



香港考試及評核局
Hong Kong
Examinations and
Assessment Authority

English Language

Seminars on HKDSE Core Subjects

18 January 2020



Rundown

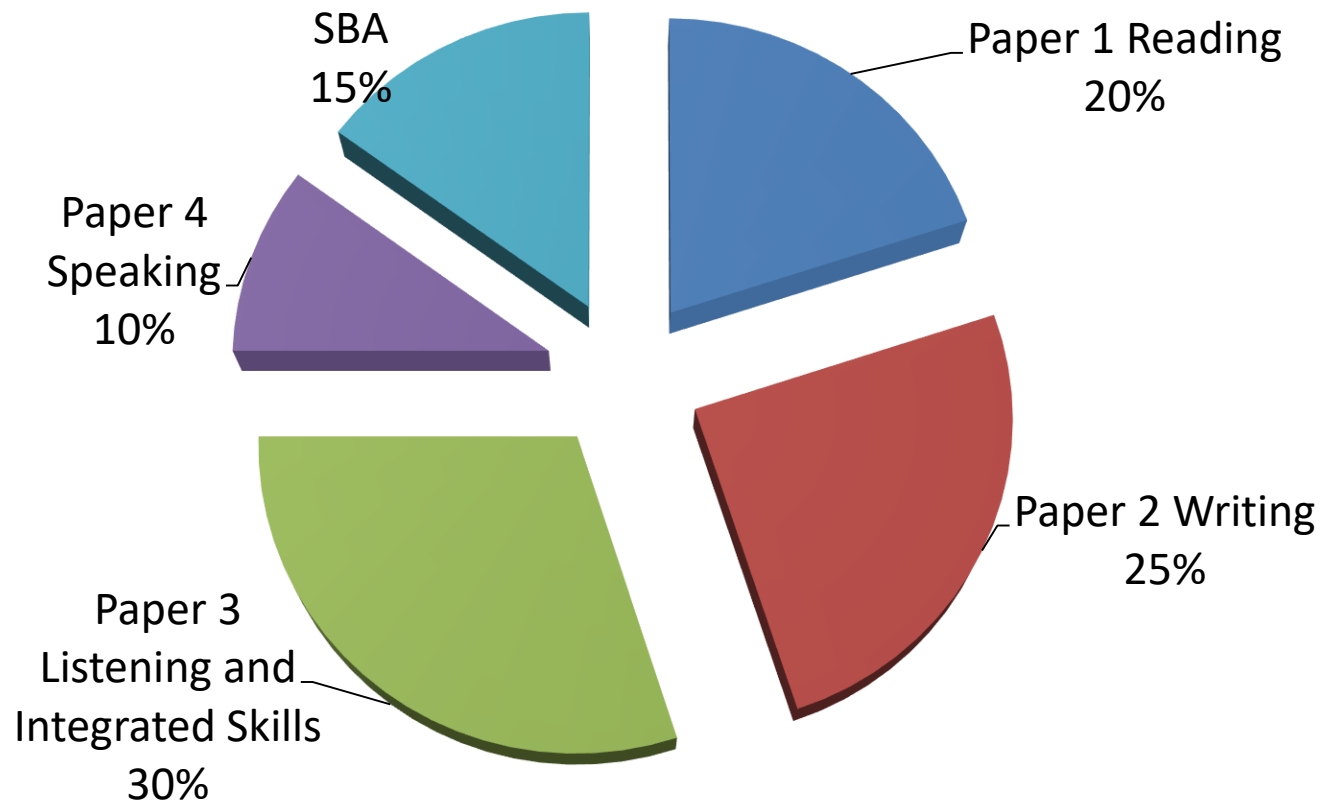
1. General Introduction
2. Assessment objectives and requirements for Papers 1 and 3
3. Graded Approach
4. Assessment objectives and requirements for Papers 2, 4 and SBA
5. Q & A

General Introduction

- Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE) was first introduced in 2012
- Assessment is based on the learning targets and objectives of the Curriculum and Assessment Guide for English Language (S.4-S.6)
- Designed for secondary school leavers
- Certification and university entry

Assessment Components

Public Examination and School-Based Assessment

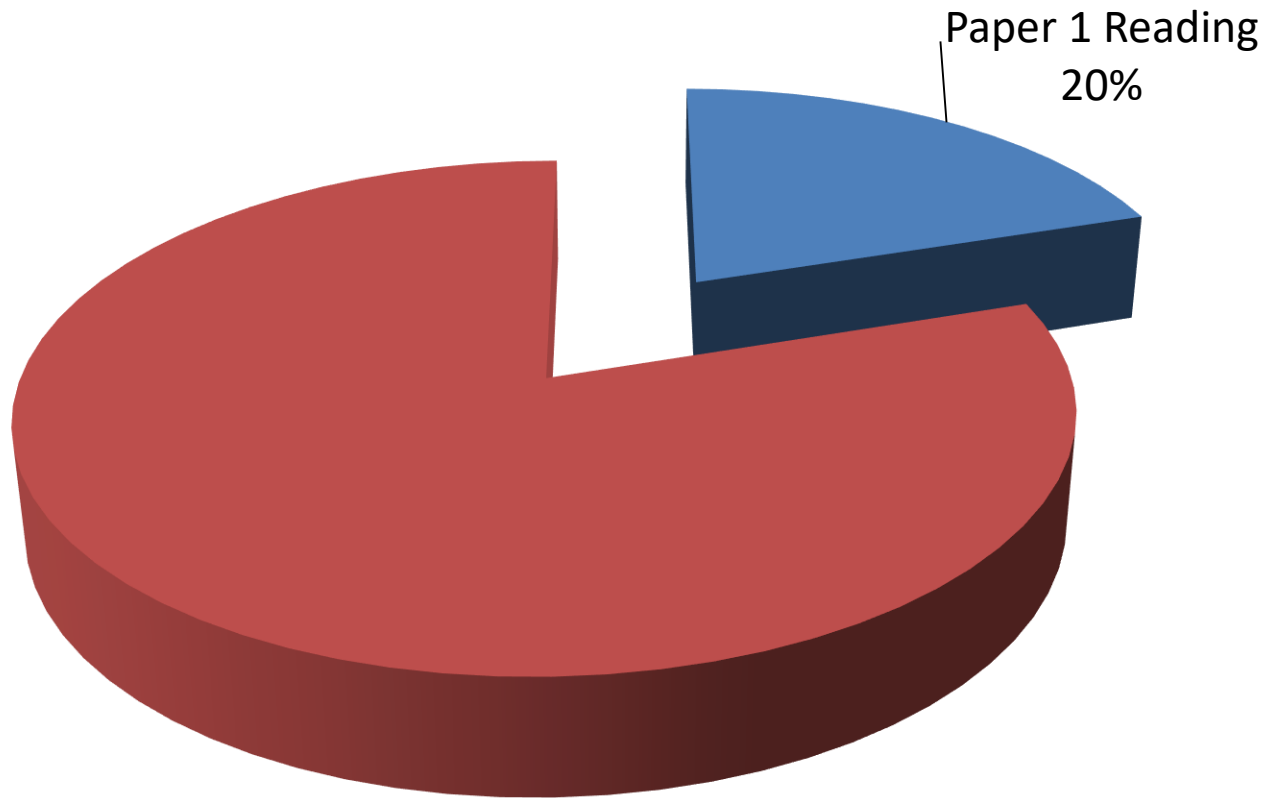


REPORTING OF RESULTS

Component	Weighting
Reading	20%
Writing	25%
Listening & Integrated Skills	30%
Speaking	25% (Paper 4 & SBA)

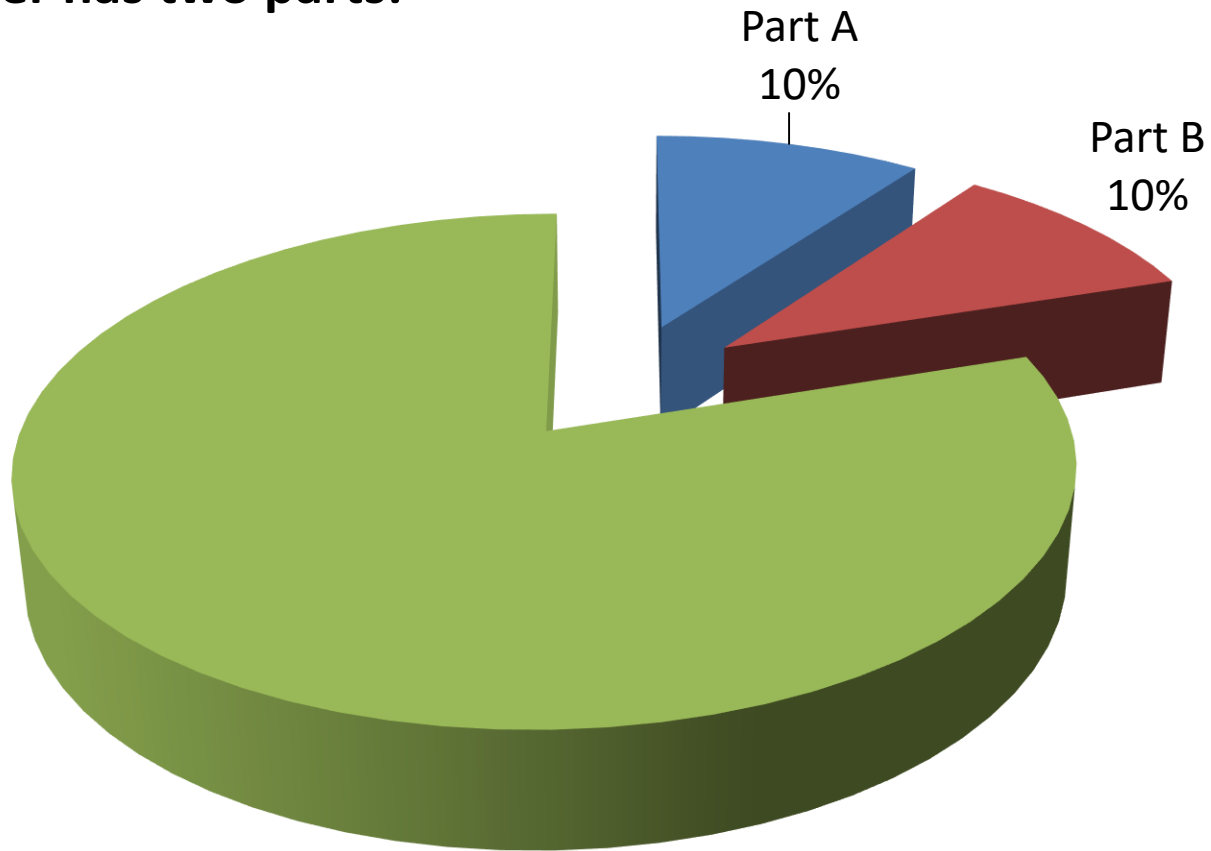
Paper 1 Reading

Assessment Components



Paper 1 Reading

This paper has two parts:



Assessment objectives - Reading

Curriculum and Assessment Guide

Broad learning outcomes

- Understand and interpret the purpose and meaning of a broad range of texts
- Identify the main theme and key details
- Identify the contextual meaning of words and phrases
- Interpret the tone and mood of a writer
- Distinguish and evaluate views, attitudes, arguments
- Understand the use of a range of language features
- Interpret, analyse, select and organise ideas and information

Reading

- Duration: 1.5 hours for both parts
- 1 or more texts in each part (about 900-1200 words)
- Topics and genres will be of different kinds
- Item types: gap fill, T/F/NG, matching, pronoun referencing, MC questions (4 options), chart completion, matching, ordering, open ended questions (What, Why, etc.)

Part 1A

Compulsory

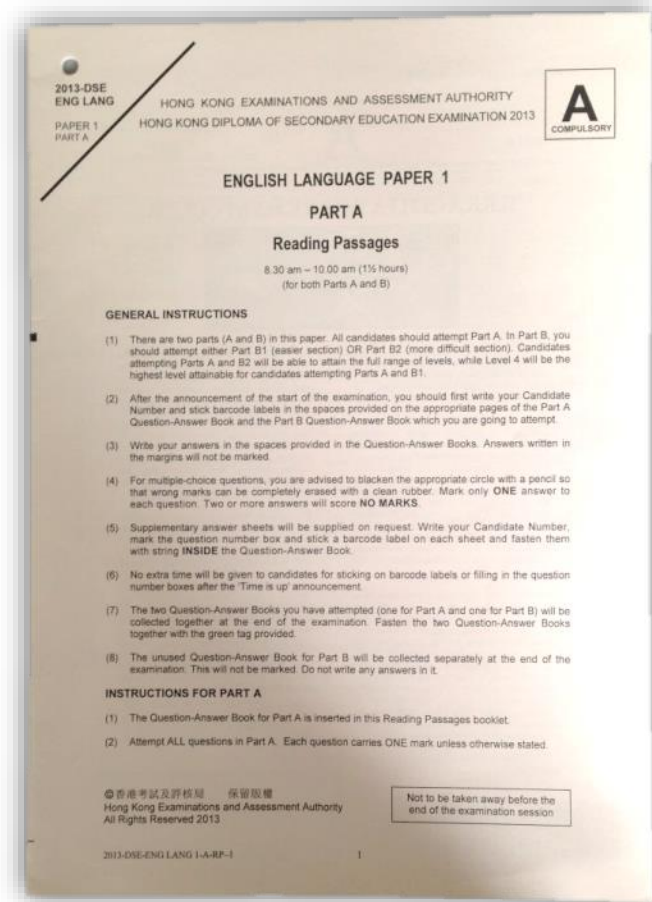
All candidates will attempt Part A

A set of reading passages booklet and a QAB

Tested on a variety of reading skills

MCQ, short-answer, open-ended questions

Easy and difficult items



Part 1B1 and 1B2

Part 1B1
Easier

Optional

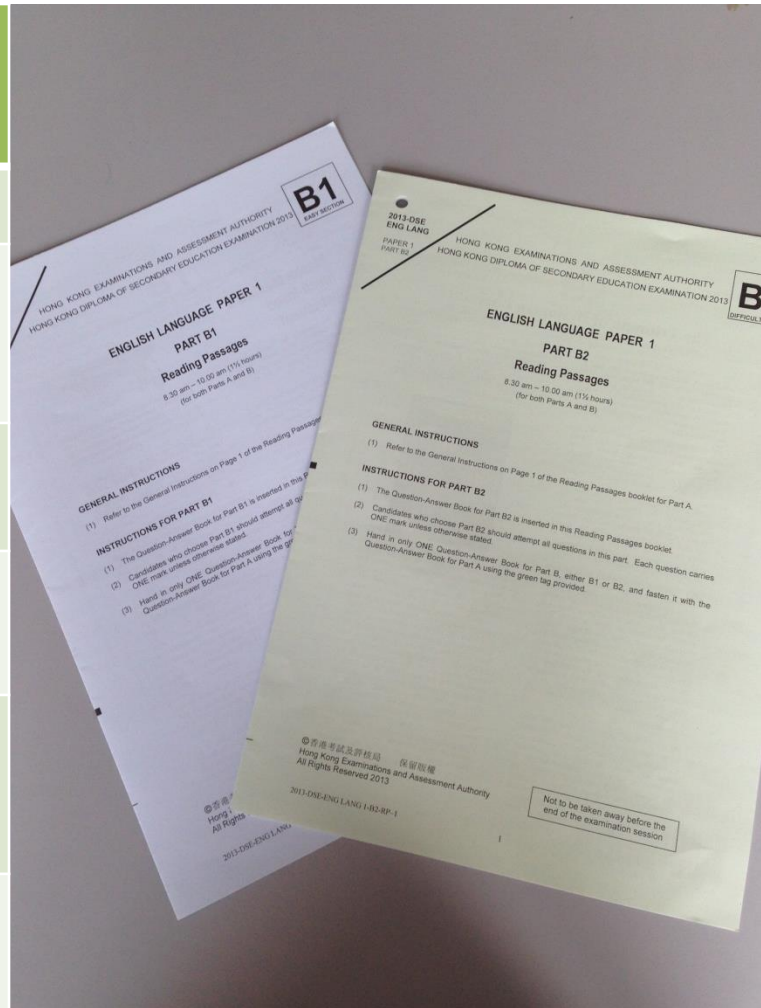
A set of reading passages
booklet and a QAB

More simple texts

Less cognitively
demanding

MCQ, short-answer,
open-ended questions

Easier items



Part 1B2
More difficult

Optional

A set of reading
passages booklet and a
QAB

More challenging texts

More cognitively
demanding

MCQ, short-answer,
open-ended questions

More difficult items

Time allowed for Part A and B: 1.5 hours

General Performance (1)

Candidates scored well on items which tested

- simple factual understanding of the text
- concrete factual items

General Performance (2)

Candidates struggled when attempting:

- single-word summary gap-fills
- items testing understanding of abstract concepts
- items testing ability to identify and analyse figurative language using textual context / to find a metaphor

Recommendations to Candidates (1)

- Avoid excess copying
- Pay attention to the form and spelling of words needed in gap-fill questions, the grammar of questions, especially for one-word or short-answer questions where more information is conveyed
- Understanding the core message of the text as a whole

Recommendations to Candidates (2)

- Candidates should decide before entering the exam whether to take B1 or B2. It is probably unwise to base this decision on a quick glance at the texts or a superficial viewing of the items on the day of the exam itself

Paper 1: Recommendations (3)

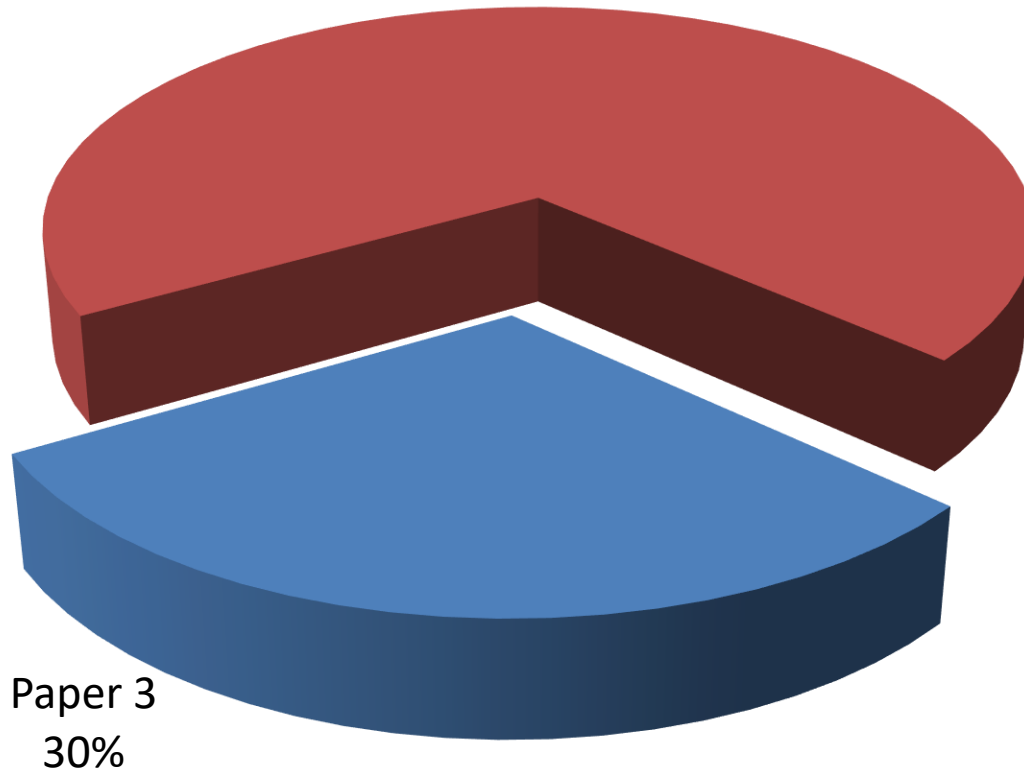
- Accuracy in spelling and grammar is not required for open-ended questions
- Marks are awarded if the message is clear
- For some cloze/gap-filling tasks, accuracy is required as the cloze itself serves as a reading comprehension text
- Make sure handwriting is legible

Paper 1: Recommendations (4)

- Refer to the texts for answers (Do NOT reply on personal knowledge or experience)
- Understand the links between sentences and the ideas they contain, as well as the overall paragraph structure and authorial voice
- Be aware of the need for paraphrasing in an answer, as opposed to copying
- If copy, don't copy too much: only your first answer (idea) will be marked.

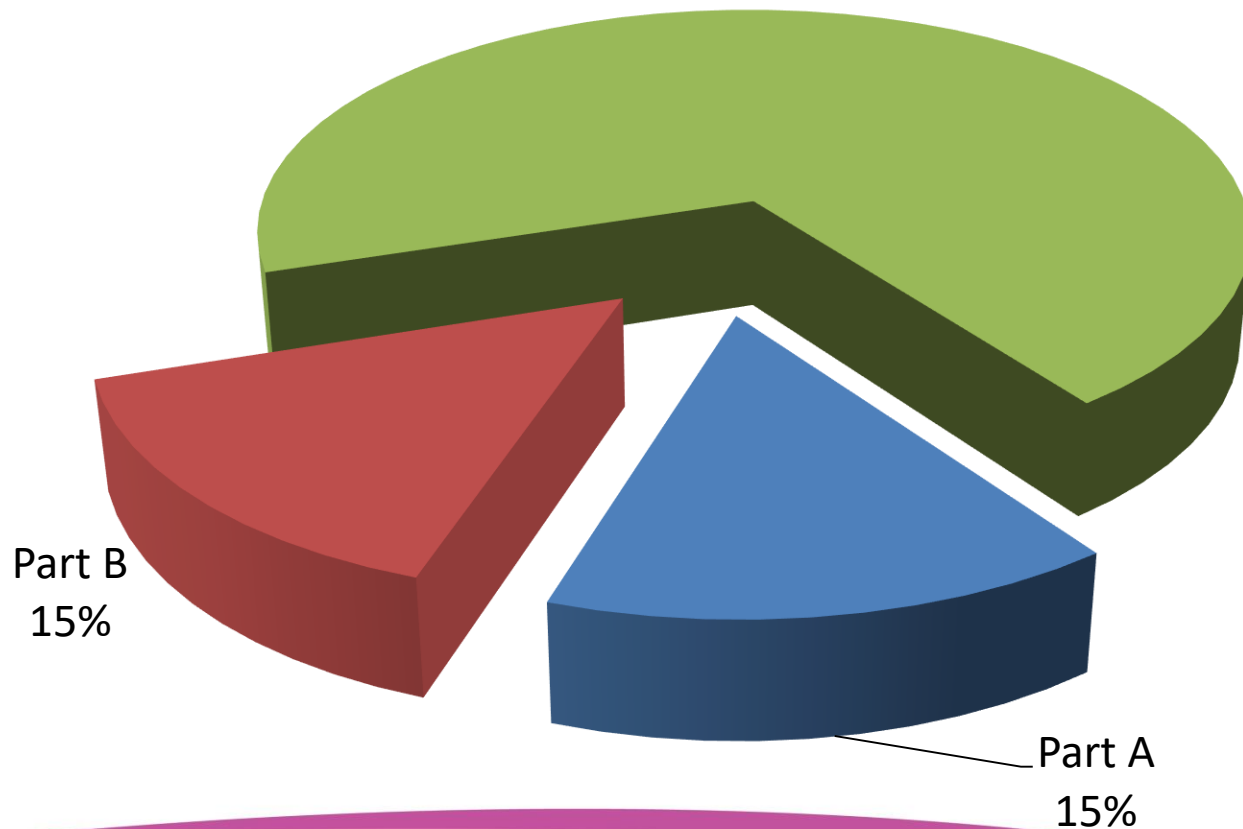
Paper 3 Listening and Integrated Skills

Assessment Component



Paper 3 Listening and Integrated Skills

This paper has two parts:



Assessment objectives - Listening

Curriculum and Assessment Guide

Broad learning outcomes

- 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 range of accents and language varieties and speech delivered at a moderate pace
- Understand the use of a range of language features in fairly complex spoken texts

Paper 3

Listening and Integrated Skills

Instructions for Listening Part

- Listening test will be broadcast via radio or the infra-red (IR) transmission system (check your admission form)
- For radio-broadcast centres, candidates must bring their own radio set equipped with earphones
- If assigned to IR system, candidates must bring their own earphones (but not a radio)

Part 3A

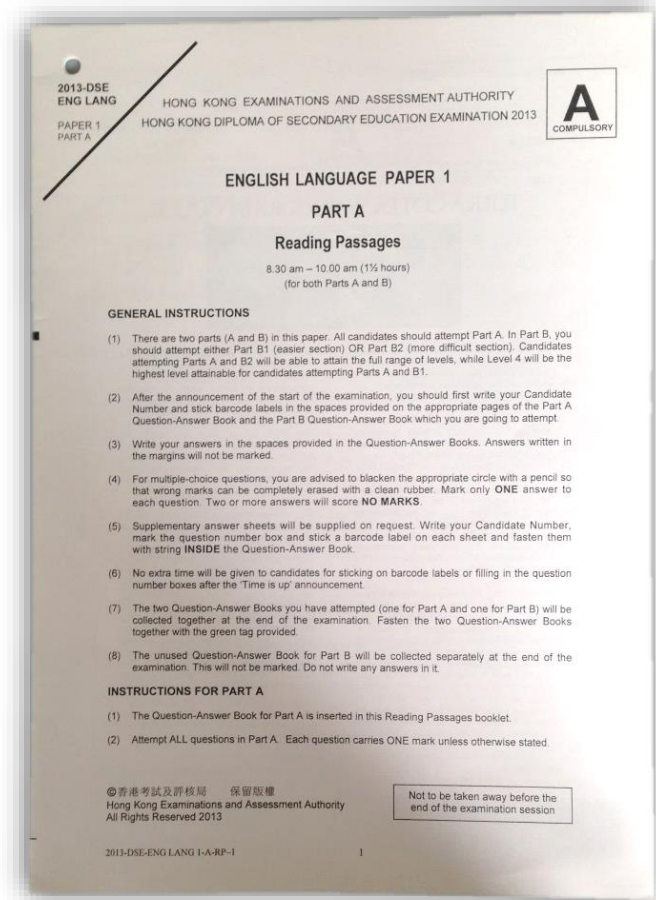
Compulsory

All candidates will attempt Part A

Listening component - listen to a recording that will last for about 50 minutes

Need to complete a variety of listening tasks

Easy and difficult items



Question Types in 3A

- Filling in blanks in a flowchart
- Filling in or ticking cells in a table
- Filling in gaps in a bulleted list
- Diagram labelling
- Numbers, dates, names or roles
- Sentence completion

Part 3B1 and 3B2

Part B

- Required to process information by selecting and combining data from the recording and written sources in the Data File in order to complete a variety of writing tasks in a practical work or study situation
- At least one of the writing tasks will require you to produce an extended piece of writing
- The information necessary to complete these tasks will be provided in the recording or the Data File
- You should write on each line to avoid unnecessary use of supplementary answer sheets

Part 3B1 and 3B2

3B1 Easier

Optional

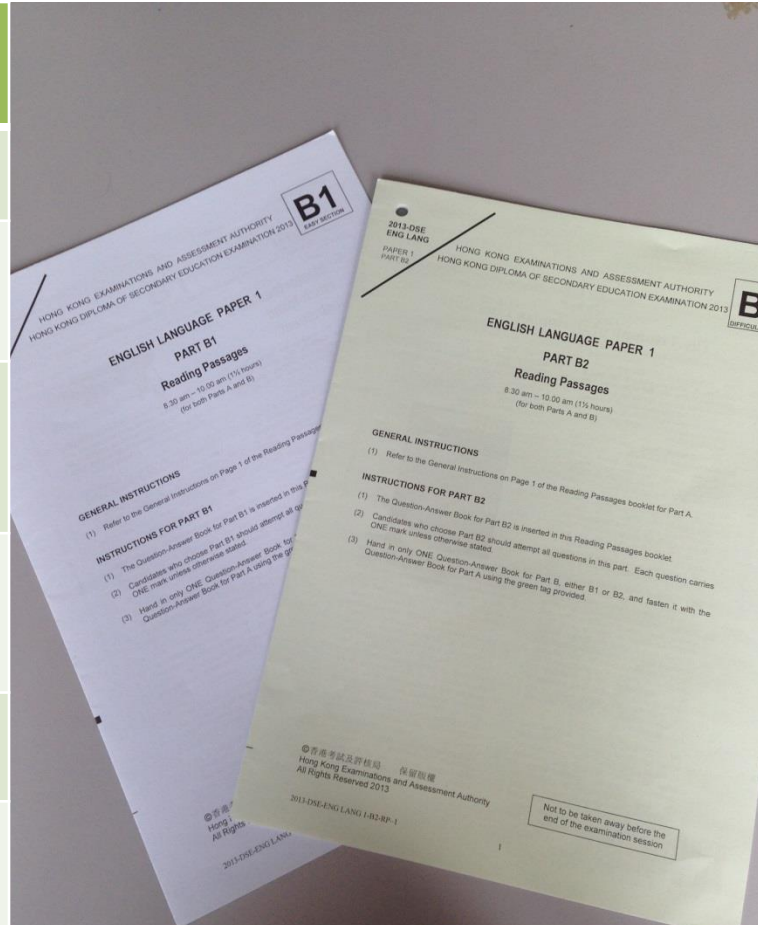
Locating and processing information

Identifying relevant information and discarding irrelevant information

Writing in a well organised and readable manner

Using a tone/style appropriate

Easier tasks



3B2 More difficult

Optional

Locating and processing information

Identifying relevant information and discarding irrelevant information

Writing in a well organised and readable manner

Using a tone/style appropriate

More difficult tasks

Time allowed for Part A and B: about 2 hours

Paper 3A: Recommendations

- Spend the preparation time familiarising yourself with the tasks
- Read the prompts and stems carefully to predict the required form of the answer
- Be prepared to compose answers in their own words rather than repeating the words they hear in the recording
- Check whether their answers make sense within the context of the situation before moving to part B

Paper 3B: Recommendations

Candidates should:

- carefully review notes from listening input, question prompts in the Data File and how they may relate to the tasks
- read through the review the notes made in the listening to check if they are connected directly to any content in the Data File
- avoid copying information from the Data File, instead of paraphrasing or summarising the information

Paper 3B: Recommendations

Candidates should:

- practise writing a variety of texts, in particular to work on summarising skills
- note the word guide and **point allocation** to get an idea of the scope of the task at hand
- take the opportunity to show their own English and different registers not just an ability to copy
- construct a text fit for purpose not simply string together answers

Paper 3B: Recommendations

Candidates should:

- Carefully review notes from listening input and how they may relate to the tasks
- Take the opportunity to show their own English and different registers, not just an ability to copy
- Practise summarising skills
- Practise summarising graphic information
- Be prepared to apply inferencing-through-reading /listening skills to make sense of information that may not be explicitly stated

Paper 3B: Reminder from the Assessment Guidelines

- All of the following may vary from year to year:
 - The nature of the listening task
 - The number of tasks
 - The length of the tasks
 - The points allocation per task
 - The total points allocation for Part B
 - The aspects of performance tested
 - Etc.

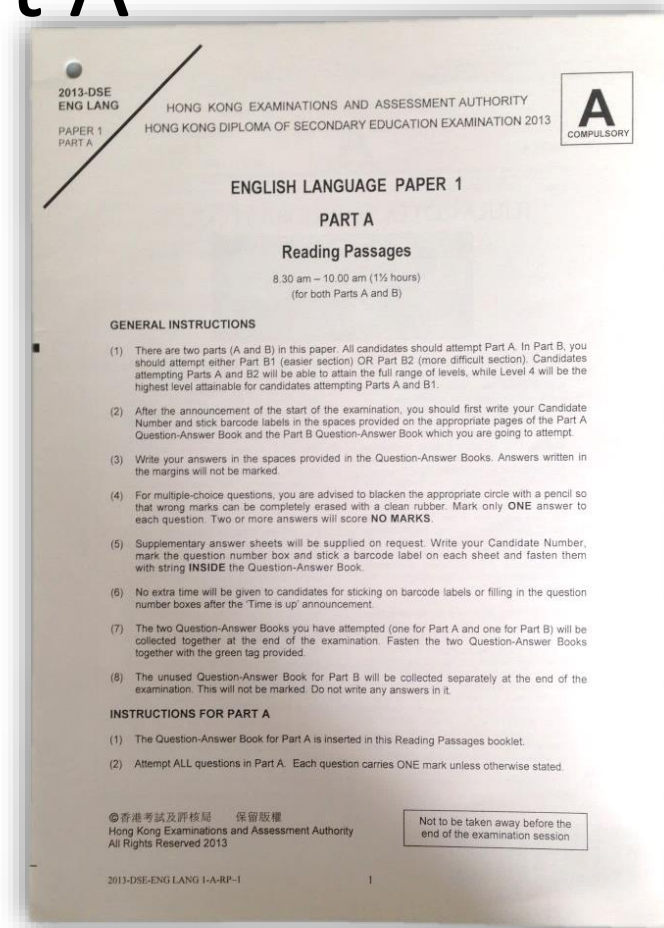
Graded Approach

Part A

Compulsory

Easy and difficult items

Level descriptors: 1-5



Part B1 and B2

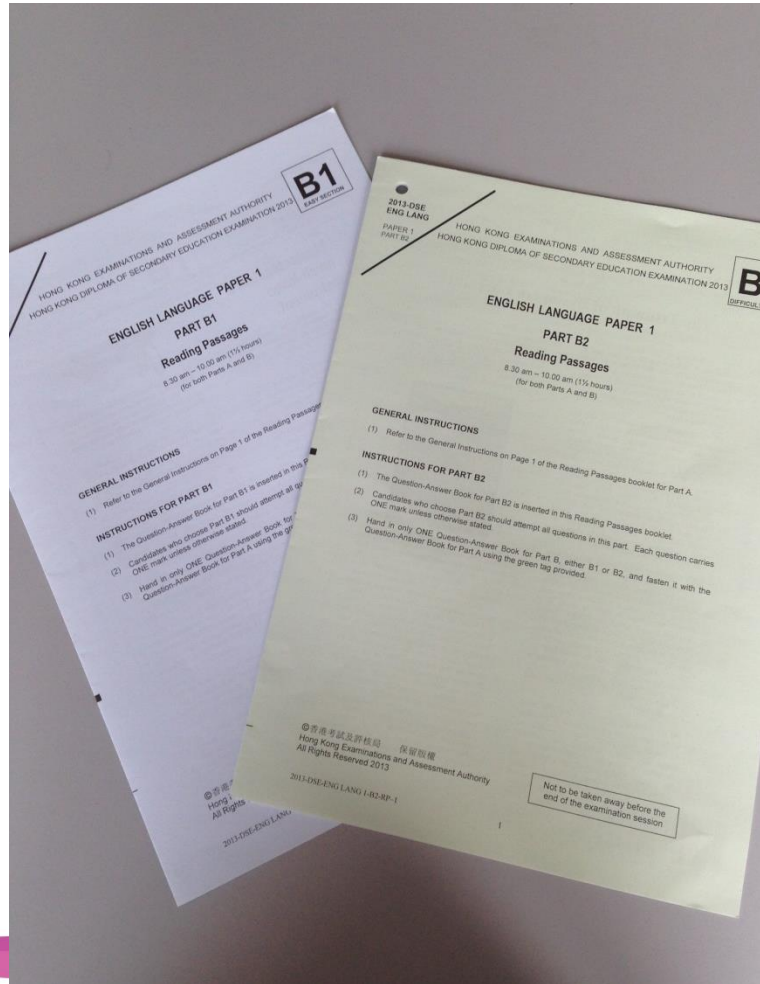
**B1 (optional)
Easier**

Easier items

Level descriptors:
1-4

Highest grade:
level 4

Items in B1 do not
assess abilities required
for attaining Level 5



**B2 (optional)
More difficult**

More difficult items

Level descriptors:
2-5

Highest grade:
level 5**

B2 candidates will
be able to attain
the highest level of
performance (Level
5 or above)

Equipercentile Equating

- To equate the performance of candidates taking different parts of the same paper
- Through equating, scores in the optional parts of the paper (B1 and B2) are statistically adjusted for difficulty to the same scale using the percentile ranks of candidates' scores in the compulsory part (A)
- Candidates getting different marks in different parts of the paper are rank ordered and divided into equal-sized groups. The marks of candidates taking different optional parts but achieving the same mark in Part A will be equated

Equipercentile Equating

- The B1 marks will be converted to a scale comparable to the B2 mark scale
- Equated scores will be combined with Part A scores to form total paper mark
- Scores of B2 candidates will be combined with Part A without need for conversion

Equipercntile Equating

EQUIPERCENTILE EQUATING OF B1 MARKS TO B2 SCALE

Mark range	A percentile group of B1 candidates achieve 30 marks in Part B1.	The same B1 percentile group achieve 20 marks in Part A. Also achieving 20 marks in Part A is a group of B2 candidates.	The B2 percentile group achieve 15 marks in Part B2.	Therefore, the equivalent B1 marks on the B2 scale is 15 marks.
5				
10				
15				
20				
25				
30	B1 Candidates	B1, B2 Candidates	B2 Candidates	B1 Candidates
35				
40				

A simplified example of how a score of 30 in B1 is equated to a score of 15 in B2.

Conversion Table

2013 Paper 1B

1B1	1B2
0	0
1	0
2	1
.	.
23	11
24	12
25	13
26	13
27	14
.	.
.	.

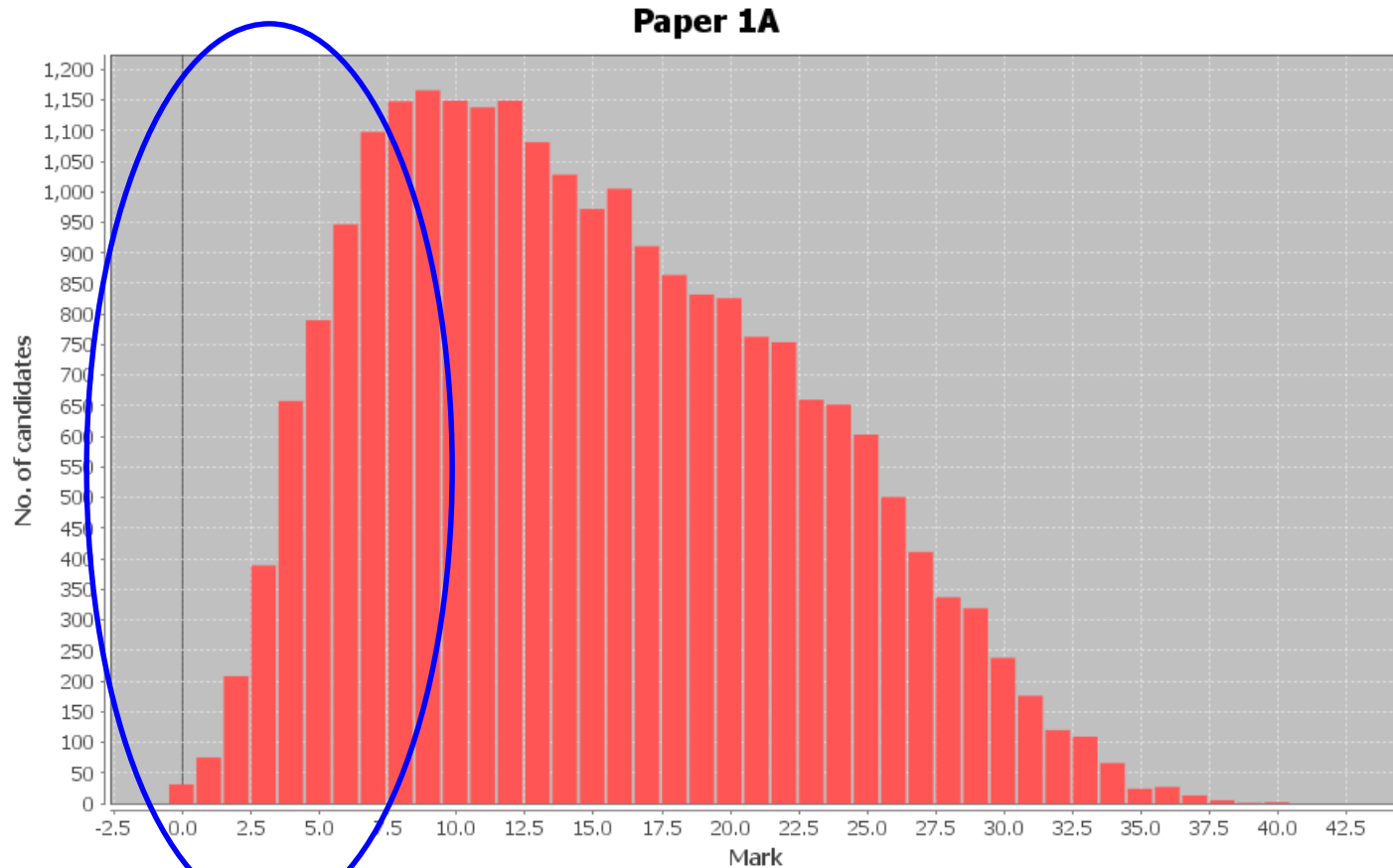
How to choose B1 or B2?

Choosing B1 or B2

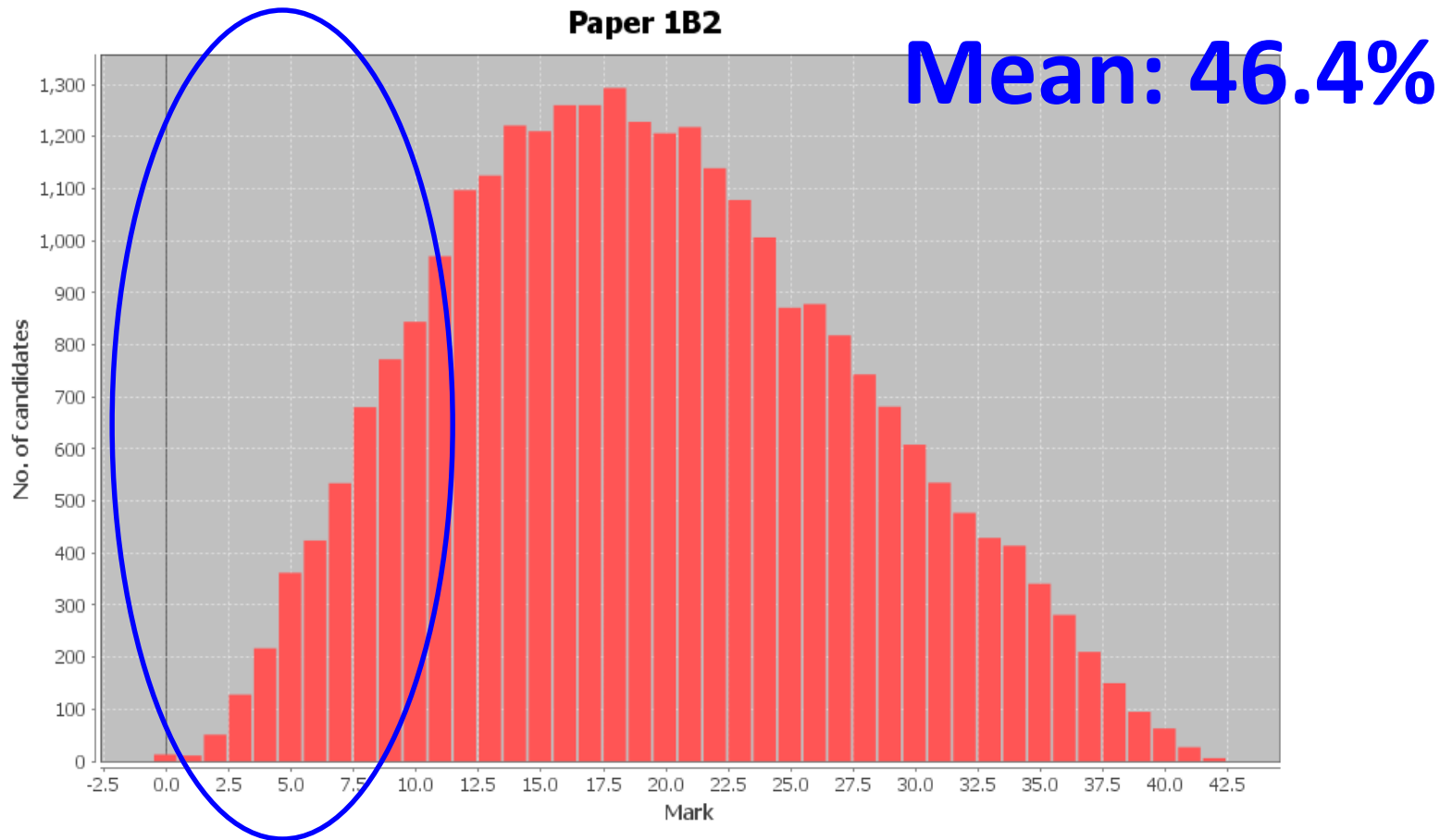
- Candidates should choose the optional part of the paper that best matches their ability
- Teachers should advise their candidates well before the day of the exam which optional part of the paper to attempt
- Teachers should make reference to level descriptors or ask candidates to complete both parts of last year's examination paper and compare their results in B1 with B2
- B1: candidates whose abilities match the level descriptors for level 3 or below
- B2: candidates who wish to attain level 5
- Candidates whose abilities fall in the middle will not be disadvantaged by their choice of either B1 or B2

How B1 Candidates Performed in 1A (2019)

Mean: 35.6%



Part 1B2 Score Distribution (2019)



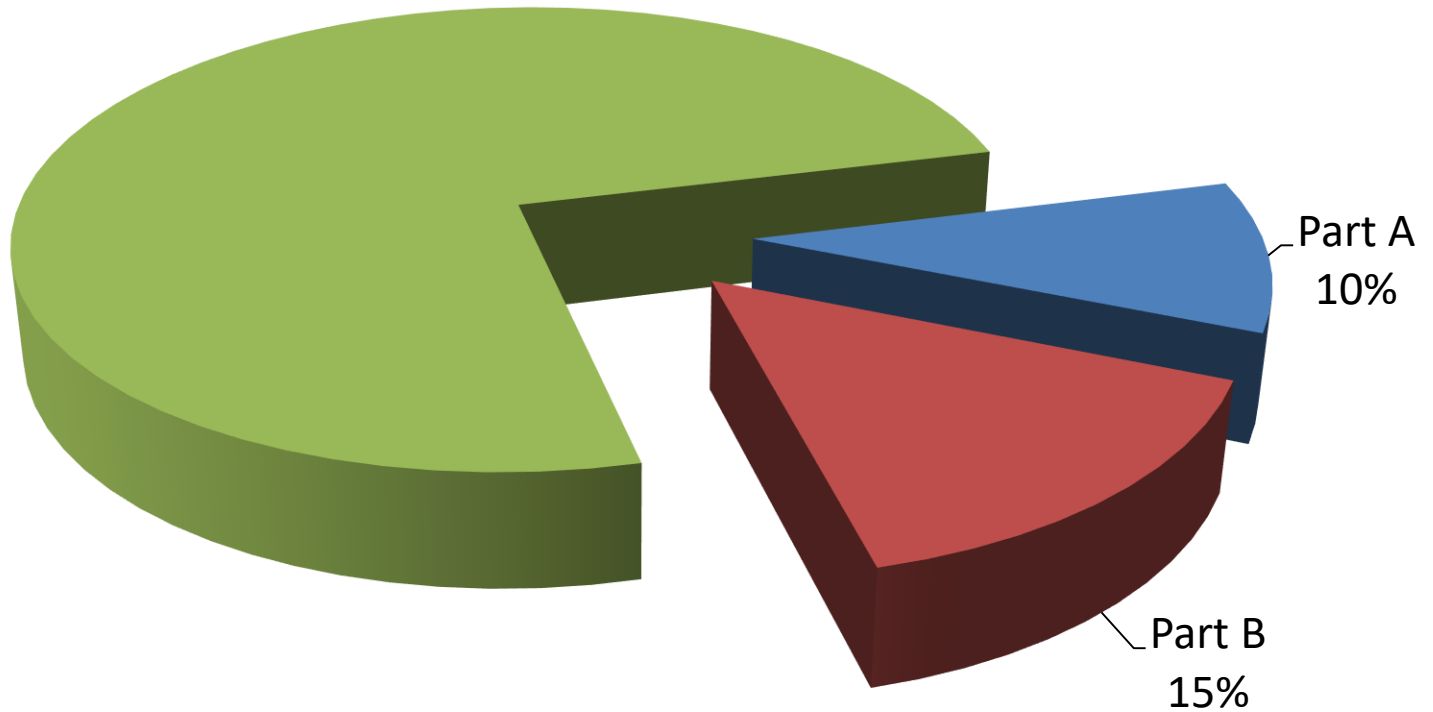
Paper 2 Writing

Assessment Component



Paper 2 Writing

This paper has two parts:



Assessment objectives - Writing

Curriculum and Assessment Guide

Broad learning outcomes

- Write texts for different contexts, audiences and purposes with relevant content and adequate supporting ideas
- 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

Paper 2 Writing

Part A (Compulsory)	Part B (Choice of 1 question out of 8)
Short, guided writing task	Longer writing task
About 200 words	About 400 words
1 question	8 questions (each based on electives) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poems and songs• Drama• Short stories• Popular culture • Sports communication• Debate• Workplace communication• Social Issues

Time allowed for Parts A and B: 2 hours

Assessment Criteria

Content

- Content fulfils the requirements of the question
- Relevant
- Ideas are well developed/supported
- Creativity and imagination are shown when appropriate
- Engages the reader's interest consistently and shows a high awareness of audience

Assessment Criteria

Language

- Wide range of accurate sentence structures, with a good grasp of more complex structures
- Grammar accurate (with only very minor slips)
- Vocabulary well-chosen and often used appropriately to express subtleties of meaning
- Spelling and punctuation are almost entirely correct
- Register, tone and style are entirely appropriate to the genre and text-type

Assessment Criteria

Organisation

- Text is organised effectively
- Logical development of ideas
- Cohesion of the text is clear
- Cohesive ties throughout the text are sophisticated
- Overall structure is coherent, sophisticated and appropriate to the genre and text-type

Chief Examiners' Recommendations

- Develop awareness of a range of different written genres
- Develop understanding of the social purposes of a given genre and how the organisation of the text, choice of grammar and vocabulary can help achieve communication

Chief Examiners' Recommendations

- To enhance communication, candidates need to build up a range of grammatical and lexical structures
- Sentence structures, forms and stock phrases need to be used appropriately and with the intended meaning
- Candidates should be aware of the uses of different tenses and voices

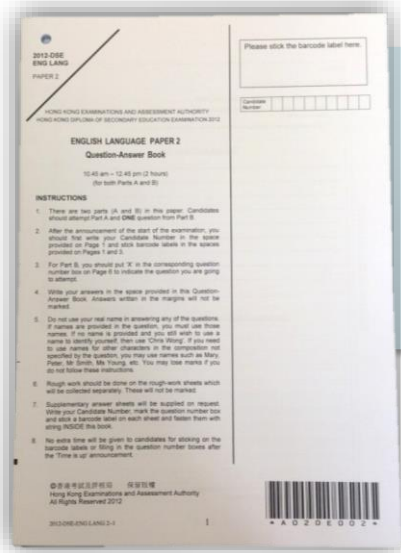
Chief Examiners' Recommendations

- Use devices such as synonyms and superordinates to avoid unnecessary repetition of vocabulary and to strengthen the internal cohesion of the text
- Spend time planning and editing text, e.g. if too many details are included, risk losing the reader

Chief Examiners' Recommendations

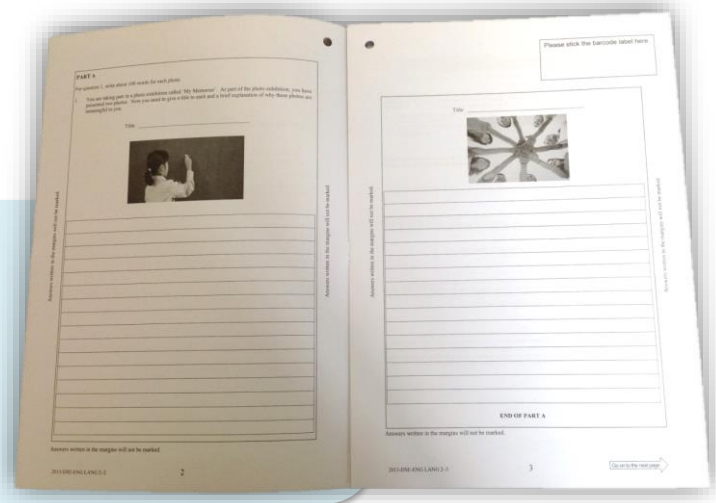
- Length – Candidates are instructed to write around 200 words for Part A and 400 words for Part B
- Task is designed to elicit evidence of a candidates' writing abilities – produce a sample high quality of writing

Reminders



Rough work sheets will be provided for planning and drafting of ideas

Write on every line to avoid unnecessary use of supplementary answer sheets



Reminders

FOR PART B ONLY
Put an 'X' inside the question number box to indicate the question (Q.2 – Q.9) that you have chosen.

試題編號	Question No.						
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Below the table are several horizontal lines for writing.

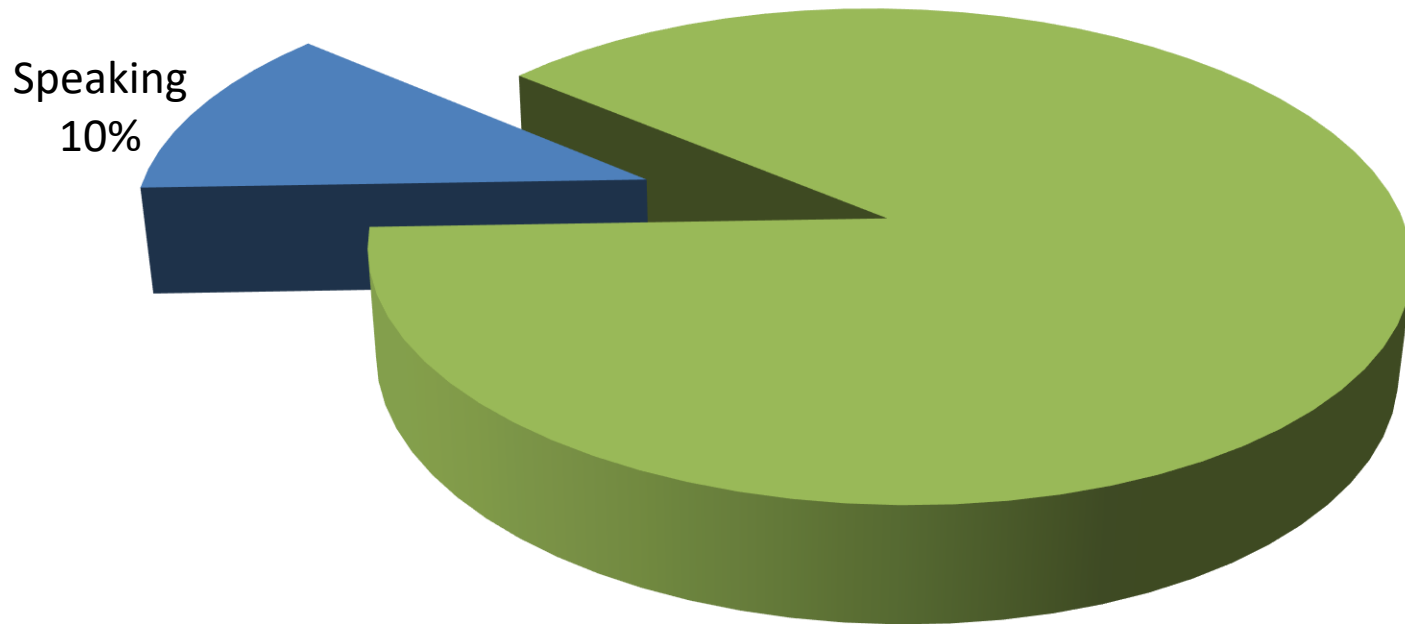
In part B, indicate the question you have chosen by putting an 'X'

Paper 4 Speaking (Public Exam)



Paper 4 Speaking

Assessment Component



Assessment objectives - Speaking

Curriculum and Assessment Guide

Broad learning outcomes

- Express information and ideas (e.g. personal experience, opinions, 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
- Produce coherent and structured speech with ideas effectively/clearly presented
- Pronounce words clearly and accurately
- Use appropriate pace, volume, intonation, stress, eye contact etc. to support communication

Paper 4 Speaking

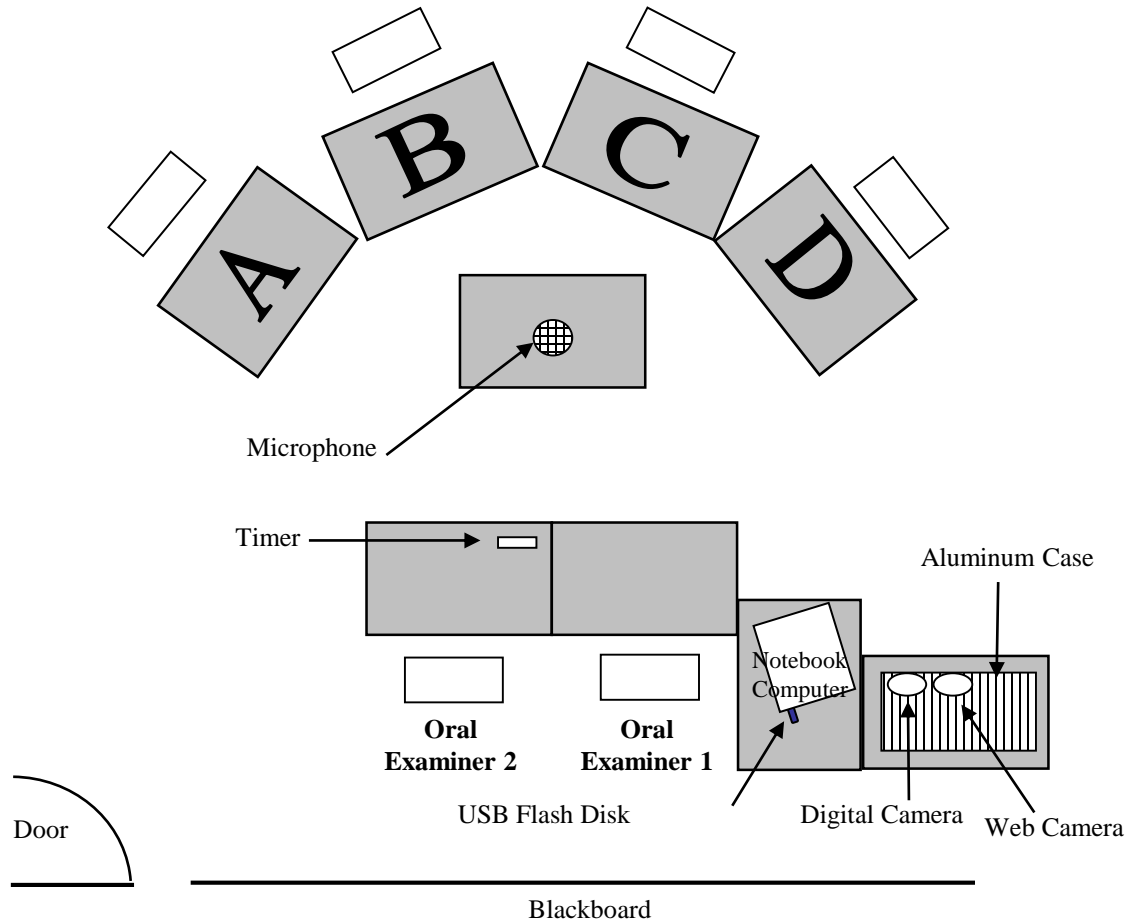
Part A Group Interaction (8 min for group of 4)

- 3-4 candidates grouped together
- Group discussion based on a given short text and a context
- May be required to make suggestions, give advice, explain a choice, argue for/against a position

Part B Individual Response (1 min per candidate)

- Each candidate will be asked 1 question from the examiner based on the group discussion task

Seating arrangement in the Examination Room



Instructions for Paper 4

Part A

- Hand your scoresheet to the examiner and sit according to seating plan
- Exam will be video-recorded
- Wait for instructions on when to begin (copy of QP on desk)
- During group discussion, speak facing the candidates (not camera or examiner)
- Interact with the other candidates – listening and responding to what they have said, adding your own ideas to the conversation
- Everyone should take turns to speak

Instructions for Paper 4

Part B

- The examiner will ask each candidate a question related to the discussion topic
- The examiner will choose a question, and then press the timer which is set for 1 minute
- If you don't understand examiner's question – ask to repeat the question (only repeat once, timer will not be stopped)
- After all the candidates have finished Part B, return the notecard and leave the examination centre

Paper 4: Speaking

Pronunciation & Delivery

Common Problems:

- Some candidates spoke at a rapid pace with no pausing as they wanted to say as much as possible
- Affected their delivery and also inhibited the ability of other candidates to understand

Paper 4: Speaking

Pronunciation & Delivery

Recommendations:

- Listen to spoken English from a variety of sources
- Don't rush
- Speak clearly and as naturally as possible
- Learn to use phrasing and intonation to enhance communication

Paper 4: Speaking

Communication strategies

Common Problems:

- Multiple candidate all wanting to start discussion
- Taking a long turn and giving a mini-presentation often from extensive notes

Paper 4: Speaking

Communication strategies

Recommendations:

- Importance of collaboration – respecting everyone's right to speak and contribute to the discussion
- To only take short notes on note card so do not have to read out a text in group interaction thus facilitating more natural interaction

Paper 4: Speaking

Vocabulary and Language Patterns

Common Problems:

- Difficulty producing grammatically accurate structures
- Lack of appropriate vocabulary in more unfamiliar topics

Paper 4: Speaking

Ideas & Organisation

Common Problems:

- Showed lack or limited understanding of the text
- Failed to elaborate on initial points made

Paper 4: Speaking

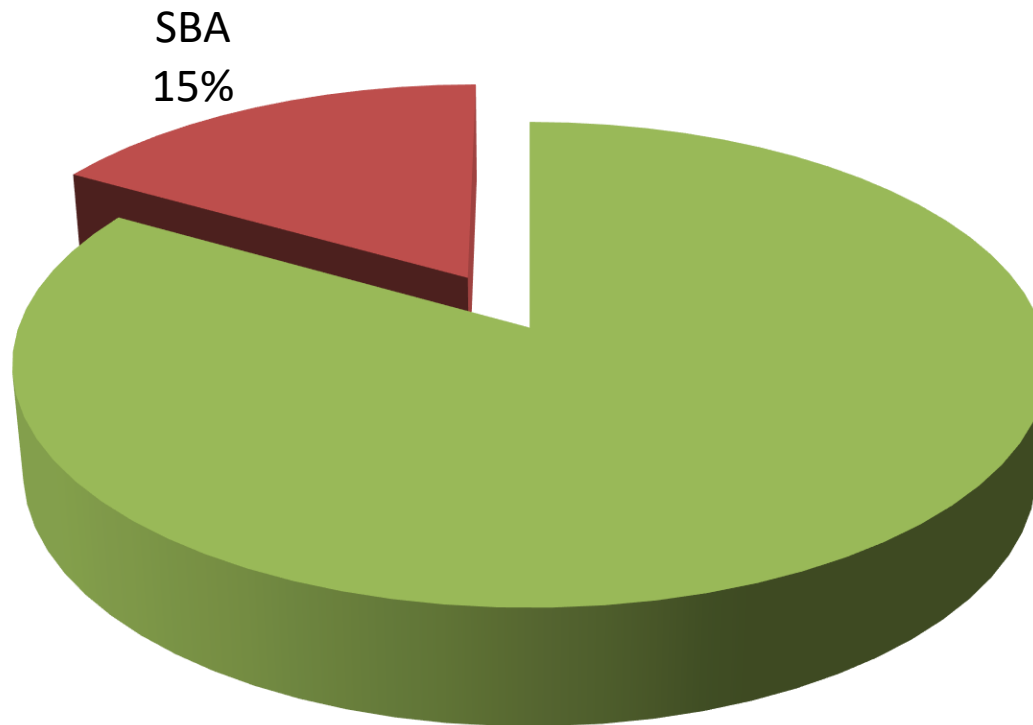
Ideas & Organisation

Recommendations:

- Use the preparation time to extract relevant information from the text and make brief notes
- Draw on their own experience or think of examples that support their ideas

Paper 4 Speaking - SBA

Assessment Component



School-based Assessment (SBA)

Rationale

- To enhance the validity of public assessment and extend it to include a variety of learning outcomes that cannot be easily assessed through public examinations
- Assessment administered in schools by subject teachers

English Language SBA

- Candidates will read/view a number of texts (books, films) over the course of study
- Study two or three elective modules
- Take part in group discussions and make presentations based on information they have learned

SBA Mark submission

Part A Reading/Viewing programme

Do a group discussion / individual presentation based on the texts that you have read/viewed

Submit one mark at the end of S.6

Part B Elective modules

Do a group discussion / individual presentation on something you have studied in the electives

Submit one mark at the end of S.6

Supervisor's Report on Individual Presentation

- Students took the individual presentation seriously and prepared well for it
- All were able to give a presentation of about 3 minutes, with some strong students giving longer presentations of up to 7 minutes

Performance of Stronger Students (IP)

- Able to speak fluently and naturally with clear and accurate pronunciation and intonation
- Had audience awareness and used body language to maintain audience interest
- Used a wide range of vocabulary and language patterns
- Developed their ideas clearly

Performance of Stronger Students (IP)

- Did not refer to notes or with only occasional, unobtrusive reference to a note card
- Some strong students memorised their presentation, so their final score was lower

Performance of Weaker Students (IP)

- Some still made an effort to do their best
- Many had difficulties in pronunciation, phrasing and intonation
- Wrote out their script or copy chunks of information onto the note card and then just read aloud
- Little audience awareness, although they did look up from time to time

Performance of Weaker Students (IP)

- Language mistakes: tenses, agreement, pronouns, word forms and sentence structures
- Did not have the vocabulary to develop and elaborate their ideas
- These affected their ability to express their ideas clearly

Use of PowerPoint in IP

- More students used PowerPoint presentations during their SBA assessment this year
- This is fine if the slides enhance a presentation
- In most cases, the slides were filled with information which the students read aloud
- The slides were more of a distraction than an aid and did nothing to enhance quality
- Suggestions: focus on two or three main ideas which can be expanded upon

Performance of Stronger Students (GI)

- Able to respond to what had been said and to further develop the points, contributing to a more coherent discussion
- Employed a wide range of communication strategies: rephrasing, summarising, asking questions and drawing others into the discussion

Performance of Weaker Students (GI)

- Read out written scripts regardless of what the preceding candidate said
- Not able to respond appropriately to what had been said; there was no real interaction among the group members
- Mostly used formulaic expressions like 'I agree' or 'That is a good idea' without any elaboration or justification

Performance of Weaker Students (GI)

- Turn-taking became very mechanical and the order of speaking followed a fixed pattern
- The group interaction became four mini-presentations on the given topic with little or no overall coherence

Recommendation

- Pronunciation and Delivery: Listening to simple audio books, paying attention to how the words are pronounced and the intonation patterns used
- Use simple vocabulary and simple sentence structures
- Higher ability students: Do presentation without referring to their note card; focus more on the use of intonation and body language to engage the audience

Recommendation

- Access to a wide range of authentic materials such as TED talks, recordings of public speaking competitions, podcasts etc. can help students understand the different techniques that can be used to give good presentations and also the value of effective speaking skills

Recommendation

- Understand the importance of listening to what others are saying as what each student says should follow on from what the preceding speaker has said
- Engage in a genuine discussion with appropriate eye contact which can then help all the group members achieve higher marks
- Self / peer evaluation are effective ways of helping students understand their areas for improvement

SBA: Recommendations

Students should

- learn the correct articulation of common words as well as how to use intonation to enhance communication
- practise and apply what they have learned / read / viewed
- practise speaking English daily inside and outside school

Useful resources

- *Handbook for Candidates*
- www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/HKDSE/admin/student_s_handbook/
- *HKDSE English Language Question Papers (2012-2019)*
- English Language Level Descriptors
www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/assessment/subject_information/category_a_subjects/hkdse_subj.html?A1&1&2_4
- Samples of Candidates Performances
www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/hkdse_subj.html?A1&1&2_25
- Speaking Guidelines for Candidates
www.hkeaa.edu.hk/DocLibrary/HKDSE/Subject_Information/eng_lang/EngDSESpeakingGuidelines.pdf
- FAQs www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/hkdse_subj.html?A1&1&2_6