

English Language

Seminars on HKDSE Core Subjects

18 January 2025



Rundown

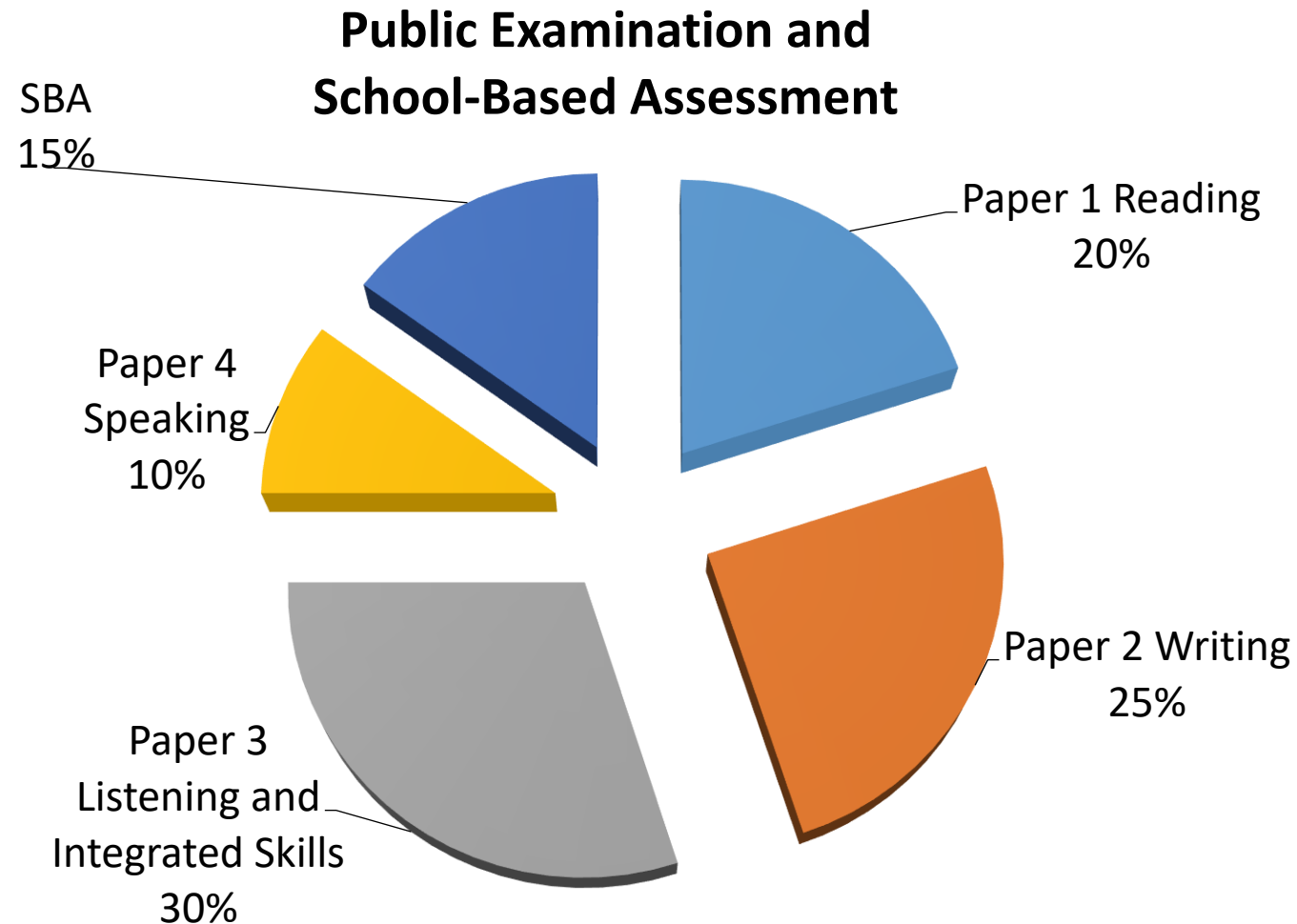
1. General Introduction
2. Assessment objectives and requirements for Papers 1 and 3
3. Graded Approach
4. Assessment objectives and requirements for Papers 2, 4 and SBA
5. Q & A



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

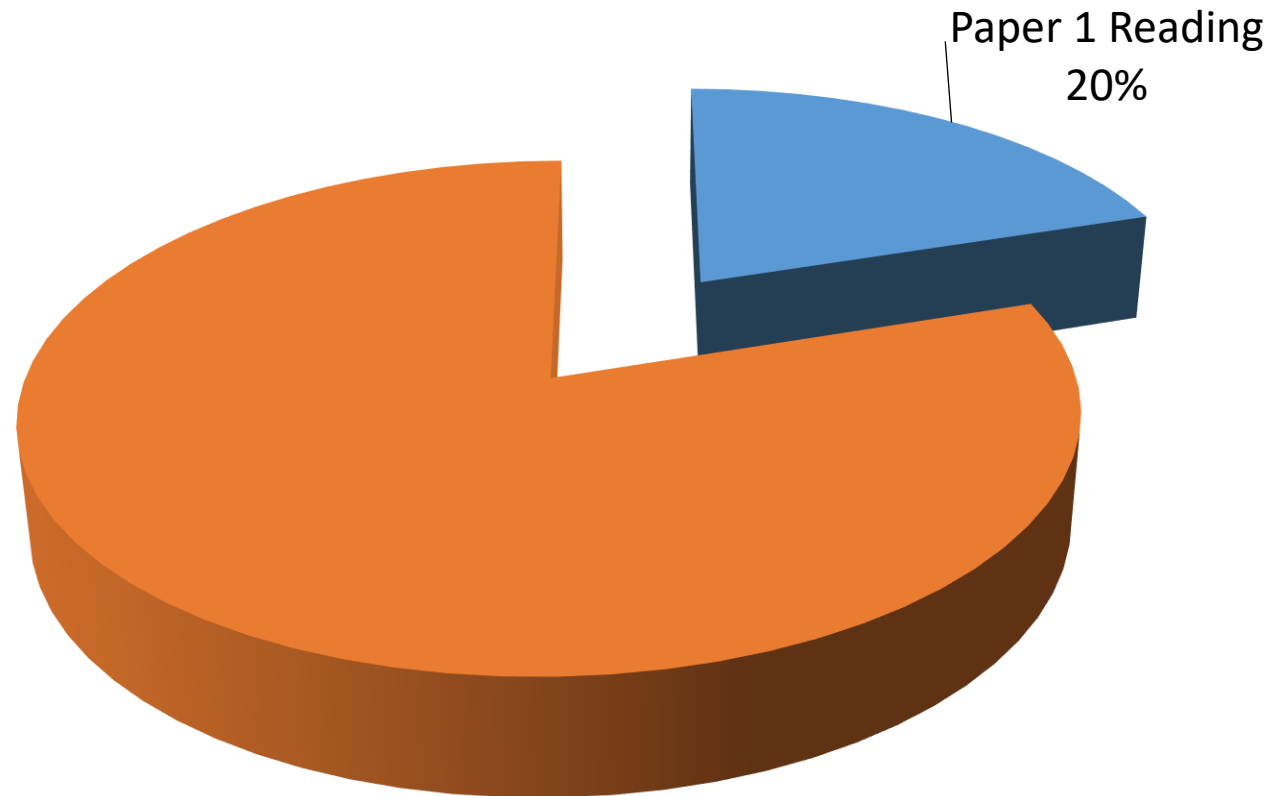


REPORTING OF RESULTS

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

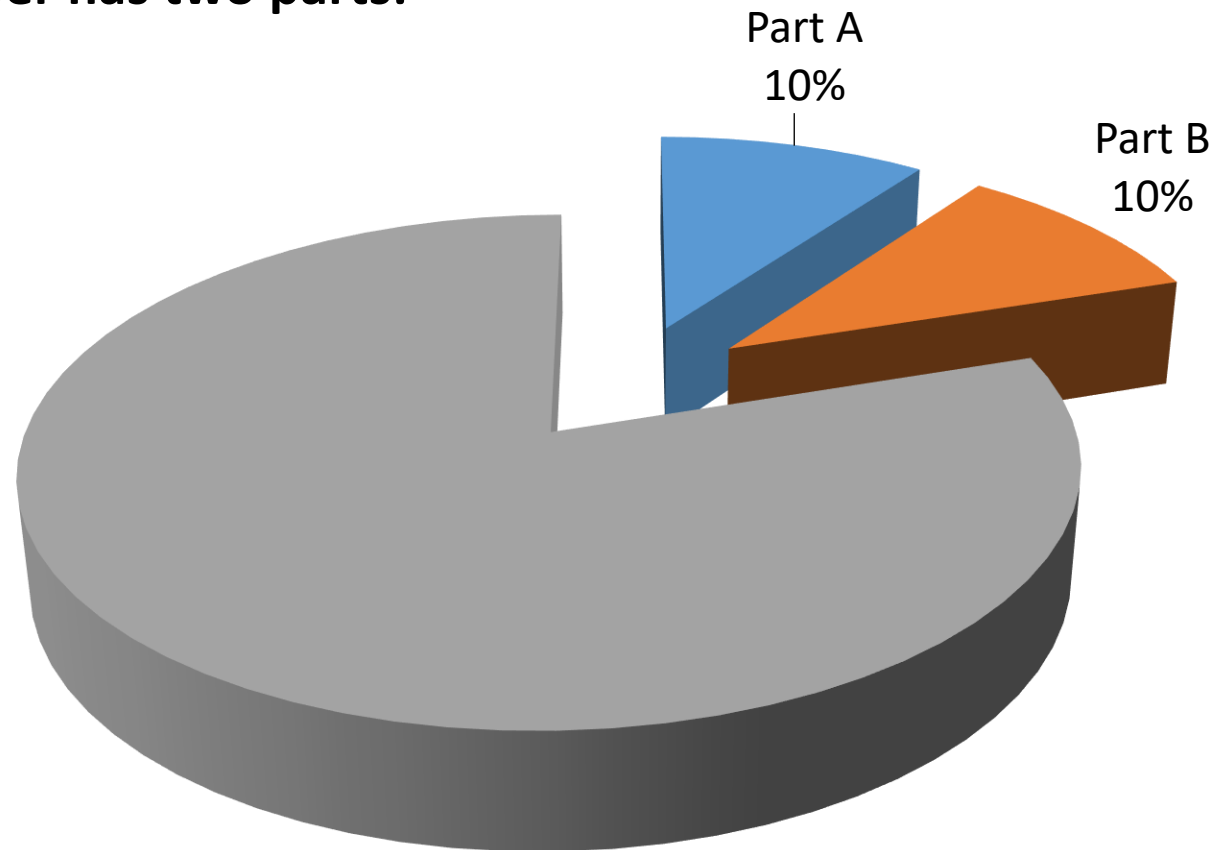
Paper 1 Reading

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

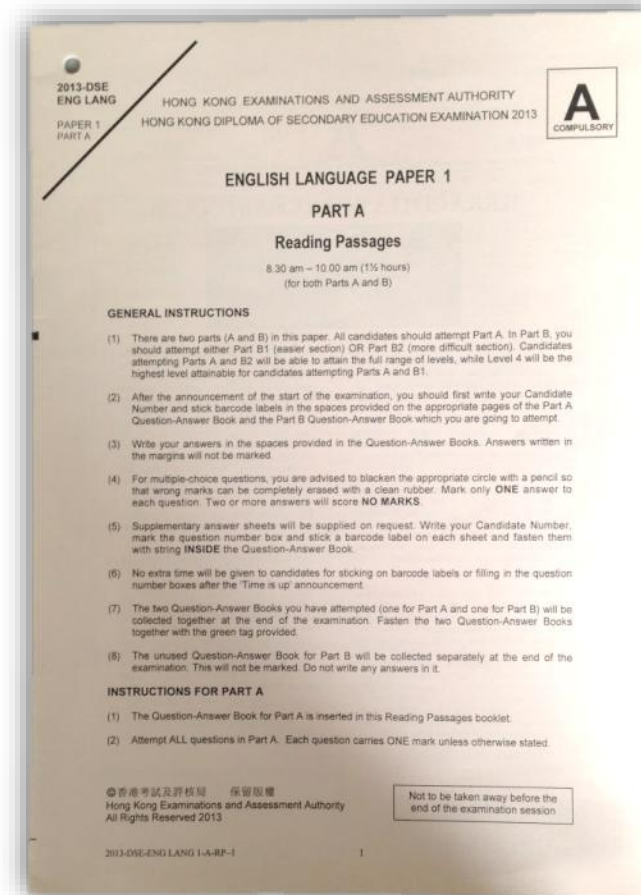
All candidates will attempt Part A

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

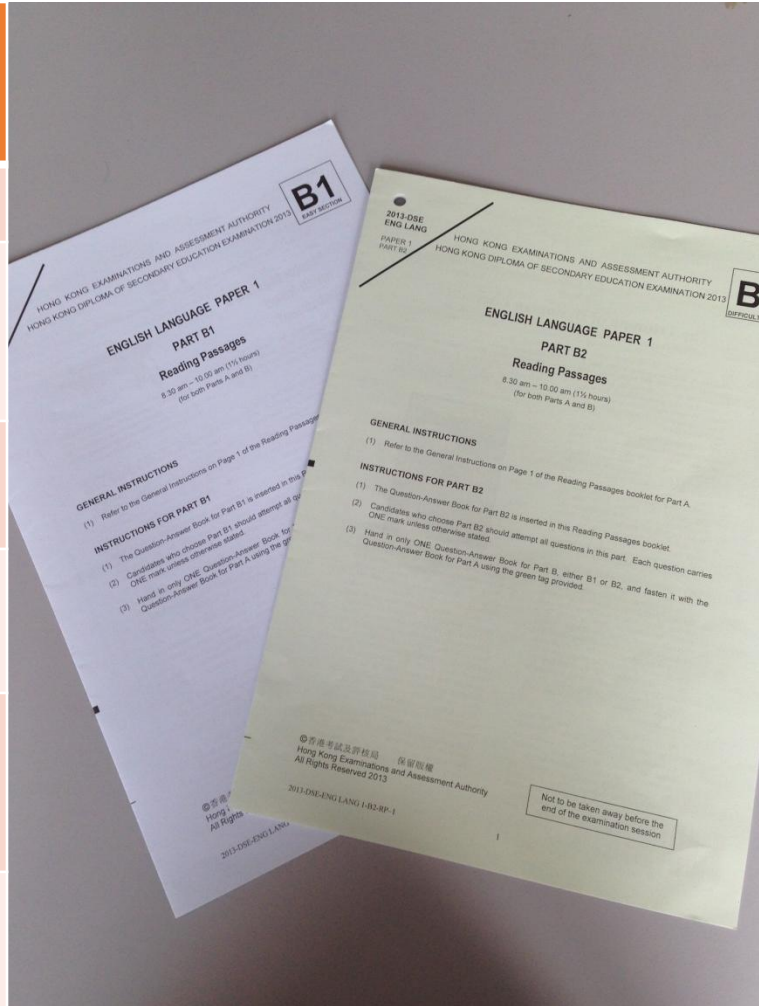
A set of reading passages booklet and a QAB

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 (2024 Exam)

Candidates scored well on items which required them to:

- identify simple factual information
- identify straightforward references
- identify examples from texts
- interpret writer's opinion
- understand the texts holistically

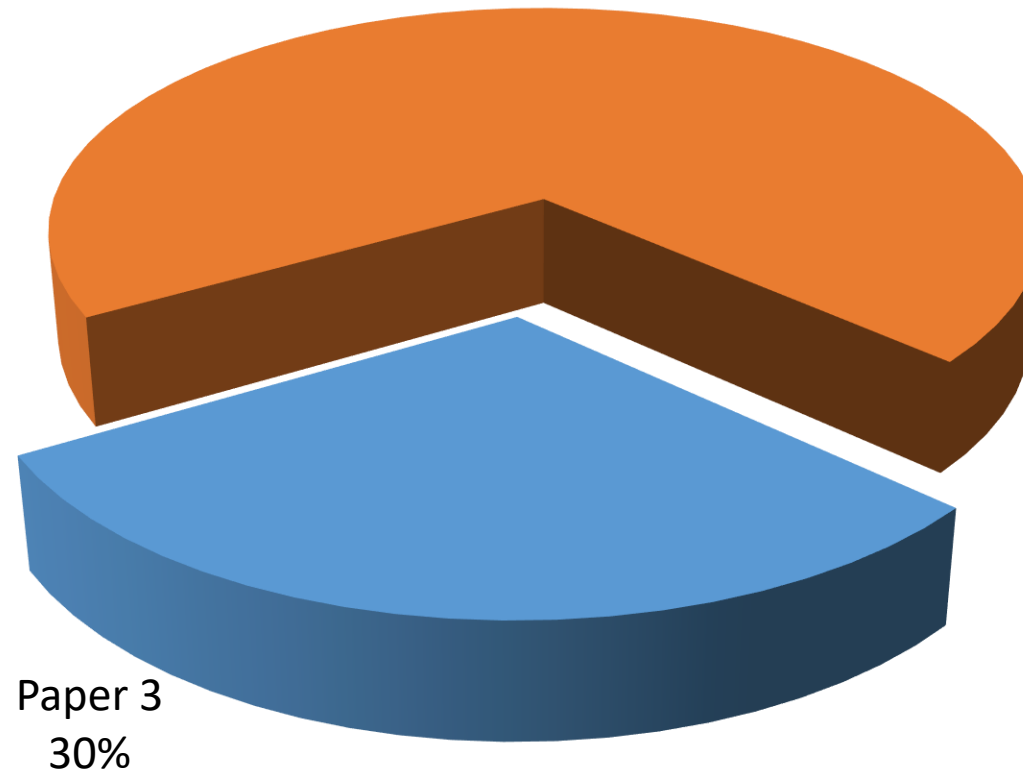
Candidates struggled when attempting:

- items which tested understanding of figurative language and metaphor
- items which required inferencing
- sentence completion
- gap-fill items
- items which distinguish specific from general information



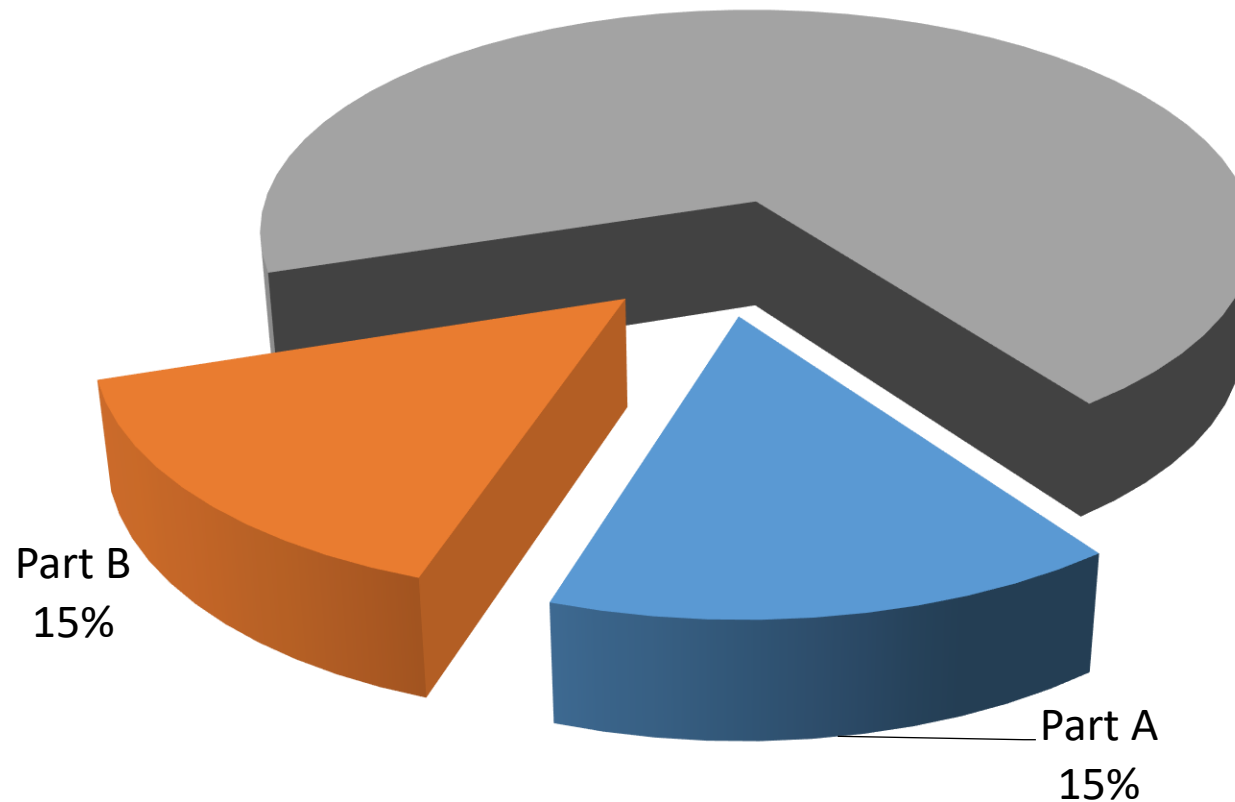
Paper 3 Listening and Integrated Skills

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 / Public Address (PA) 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)
- Candidates assigned to centres using PA System need not bring a radio or earphones.

Part 3A

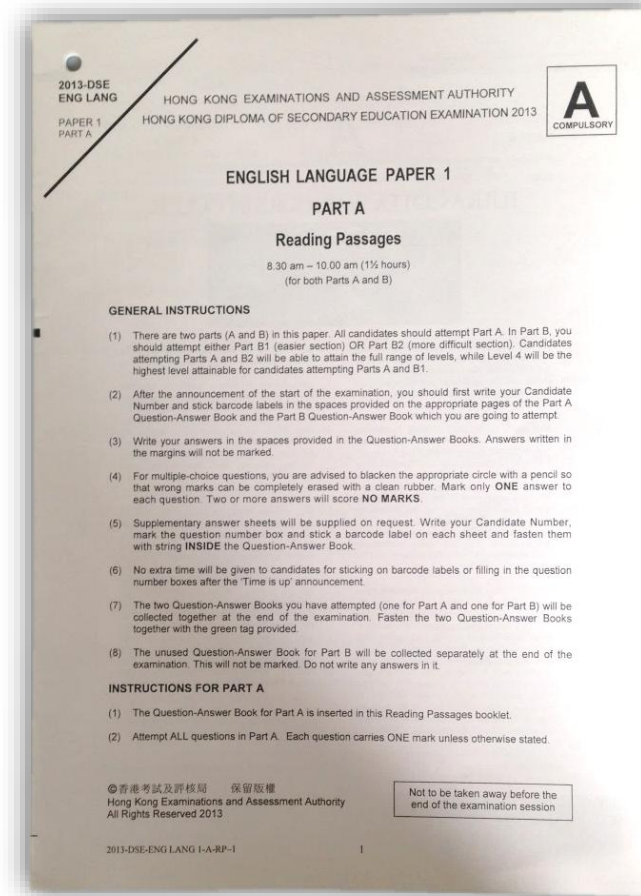
Compulsory

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

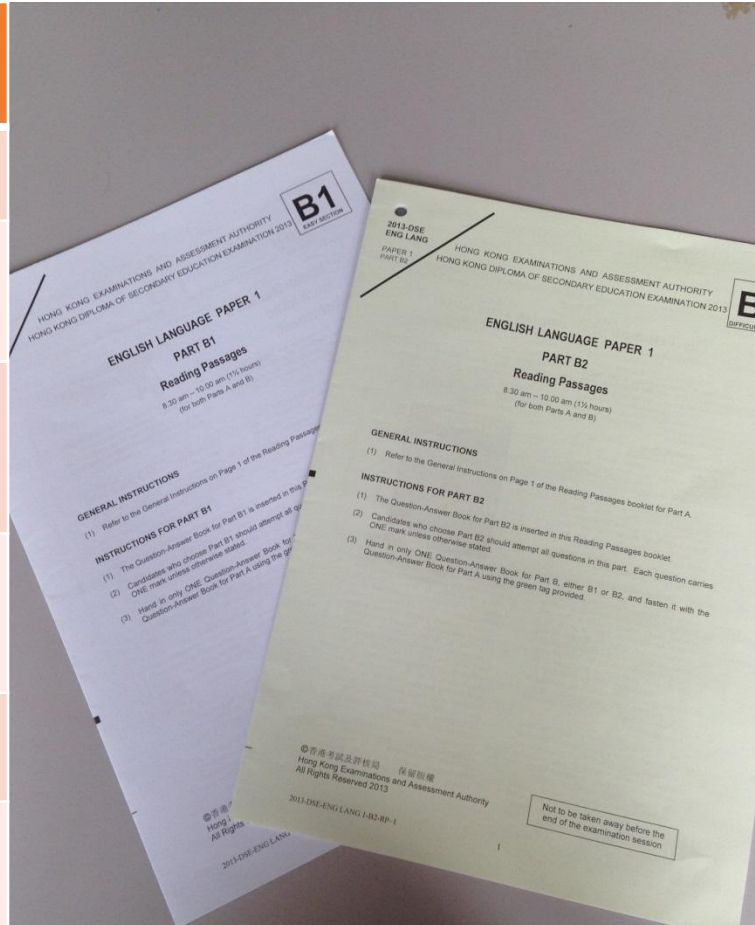
Locating and processing information

Identifying relevant information and discarding irrelevant information

Writing in a well organized 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 organized and readable manner

Using a tone/style appropriate

More difficult tasks

Time allowed to complete Part B (after the recording has finished): 1hr 15mins

Paper 3A: Recommendations (2024 Exam)

- Candidates need to demonstrate clearly that they have understood the relevant part of the recording fully and precisely.
- Particular areas of concern include spelling, numbers in the tens of thousands and grammatical accuracy.
- Candidates need to pay attention to specific versus generic references e.g. the plural 'humans' is needed, in 'fight with other humans'. The singular 'human' makes it a specific reference and so wrong.
- Candidates can work on the skills of global understanding and summarising as well as specific 'listening-to-writing' skills.



Paper 3B: Recommendations (2024 Exam)

- Candidates should first understand the situation and instructions given thoroughly to identify the text type, purpose of writing, target audience and task requirements. Drafting a brief outline may help guide the flow and structure of their texts.
- Candidates should remember that the information in the Data File may have been written for a variety of different purposes and should not be simply copied verbatim for texts which serve another purpose.
- Candidates should take time to orient themselves with the tasks and review the note-taking headings provided before the recording is played.
- Tidying up notes immediately after the recording will allow candidates to double check the information while their memory is still fresh.
- The combination of attentive preparation and thoughtful execution is key to performing well on these tasks.



Graded Approach for Papers 1 and 3

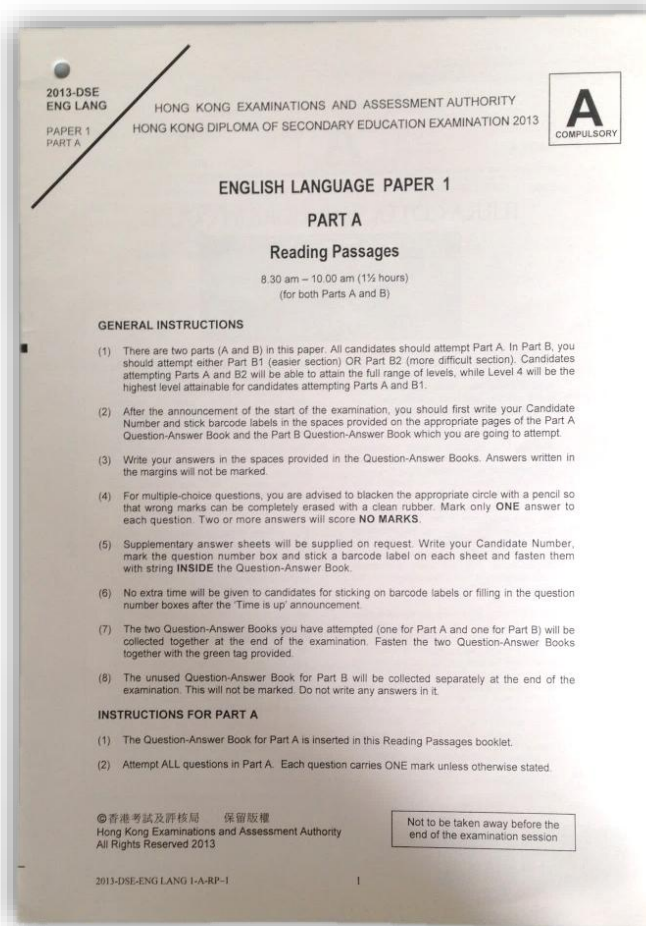


Part A

Compulsory

Easy and difficult items

Level descriptors: 1-5



Part B1 and B2

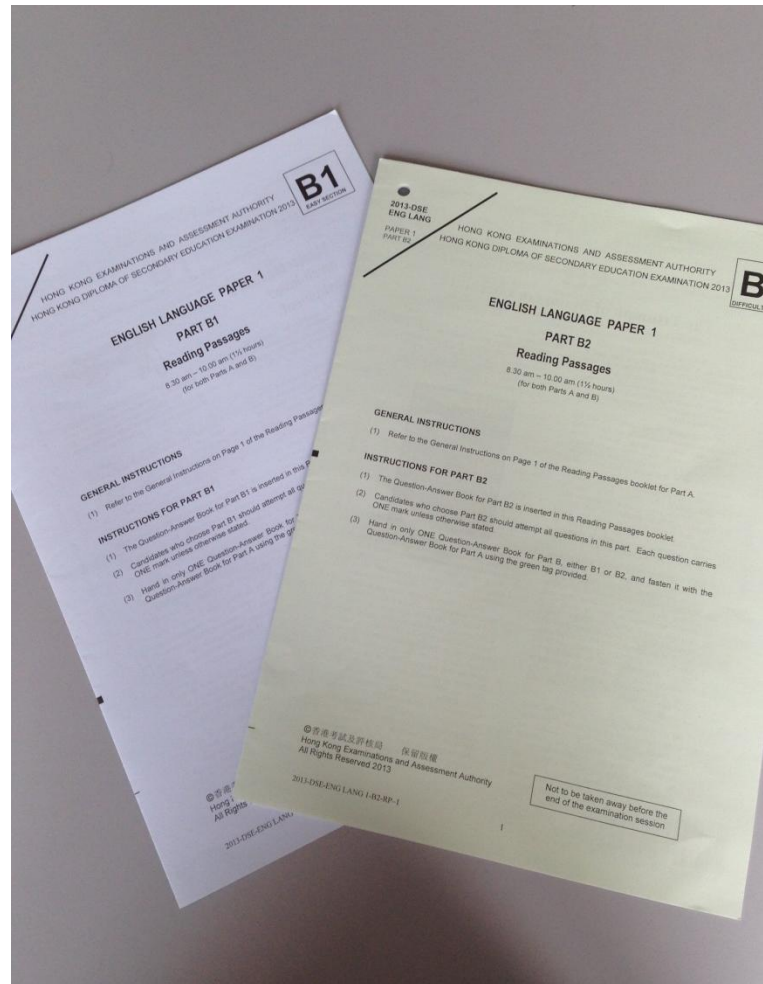
B1 (optional) Easier

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)

Conversion Table

2024 English Language Paper 1B

1B1	1B2
1	0
2	0
3	1
.	.
23	6
24	7
25	7
26	8
27	8
.	.
42	37



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

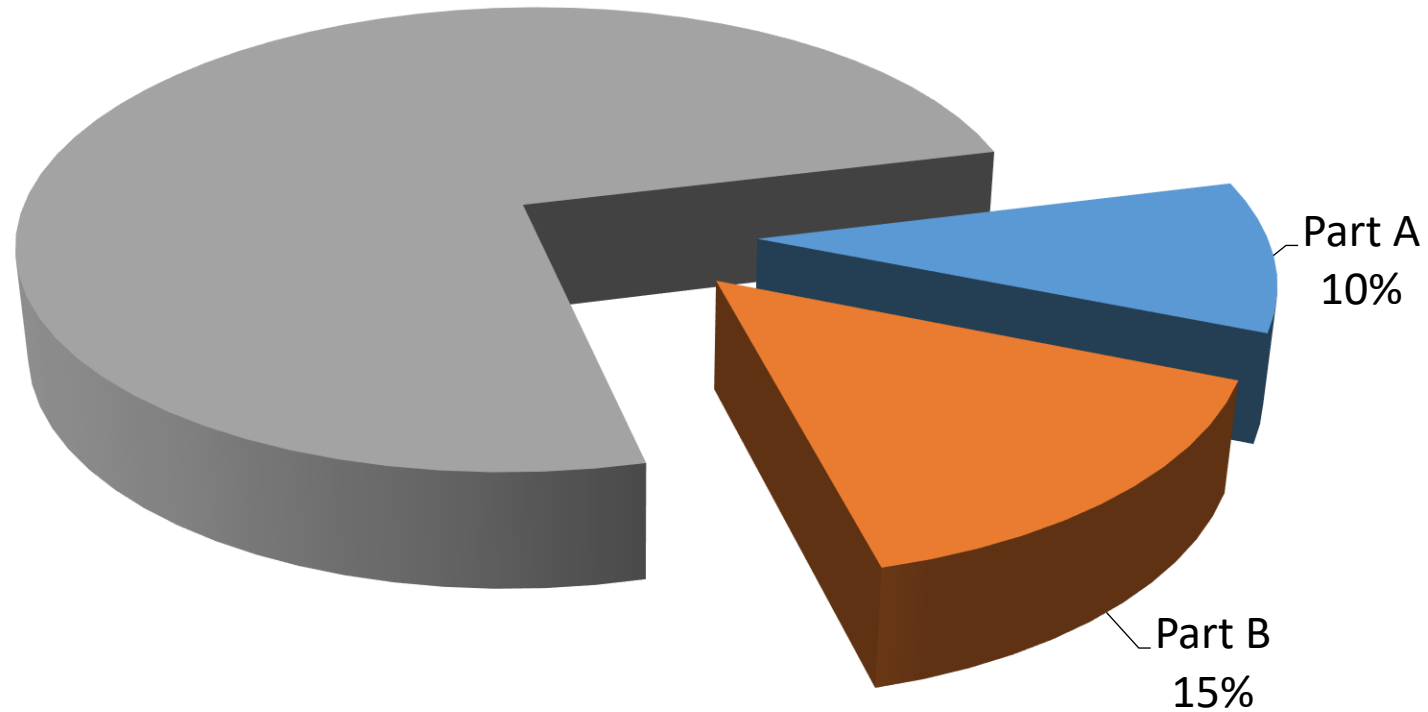
Paper 2 Writing

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
- Appropriately and accurately convey meaning using varied vocabulary, linguistic devices and language patterns
- Plan and produce coherent and structured texts with effectively presented and developed ideas
- 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 4)*
Short, guided writing task	Longer writing task
About 200 words	About 400 words
1 question	4 questions

Time allowed for Parts A and B: 2 hours

*Due to optimisation of the English Language Curriculum, the number of questions in Paper 2 Part B has been reduced from 8 to 4 starting in the 2024 examination year.

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

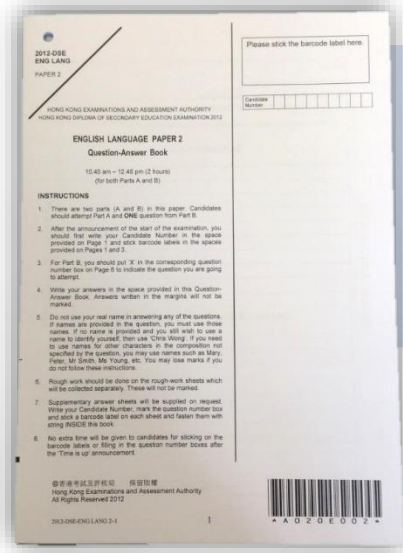
- Text is organised effectively
- Logical development of ideas
- Cohesion of the text is clear
- Cohesive ties throughout the text are sophisticated
- Overall structure is coherent, sophisticated and appropriate to the genre and text-type

Recommendations (2024 Exam)

- Choose a topic and genre you are familiar with
- Take time to think of ideas, how to express them in the text type and who the intended audience is
- Clarity of expression is important – don't be 'over-ambitious' with language use, making it difficult for the reader to follow
- Consider task purpose and stay on track
- Time management: two texts - choosing, planning, writing and proofreading

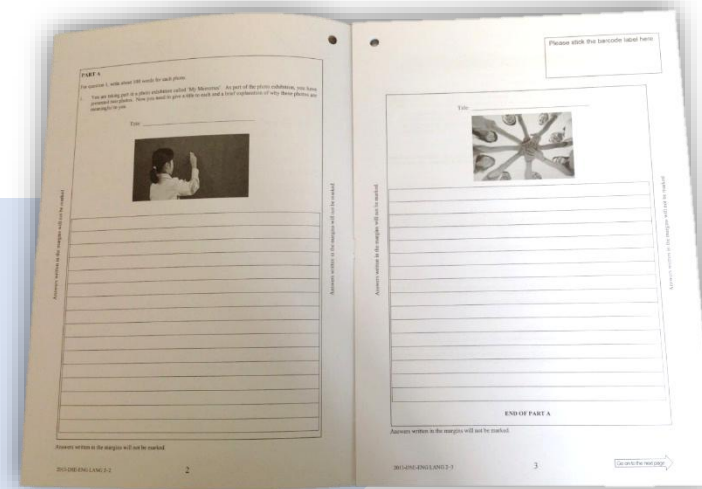


Reminders



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

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

FOR PART B ONLY

Put an 'X' inside the question number box to indicate the question (Q.2-Q.5) that you have chosen.

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

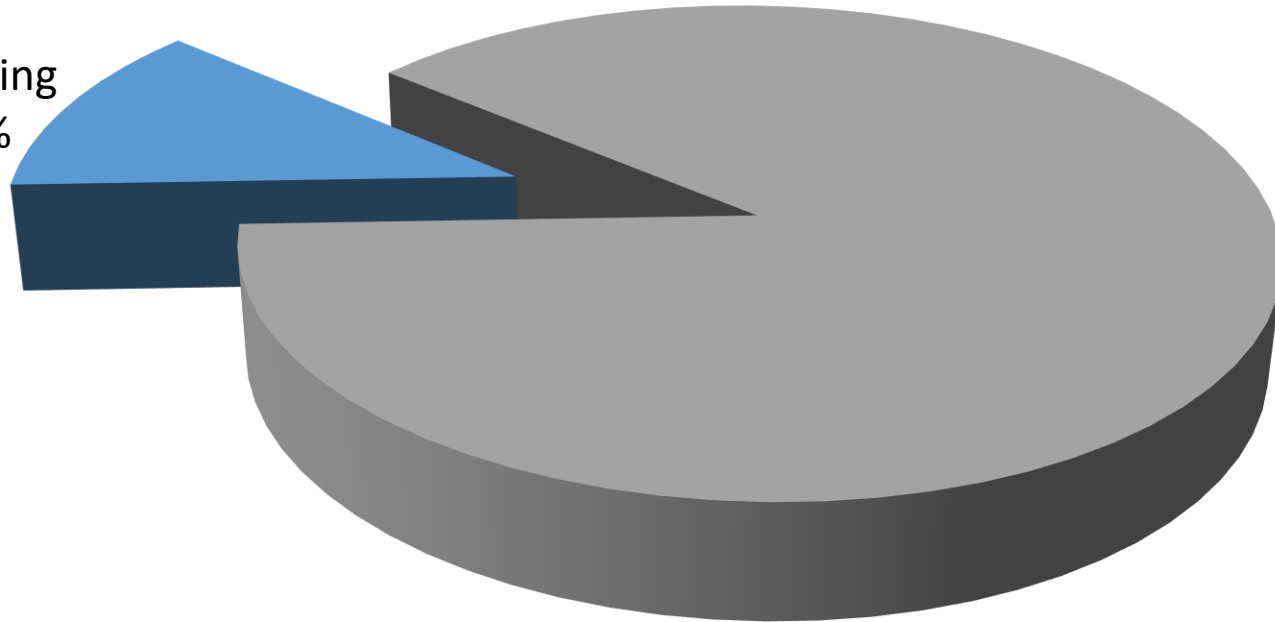
Paper 4 Speaking (Public Exam)



Paper 4 Speaking

Assessment Component

Speaking
10%



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

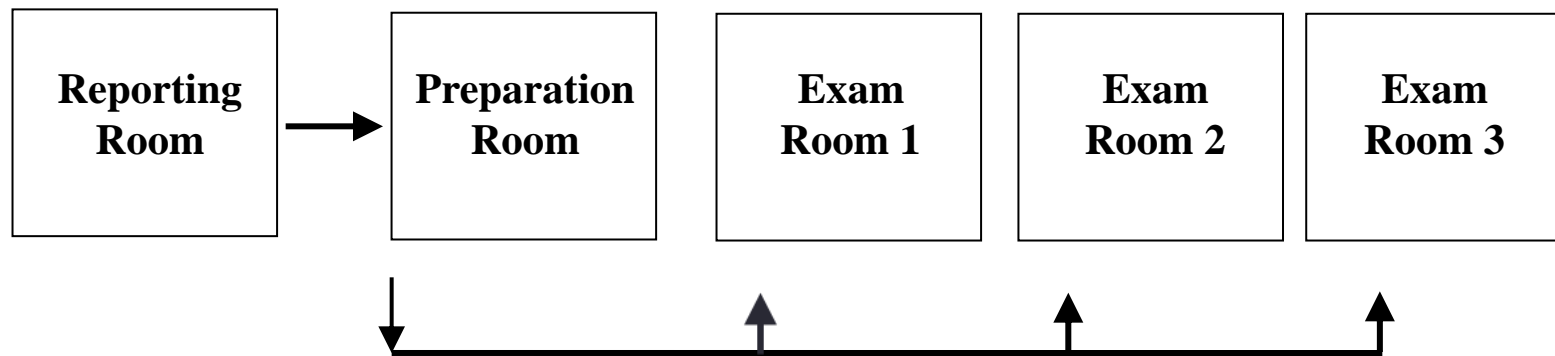
Part B Individual Response (1 min per candidate)

- The examiner will ask each candidate a question based on the topic of the short text or the group discussion task

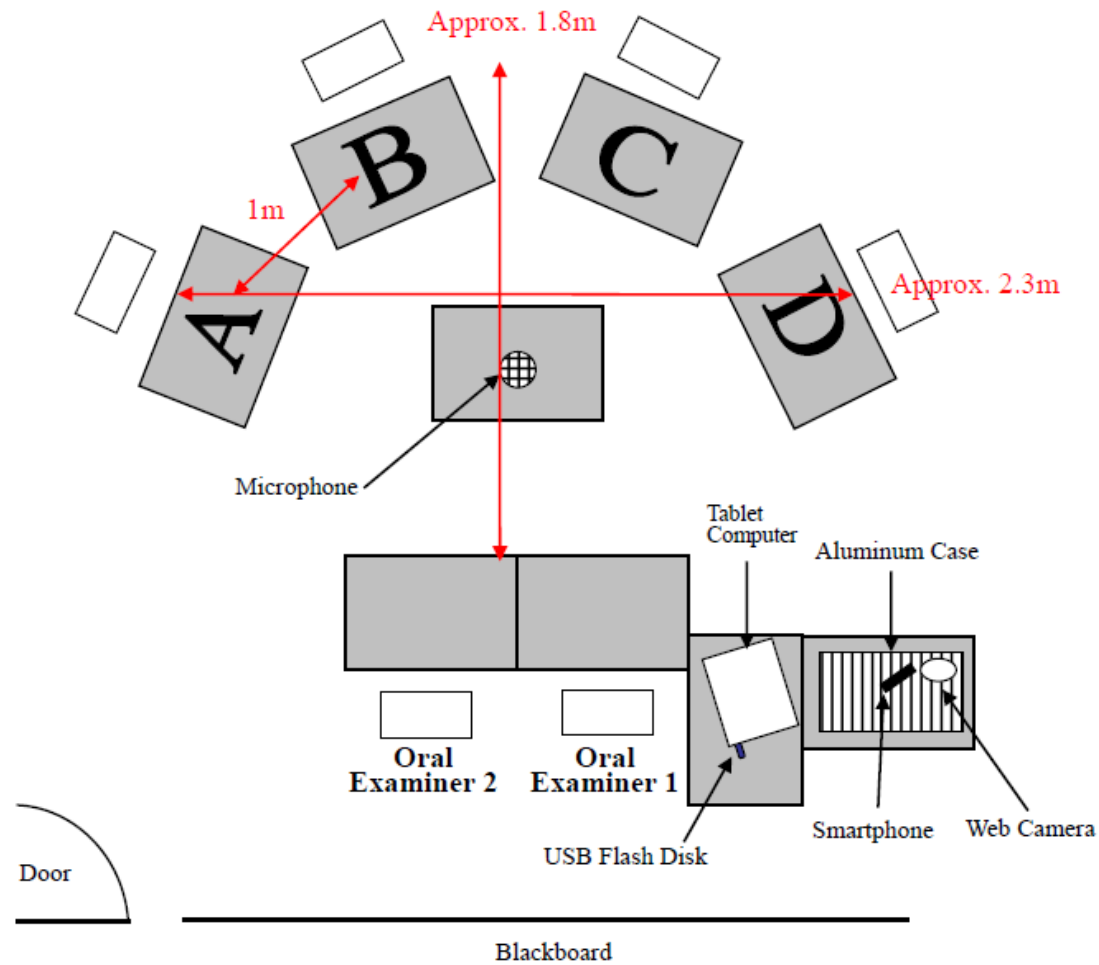


Paper 4 Speaking

- Layout of the oral examination centre



Seating arrangement in the Examination Room



Instructions for Paper 4

Reporting Room

- Bring your admission form and identity card to the examination centre
- Reporting times: 5:00pm, 6:00pm, 7:00pm (you may have to wait up to an hour, so eat before you go to the exam centre)
- Use the toilet within the first 30 minutes of reporting time
- Allowed to read in reporting room, but not to talk or use a mobile phone
- Assigned to an exam group
- Check the information printed on your scoresheet and stick the label on your chest



Instructions for Paper 4

Preparation Room

- The Question Paper (QP) will be taped to the desk face down – wait until the supervisor tells you to turn over the QP
- You will be given a notecard for making notes
- You have 10 minutes to prepare
- Bring a pen/pencil to jot down notes during the preparation time
- No talking or consulting books/reference materials
- When time is up, stop writing and turn the QP back over
- Take the notecard with you to the exam room



Instructions for Paper 4

Examination Room (Part A)

- Hand your scoresheet to the examiner and sit according to the seating plan
- The exam will be video-recorded
- Wait for instructions on when to begin (a copy of the QP will be face down on the desk in front of you)
- During group discussion, speak facing the other candidates (not the camera or examiners)
- Interact with the other candidates – listen and respond to what they say; add your own ideas to the conversation
- Take turns to speak; everyone should speak



Instructions for Paper 4

Examination Room (Part B)

- The examiner will ask each candidate a question related to the discussion topic
- The examiner will ask the question, and then press the timer, set for 1 minute
- If you don't understand the examiner's question, you may ask them to repeat the question – you can only do this once, and the timer won't be stopped
- After all the candidates have finished Part B, hand your notecard to the examiner. You can then leave the examination centre.

Paper 4: Speaking

Pronunciation & Delivery

Recommendations:

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



Paper 4: Speaking

Communication Strategies

Common Problems:

- Multiple candidates all wanting to start the discussion.
- Taking a long turn and giving a mini-presentation, often from extensive notes.

Recommendations:

- Importance of collaboration. Allowing or inviting someone else to speak is a valid communication strategy.
- Make only brief notes on the note card: avoid reading aloud big sections of text in the group discussion, 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

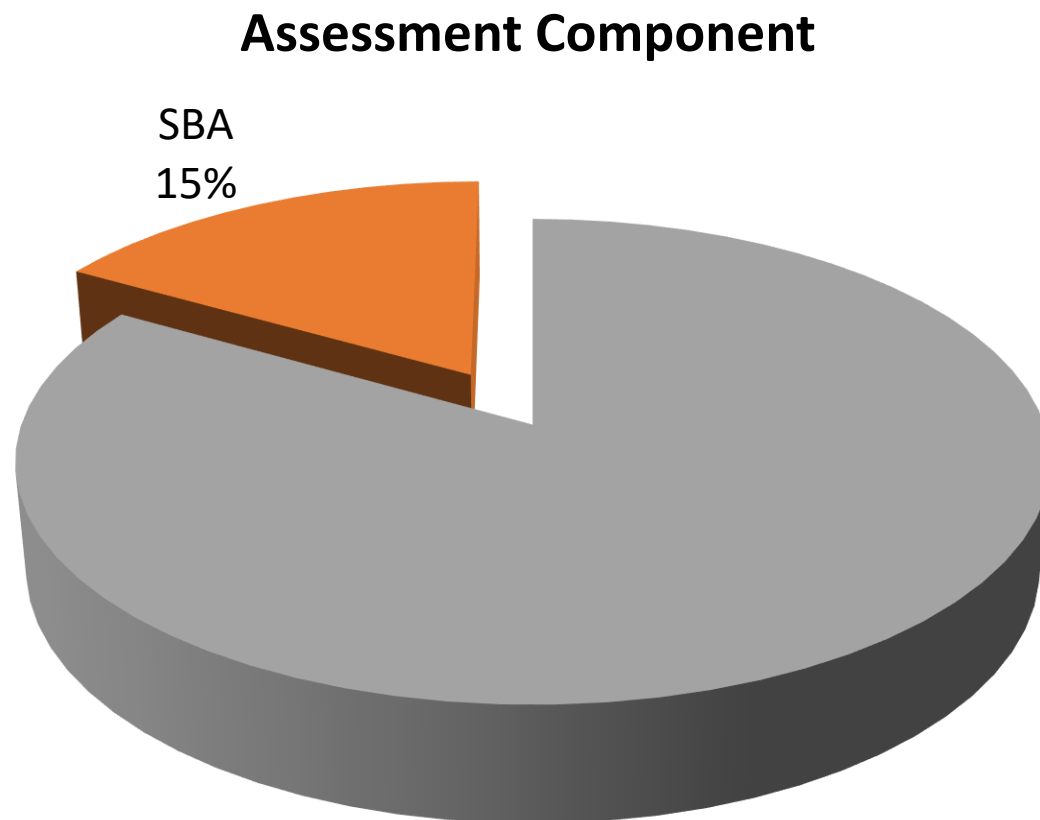
Ideas & Organisation

Recommendations:

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



Paper 4 Speaking - SBA



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

SBA Mark Submission

Submit two marks at the end of S.6

- Take part in a group discussion and an individual presentation based on the texts that you have read/viewed
- One assessment should be based on at least one print text and the other assessment on at least one non-print text.



Recommendations

- Students should read the assessment criteria carefully so that they can understand what they need to do / should not do in order to achieve an appropriate score
- The focus of SBA is on developing and assessing the speaking ability of students
- Students should NOT memorise or read aloud their presentations



Recommendations (Assessment Criteria)

			card.	unclear.
4	<p>Can project the voice mostly satisfactorily without artificial aids.</p> <p>Can pronounce most sounds/sound clusters and all common words clearly and accurately; less common words can be understood although there may be articulation errors (e.g. dropping final consonants).</p> <p>Can speak at a deliberate pace, with some hesitation but using sufficient intonation conventions to convey meaning.</p>	<p>Can use appropriate body language to display audience awareness and to engage interest, but this is not consistently demonstrated.</p> <p>Can use the available time to adequately cover all the most essential points of the topic.</p> <p>Can respond to any well-formulated questions if these are required by and directly related to the task</p>	<p>Can use mostly appropriate vocabulary.</p> <p>Can use language patterns that are usually accurate, and without errors that impede communication.</p> <p>Can choose mostly appropriate content and level of language to enable audience to follow.</p> <p>Can self-correct when concentrating carefully, or when asked to do so.</p> <p>May refer to a note card but is not dependent on notes.</p>	<p>Can present relevant literal ideas clearly in a well-organised structure, perhaps with occasional reference to a note card.</p> <p>Can expand on some appropriate aspects of the topic with additional detail or explanation, and can sometimes link these main points and expansions together effectively.</p> <p>Can be followed without much effort.</p>
3	<p>Volume may be a problem without artificial aids.</p> <p>Can pronounce all simple sounds clearly but some errors with sound clusters; less common words may be misunderstood unless supported by contextual meaning.</p> <p>Can speak at a careful pace and use sufficient basic intonation conventions to be understood by a familiar and supportive listener; hesitation is present.</p>	<p>Can use some appropriate body language, displaying occasional audience awareness and providing some degree of interest.</p> <p>Can present basic relevant points but has difficulty sustaining a presentation mode.</p> <p>Can respond to any relevant, cognitively simple, well-formulated questions required by the task.</p>	<p>Can use simple vocabulary and language patterns appropriately, and with errors that only occasionally impede communication, but reliance on memorised materials or written notes makes language and vocabulary use seem more like written text spoken aloud.</p> <p>Can choose a level of content and language that enables audience to follow a main point, but needs to refer to notes.</p> <p>Can sometimes self-correct simple errors,</p> <p>May suggest a level of proficiency above 3, but cannot be scored accurately because of dependence on notes.</p>	<p>Can present some relevant literal ideas clearly, and can sometimes provide some simple supporting ideas.</p> <p>Can sometimes link main and supporting points together.</p> <p>May appear dependent on notes.</p>
	Volume may be a problem without	Can use a restricted range of features	Can appropriately use vocabulary and	Can make an attempt to express simple

Recommendations

Preparation stage:

- Read the task carefully and brainstorm some ideas for the task
- Choose two to three main ideas and think of supporting / additional details for each main idea
- Write down only the key words of these main ideas and supporting details on notecard
- Pay attention to how your ideas are organised



Recommendations

- Spend time on building up your English foundation
- Learn how to pronounce words accurately
- Use familiar vocabulary and sentence patterns
- Build up vocabulary
- Be more proactive and take the initiative to speak more English whenever possible



Useful resources

Handbook for Candidates

- www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/HKDSE/admin/student_s_handbook/

HKDSE English Language Question Papers (2012-2024)

English Language Level Descriptors

- https://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/assessment/subject_information/category_a_subjects/hkdse_subj.html?A1&1&2_4

Samples of Candidates Performances

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

FAQs www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/hkdse_subj.html?A1&1&2_6

Thank you

