

Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination - Marking and Processing of Marks (August 2016)

Text only version

Introduction

The first Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE) was administered in 2012. The primary purpose of the HKDSE is to measure the attainment of candidates who have completed a three-year senior secondary course. There are three categories of HKDSE subjects, and candidates may take up to a maximum of eight subjects from Category A, B or C:

- Category A: 24 Senior Secondary subjects
- Category B: Applied Learning subjects
- Category C: Other Language subjects

The Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) is responsible for the public assessment of all Category A subjects. The HKEAA has a set of comprehensive procedures to ensure fairness and consistency in assessing candidates' performance. This leaflet aims to outline the procedures adopted in the marking of written papers and the processing of marks for Category A subjects.

The assessment of Category B subjects is undertaken by individual course providers, with results moderated by the HKEAA. For Category C subjects, marking and grading are conducted by Cambridge International Examinations (CIE).

Marking Procedures for Written Papers

Appointment of markers: Applicants' academic qualifications, and teaching and marking experience are the key elements for consideration in the selection process. All markers are required to undertake rigorous training and to be qualified for marking. Each year, around 4 000 markers are recruited, most of whom are teachers.



Marking scheme: Prepared by the moderation committee, the marking scheme serves as a guide to markers on how marks should be awarded, taking into consideration the question requirements and the range of acceptable responses. Moderation committees, each comprising a Chief Examiner, a setter or co-setters, moderators and an HKEAA subject manager, are responsible for the development of question papers and marking schemes.

Marking schemes are not model answers. Answers not covered by the marking scheme could also score marks if they are relevant to the question and logically presented.



Sample scripts selection: After the examination, sample scripts covering different approaches of candidates' responses and illustrating performance in relation to the level descriptors are selected. These samples provide useful material for standardising marking and for grading.



Standardisation meeting: The examiners compare marks awarded to the sample scripts, agree on marking principles and standards, and revise the marking scheme, where necessary, before the markers' meeting.



Markers' meeting: The examiners brief markers on the assessment objectives and demands of individual questions. Some sample scripts are trial marked by markers to identify and rectify discrepancies in the interpretation of the marking scheme.



Allocation of scripts to markers: Candidates are assigned random candidate numbers by computer. Since the 2015 HKDSE, the written papers of all subjects have adopted onscreen marking (OSM) in which candidates' scripts are randomly distributed to markers, with scripts from their students or close family members excluded in the distribution. **Markers do not know the identity of the candidates.**



Marking: Markers must demonstrate that they have mastered the marking standards before they can proceed to mark the scripts. For scripts that are double-marked, there will be two raw marks awarded independently by two different markers. If there is a big discrepancy between these two marks, a third marker will mark the script. A fourth marking will also be conducted if there is a continuing discrepancy, to ensure a fair assessment of the script. Normally, the closest, highest pair of marks is added up to form the raw mark for the script.



Checkmarking: The marked scripts of each marker undergo at least two stages of checkmarking by the examiners to ensure consistency and to spot problems of marking. If a script has been selected for checkmarking, the mark awarded by the checkmarker is also recorded and may override the raw mark if deemed more reliable.



Addition of marks: As scripts are marked onscreen, marks are automatically added up and checked by the computer system.

Points to Note

It should be noted that marking involves professional judgements and is not an exact science. Different markers may not award identical marks to the same answer, particularly for questions of an open-ended nature. ***Marks awarded by persons who have not been trained or standardised cannot be regarded as valid assessments of candidates' performance.***

From Raw Mark to Subject Mark

After marking is completed, various processes are adopted to ensure that the marks awarded by markers, the marks in different optional parts and the marks of different papers are fair and comparable before they are aggregated to form the subject mark:

Process	Mark generated	Remarks
Marking	Raw mark	Marks given by marker(s).
Mark adjustment	Adjusted mark	Marks awarded by markers are adjusted, if necessary, to rectify lenient, strict or erratic marking.
Mark equating (if applicable)	Equated mark	Marks of one optional part are equated to those of another optional part (e.g. in English Language Paper 1 (Reading) and Paper 3 (Listening & Integrated Skills), marks of the easier section are converted to equivalent marks in the more difficult section).
Forming paper mark	Paper mark	After adjustment/equating, marks of all questions/sections within a paper are added up according to the weighting of the questions/sections in the paper.
Forming weighted paper mark	Weighted paper mark	Marks of different papers are converted to the same comparable scale, taking into account the spread of marks in different papers and the published paper weightings, before they are combined to form the subject mark.
Forming component mark*	Component mark	For components with only one paper, the component mark is the same as the weighted paper mark. For components consisting of one examination paper and the SBA [^] , the component mark is the sum of the weighted paper mark and the moderated SBA mark according to their weighting as stipulated in the Assessment Framework.
Forming subject mark	Subject mark	For English Language, Chinese Language and Combined Science, the subject mark is the sum of the marks of all the components. For other subjects, the subject mark is the sum of the weighted paper marks and the moderated SBA marks (if applicable).

* Applicable only to English Language, Chinese Language and Combined Science, where component results are reported in addition to the subject result.

^ Component 4 (Speaking) of English Language comprises the results of Paper 4 and the SBA, Component 3 (Listening and Integrated Skills) of Chinese Language comprises the results of Paper 3 and the SBA, while each component of Combined Science comprises the results of the written examination and the SBA of the half-subject concerned.

For more details on the different processes and marks mentioned above, please refer to www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/assessment/marking/

Grading and Reporting

Standards-referenced Reporting (SRR) is adopted to report candidates' assessment results in the HKDSE. The HKEAA has established a grading system which aims to maintain standards between successive years and inter-subject comparability within the same year. For details about the grading procedures and the SRR approach, please refer to www.hkeaa.edu.hk/DocLibrary/Media/Leaflets/HKDSE_SRR_A4_Booklet_Jun2011.pdf for the booklet *Grading Procedures and Standards-referenced Reporting in the HKDSE Examination*.

Enquiries

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