   |
|  | (ii) The causes of deviant behaviour - social, economic, psychological, physiological, hereditary   |
|  | (iii) Crime as an example of deviant behaviour  |

*SYLLABUS CONTENT*

*EXPLANATORY NOTES*

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| (d) Coping with deviant behaviour    | (i) Self-discipline, self-acceptance, tolerance of others<br><br>(ii) Law enforcement, punishment, rehabilitation and prevention   |
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| IV. Communication and the mass media |  |
| (a) Basic processes of communication | (i) Communication as a basic element in social life<br><br>(ii) Basic components of communication: the sender, message, medium, receiver and feedback<br><br>(iii) Encoding, transmitting, and decoding a message<br><br>(iv) Feedback<br>– its role<br>– ways of giving feedback<br><br>(v) Factors affecting the interpretation of a message |
| (b) Analysis of a message            | (i) The need for and the ways of determining the accuracy of a message<br><br>(ii) Identifying the value judgement of a message<br><br>(iii) The validity of arguments and reasoning in a message, e.g. using an inappropriate authority, over-generalization  |
| (c) The mass media                   | (i) Types, functions and limitations<br><br>(ii) The impact on young people, e.g. attitude, behaviour and character formation<br><br>(iii) The effects of advertising  |

*SYLLABUS CONTENT*

*EXPLANATORY NOTES*

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| (d) Communication between the people and the government in Hong Kong | (i) The need for communication<br>(ii) The nature, formation and value of public opinion<br>(iii) The channels of communication<br>(iv) The effectiveness of the channels of communication   |
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| V. Work  |  |
| (a) The concept of work  | (i) The meaning of work in human life e.g. to earn an income, to contribute to society, to self actualize<br>(ii) Factors affecting the choice of different types of work<br>(iii) The changing nature of work as a result of technological advances |
| (b) The impact of work   | The impact on an individual's health, leisure, family relationships, finance and social status   |
| (c) Relationships in the workplace                                   | (i) Relationships with superiors, colleagues and clients<br>(ii) Conflicts and resolutions between employers and employees<br>(iii) Attitudes towards work   |
| (d) Work and society with special reference to Hong Kong             | (i) Changing employment patterns<br>– in terms of industries<br>– in terms of occupations<br>(ii) Manpower planning and vocational training<br>(iii) Services relating to employment: the work of government and voluntary organizations             |

*SYLLABUS CONTENT*

*EXPLANATORY NOTES*

VI. Social Issues

A detailed study and analysis of ONE of the following social issues is required. These issues are closely related to Topics I to V above. The focus of study should be on events and situations in Hong Kong.

Candidates should have a general knowledge of some social issues to help them better understand the society in which they live. The emphasis should be on the process of enquiry and decision-making, and on developing appropriate skills and attitudes rather than on the memorization of facts and data.

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| (a) Juvenile delinquency and its prevention from the perspective of adolescents' development           | (i)   | identify the problems related to the issue and their causes  |
| (b) Roles and functions of the mass media in the 21st century  | (ii)  | identify different values embedded in the issue  |
| (c) Information technology and their impact on labour, welfare, and the public                         | (iii) | recognize the impact of the problems on the individual and the society   |
| (d) Influence of advertising on the lifestyle of young people in Hong Kong                             | (iv)  | describe and justify the role of the citizens, the government and various social groups in resolving the problems  |
| (e) Ageing population and its implication for Hong Kong in the 21 <sup>st</sup> century (2010 & 2011)* | (v)   | assess the achievement in solving the problems to date <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– in meeting the expectations of the individual/social groups</li><li>– in terms of the effectiveness of policies/programmes undertaken</li></ul> |
| (f) The development of political system and the channeling of public opinion                           | (vi)  | investigate alternative measures and assess the possible consequences in view of <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– conflicting interests among groups and sectors</li><li>– the limitation of resources</li></ul>                        |

*SYLLABUS CONTENT*

*EXPLANATORY NOTES*

- (vii) examine one's own value-base and integrate different perspectives so as to arrive at one's own judgement on an issue for possible action.

(Note: Teachers and candidates should be aware that there are other equally valid and useful frameworks for approaching the social issues, and should feel free to adopt their own preferred framework. It should be borne in mind, however, that those following alternative approaches should not lose sight of the importance of fulfilling the aim of Topic VI, viz. helping candidates to develop appropriate skills and attitudes in analyzing social issues.)

(\* The figure in brackets denotes the year for the topic to be examined.)