

Seminar on HKDSE Core Subject – English Language (21 Jan 2017) Highlights of Questions and Answers

Writing

1 In Paper 2, will there be a mark deduction if a candidate's answer exceeds the word limit?

There is only 'word guide', not 'word limit', in the tasks in Paper 2. No marks will be deducted if candidates write more than the word guide given. The word guide is designed in order to provide information to candidates regarding the requirements of the task, how best to organise their writing as well as giving them guidance as to how much time they should spend on each task.

However, candidates who write significantly more than the suggested number of words may not have time to complete both tasks satisfactorily or spend time in planning their writing or in proofreading what they have written.

2 Does the HKEAA have a list of 'banned expressions'? Will there be any marks deduction if a candidate uses stock phrases or clichés?

The Authority does not have any 'banned expressions'. However, one area where the quality, and consequently the marks, of candidates' responses suffered is through poor choice and use of stock phrases, clichés and quotes. It is vital that candidates also know where such lexis can be appropriately used.

Listening and Integrated Skills

3 What should candidates do if the reception is poor during the listening test?

Before the listening test, candidates will be given ample time to check the reception of the radio. If the reception is poor and does not improve, candidates can request to move to the 'Special Room'.

4 Are candidates allowed to use point-form to answer the tasks in Paper 3?

This would depend on the task requirements. Candidates should read the task instructions carefully.

Seminar on HKDSE Core Subject – English Language (21 Jan 2017) Highlights of Questions and Answers

Speaking

5 Are candidates allowed to jot notes during the group interaction of the speaking test?

No, candidates are not allowed to write anything during the speaking test. However, candidates are given a notecard to prepare during the ten-minute preparation.

6 What should candidates do if one of the candidates is dominating the group discussion?

Candidates should appropriately interfere and demonstrate appropriate turn-taking skills. They can interrupt politely to demonstrate their abilities to communicate with others in English.

7 Can candidates ask the oral examiner for a second question during the individual response?

Yes. If candidates do not know how to answer the first question, they can ask the oral examiner for another question. Candidates should be aware that they only have one minute for individual response and the time the examiner asks the second question will also be counted. The more time they spend on asking for another question, the less time they will have to demonstrate their speaking ability.

8 Will the accent of a candidate affect his/her result in the speaking test?

No.

9 What are the marking criteria for the speaking test?

There are four domains in assessing candidates' performance in speaking test, namely Pronunciation & delivery, Communication strategies, Vocabulary & language patterns, and Ideas & organisation.

Marking and Grading

10 Will candidates' mark affected by poor hand writing?

No. It is advised that candidates whose hand writing is not good should try to write tidily and leave more space between words so that the makers can read the answers.

Seminar on HKDSE Core Subject – English Language (21 Jan 2017) Highlights of Questions and Answers

11 What are the percentages of candidates attaining levels 5, 5* and 5** in the past HKDSE examinations?

Please refer to the HKDSE Examination Report for detailed information of candidates' results:

www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/assessment/exam_reports/

12 What is the cut score for each level in English Language?

Depending on the level of difficulty and the number of questions in the exam papers, as well as the performance of candidates each year, the actual cut scores for each level may vary from year to year. Due to this variability, the information would have little feedback value to stakeholders. On the other hand, releasing these data may lead to possible misinterpretation of the standards of various levels by candidates, teachers and the public at large.

13 Under what circumstances an answer script will be considered a 'problem script' during marking? Is double marking NOT adopted for these 'problem scripts' in papers where double marking is adopted?

In marking of English Language Paper 2, markers could submit scripts as 'problem scripts' for the following reasons:

- The candidate had written swearing words in their answer.
- Marker suspected part of the answer was missing.
- Content was irrelevant.
- Image of script was unclear and needed to be rescanned.

According to standing procedures, these scripts will be handled by the Chief Examiner or Assistant Examiner whose marks are then doubled for calculating the final mark as the examiner's marks are considered reliable. To improve quality of marking, the HKEAA will continue reviewing the marking procedures to ensure candidates' performances are assessed reliably.

Seminar on HKDSE Core Subject – English Language (21 Jan 2017) Highlights of Questions and Answers

Others

14 How should students use the samples of candidates' performance?

The samples of candidates' performance can help students understand the standards of performance for attaining the corresponding level in the HKDSE.

Samples of candidates' performance of English Language:

www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/assessment/subject_information/category_a_subjects/hkdse_subj.html?A1&1&2_25