

Writing

1. In Paper 2, can candidates write on alternate lines of the Question-Answer Book?

Candidates should write on each line to avoid unnecessary use of supplementary answer sheets.

2. In Paper 2, for writing task such as debate speech, how many arguments should candidates raise?

When attempting writing tasks such as a debate speech, candidates should strike a balance between the number of arguments and the elaboration of key ideas. To get high marks in content, candidates should note that their ideas should be relevant and appropriate. They should also elaborate the main ideas and provide supporting details.

3. In Paper 2, if candidates write more or less than the word guide given or use wrong vocabulary, will there be mark deduction?

In English Language Examination, no mark penalty is imposed for writing more or less 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. No marks will be deducted if candidates write more than the word guide given. If candidates write much less than the suggested word guide, since it cannot demonstrate their language ability, obviously they will not be awarded very high marks in both parts of Paper 2.

4. Will candidates' marks be affected by poor hand writing?

No. It is, however, advised that candidates whose hand writing is not good should try to write as tidily as they can. They can leave more space between words when writing so that it would be easier for markers to read their answers.

Listening and Integrated Skills

5. Will marks be deducted if candidates make grammatical mistakes in Paper 3A?

In English Language Examination, no mark penalty is imposed. Marks are awarded based on candidates' performance and whether their answers address the task requirements. In Paper 3A, marks will be awarded if the ideas can be clearly communicated.

6. In Paper 3, should candidates paraphrase or just copy the information from the data file?

In Paper 3, candidates' abilities in manipulating the information in the Data File and use their own language in integrated tasks are assessed. Candidates should demonstrate their ability in using their language if appropriate and they should also make sure that their answers address the requirements of the tasks.

7. Will marks be deducted if candidates make minor spelling error in Paper 3?

In English Language Examination, no mark penalty is imposed. Candidates can be awarded marks if their ideas can be clearly communicated.

8. What should a candidate do if he/she brings a radio which is not working?

If your radio is not working and you cannot improve the situation after several attempts, you should request to move to the Special Room. We suggest that candidates test their earphones and receivers carefully before the listening examination, as well as bring a spare radio with them to the examination centre.

Speaking

(Remark: In response to the latest development of the COVID-19 epidemic, the English Language speaking examinations scheduled for late March to mid-April 2022 will be cancelled. For details, please visit the HKEAA website.)

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

Candidates are allowed to ask an examiner for another question from the list, but they can only do this once. They should note that they only have one minute for individual response. The timer will not be stopped when the examiner asks the second question.

10. What should a candidate do if he/she cannot attend the speaking examination due to illness?

Candidates can apply for rescheduling of the speaking examination due to illness. They should submit their application together with the original medical certificate within three working days (Monday to Friday during office hours) after the original examination date. Candidates should pay attention to the application deadline. For details, please read the Handbook for Candidates.

11. Can candidates use mobile phones in the reporting room?

Candidates must turn off their mobile phones (including the alarm function) and put it inside their bag before entering the reporting room. If their mobile phone/electronic device emits sound/vibrates in the preparation room/examination room/corridor, they will be subject to a mark penalty.

12. 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 / after they enter the examination room. They are, however, given a notecard to prepare during the ten-minute preparation in the preparation room.

13. Are candidates allowed to read any books or notes in the reporting room?

Yes, candidates are allowed to read books or notes in the reporting room. However, they should not read any electronic copies via mobile phone/electronic devices.

14. Is it acceptable to speak with a British or American accent in the speaking test?

Yes.

15. What should candidates do if one of the candidates deviates from the topic of discussion?

In group interaction in Paper 4, candidates should collaborate and co-construct the discourse with other candidates in the team. If candidate finds a member who is going off topic, he/she can intervene politely and bring the group right on track to what is required by the task.

16. 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.

17. In speaking examination, how does the HKEAA assign candidates to groups?

To ensure the fairness of the speaking examination, candidates are randomly assigned to different groups and the oral examiners would not be the candidates' own teachers.

18. What is the dress code when candidates attend speaking examination?

Candidates must present themselves decently dressed for the examination. Candidates should refer to their admission form about the provision of air-conditioning at the examination centres. They are advised to bring a jacket with them to an air-conditioned examination centre.

19. How to improve the pronunciation and any advice for preparing the speaking examination?

Candidates are advised to make use of resources on the Internet to improve their pronunciation. Another way is to imitate the intonation, stress, pace of native English speakers. For correct pronunciation, candidates can make use of online dictionaries.

School-based Assessment (SBA)

20. Can students appeal against SBA results?

Schools are expected to resolve any queries regarding SBA results before submitting their students' SBA marks to the HKEAA. The assessment criteria and standards will be made known to students so they will be well aware of their progress and their standing during the two years. They will also have plenty of opportunities to follow up on school assessments with their teachers. Schools will be provided with administrative guidelines to ensure that SBA is implemented fairly and will be required to retain relevant evidence of students' progress and performance to address any formal complaints and queries.

After the release of examination results, candidates may only submit an application to the HKEAA for rechecking of their SBA marks. They cannot apply for a re-assessment of their performance in SBA.

21. How does the HKEAA moderate the SBA marks?

To ensure the reliability and comparability of assessment standards across schools, the HKEAA moderates SBA marks submitted by different schools, either through statistical moderation or expert judgment. The moderation involves adjusting the average and the spread of raw SBA scores of students in a given school with reference to the public examination scores of the same group of students. During the moderation process, students' raw SBA scores may be adjusted, but the rank order determined by the school will remain unchanged. Generally speaking, the results obtained will become the final SBA scores of individual students in that school.

Details on Moderation of SBA scores, please refer to [Moderation of SBA Scores in the HKDSE Booklet](#)

Examination Administration

22. Are there any special examination arrangements for candidates with specific learning disabilities when taking speaking examinations?

Candidates with specific learning disabilities (SLD) will sit the speaking examinations with other SLD candidates in groups of three or four. Under special circumstances (e.g. fewer than three SLD candidates present in a group), the HKEAA will arrange an appropriate number of Oral Examination Assistants (OEAs) to facilitate the group discussion. Depending on the nature and severity of their disabilities, candidates may be given special arrangements such as extra time allowance for preparation and during the examination.

23. When will the candidates receive admission form for the 2022 HKDSE?

Admission forms for Category A written examinations will be distributed to candidates three to four weeks before the commencement of the examinations.

24. Can candidates bring a bottle of water to the examination centres?

Yes. Candidates may drink water with the permission of the invigilator. If any special requirement arises relating to drinking water at the examination centres under the pandemic, we will stipulate the requirement in the 'Contingency and Precautionary Measures at Examination Centres' on the HKEAA website at a later stage.

25. Can candidates only bring their identity cards without the admission forms to the examination centre?

No. Candidates must bring the original of both the HKDSE admission forms and identity cards to the examinations.