

HONG KONG ADVANCED LEVEL EXAMINATION 2013

REGULATIONS

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination (“the Examination”) is a public examination conducted by the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (“the Authority”) in accordance with the provisions of the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority Ordinance.
- 1.2 The primary purpose of the Examination is to measure the attainment of students who have completed a full-time two-year sixth form course. The Examination is conducted annually, mainly in April and May.
- 1.3 With the introduction of the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination in 2012, the last cohort of Secondary 7 students will take the Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination in 2012. The 2013 Examination will be offered to private candidates only.
Therefore, the term “candidates” used in this document refers to “private candidates”.

SUBJECTS OF THE EXAMINATION

- 2.1 The Examination offers subjects at the Advanced (A) level and Advanced Supplementary (AS) level as follows :

			Language in which subject is to be examined
	Subject	Levels offered	
	Applied Mathematics	AS A	Chinese or English
*	Biology	A	Chinese or English
	Business Studies	A	Chinese or English
*	Chemistry	AS A	Chinese or English
	Chinese History	AS A	Chinese only
	Chinese Language & Culture	AS	Chinese only
	Chinese Literature	A	Chinese only
*	Computer Applications	AS	Chinese or English
	Economics	AS A	Chinese or English
	Ethics & Religious Studies	AS	Chinese or English
	Geography	A	Chinese or English
	Government & Public Affairs	AS A	Chinese or English
	History	AS A	Chinese or English
	Liberal Studies	AS	Chinese or English
	Mathematics & Statistics	AS	Chinese or English
*	Physics	AS A	Chinese or English
	Principles of Accounts	A	Chinese or English
	Psychology	AS A	Chinese or English
	Pure Mathematics	A	Chinese or English

Use of English	AS	English only
Visual Arts	AS A	Chinese or English

Note :

- * Practical subjects (see Regulation 3.3).
- 2.2 A candidate may enter for a maximum of eight subjects with no restriction on the number of A-level and AS-level subjects at any one Examination.
- 2.3 In any subject with a syllabus examinable in both Chinese and English, only one language version may be entered for in the same Examination. (N.B. Candidates taking Liberal Studies need not enter both modules in the same language.)
- 2.4 In each of the following groups of subjects, only one may be entered for in the same Examination :

- A Applied Mathematics
- AS Applied Mathematics
- AS Mathematics & Statistics

- A Chemistry
- AS Chemistry

- A Chinese History
- AS Chinese History

- A Economics
- AS Economics

- A Government & Public Affairs
- AS Government & Public Affairs

- A History
- AS History

- A Pure Mathematics
- AS Mathematics & Statistics

- A Physics
- AS Physics

- A Psychology
- AS Psychology

- A Visual Arts
- AS Visual Arts

Note : Candidates may take both A-level Chinese Literature and AS-level Chinese Language & Culture in the same Examination.

PARTICIPATION IN THE EXAMINATION BY CANDIDATES

- 3.1 A person may enter for the Examination as a candidate provided he/she has satisfied the requirements set out at (1) or (2) or (3) below:
- (1) The person has obtained in the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE) or an equivalent public examination
 - (i) Level 2/grade E or above in Chinese Language and English Language, and
 - (ii) At least 4 points in 4 other subjects* or at least 5 points in 3 other subjects* at one sitting (taken at least 18 months before the Examination for which he/she is entering).

* Each subject shall carry at least one point; grades A to E shall be given the numerical values of 5 to 1 respectively for the purpose of calculating the points.
 - (2) The person has sat a previous Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination.
 - (3) The person has reached the age of 20 by 1st January in the year of the Examination.
- 3.2 The Authority may consider applications from persons possessing other qualifications or pleading special circumstances. Applications under this regulation must be made in writing to the Secretary General before 1st September in the year preceding the Examination.
- 3.3 A candidate may enter for a practical subject (see Regulation 2.1) only if
- (1) the candidate can produce evidence of having sat the subject in a previous Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination, or in an equivalent public examination; and
 - (2) centres and facilities for the examination of the subject are available.
- However, a candidate may enter for AS-level Physics provided that he/she has previously sat A-level Physics or vice versa.
- 3.4 Candidates who enter for A/AS-level Physics, Visual Arts or A-level Biology, Chemistry, Chinese Literature or AS-level Chinese Language & Culture, Liberal Studies may opt to use their previous teacher-assessed mark on the practical component/project/reading programme to substitute the current year practical examination or requirement for submission of projects/reading reports provided that the former is obtained in the same examination within two years.
- 3.5 Practical examinations will not be arranged for the subjects of AS-level Chemistry and Computer Applications. Candidates who enter for these subjects must have sat the same examination as school candidates within two years. Their previous teacher-assessed mark on the practical/project component will be carried forward to constitute the current year's practical/project mark.
- 3.6 Entry forms will be available in September in the year preceding the Examination. Registration arrangements will be announced in the press and the Authority's web site.

- 3.7 Examination fees must be paid on or before the date specified by the Authority.

GENERAL

- 4.1 The subjects of the Examination will be examined in accordance with a timetable, which will normally be announced in September in the year preceding the Examination.
- 4.2 Although the Authority will endeavour to ensure that all examinations will be conducted on the dates and at the times specified in the examination timetable, it cannot guarantee that this will be so. In the event of an examination having to be rescheduled or cancelled, the Authority will not accept any liability in respect of claims for expenses or other damages. However, it may at its discretion refund the whole or part of the fees paid in respect of an examination which has to be cancelled.
- 4.3 Examination fees will be announced before September in the year preceding the Examination.
- 4.4 Candidates shall pay an initial fee and the subject fees.
- 4.5 Candidates may not submit more than one entry for the Examination, whether for the same or different subjects.
- 4.6 The Authority reserves the right to reject an application for entry to any examination conducted by the Authority if it is satisfied that the applicant has been involved in any serious irregularity, misconduct or dishonesty in any examination conducted by the Authority, or in connection with certificates, statements of results or similar documents.
- 4.7 Under special circumstances the Authority may at its discretion,
- (1) admit a candidate after the normal closing date for entry, on payment of a supplementary fee in addition to the normal examination fee;
 - (2) allow the addition or substitution of a subject or subjects to a candidate's entries after they have been accepted, on payment of a supplementary fee (For the purpose of this regulation, a change of language version will be regarded as a change of subject.);
 - (3) allow changes in a candidate's choice of paper, or sections within a paper, on payment of a supplementary fee;
 - (4) accept a script submitted by a candidate in a language medium other than that for which the candidate entered, or for a subject/syllabus other than that for which he/she entered, on payment of a supplementary fee;
- 4.8 Candidates with special needs may apply for exemption from part(s) of the requirements in an examination or special examination arrangements. Such applications must be made in writing to the Secretary General within a period prescribed by the Authority together with full supporting documents (e.g. medical certificates).
- 4.9 Entries of candidates will not be regarded as having been accepted until

the fees payable have been received in full by the Authority.

- 4.10 A copy of the (1) Candidate Entry Information Checklist and a copy of the (2) Instructions to Candidates will be issued to candidates in late November in the year preceding the Examination. Candidates will be responsible for checking their entry data to see that the entries they made at the time of registration have been correctly processed. The Secretary General must be notified in writing before 9th December of any discrepancies discovered. In the absence of such notification, the entry data will be regarded as having been confirmed. Any subsequent request for changes will be subject to the provisions of Regulation 4.7.
- 4.11 Applications for amendments to a candidate's personal particulars received after 8th December in the year preceding the Examination may be accepted at the discretion of the Secretary General.
- 4.12 A candidate withdrawing from the Examination may receive a partial refund of the fees paid provided that the Secretary General is notified in writing of the candidate's withdrawal before 9th December in the year preceding the Examination. The Authority may, at its discretion, consider special applications of exceptional circumstances. There will be no refund for partial withdrawal. Examination fees are not transferable from one examination to another, nor from one person to another. Examination fees will not be refunded to candidates who are disqualified (see Regulation 5.1).
- 4.13 Admission forms will be issued to candidates in February in the year of the Examination.
- 4.14 On application by a candidate, a duplicate admission form may be issued to replace one which has been lost, subject to payment of a supplementary fee.
- 4.15 Electronic calculators, including programmable calculators, may be used in any examination session (except for language subjects) provided that the calculators are battery-powered, silent in operation and with neither print-out nor graphic/word-display facilities and do not use dot-matrix technology in the main display. Other electronic devices with graphic/word-display facilities (such as databank watches) are not permitted.
- 4.16 All answer scripts submitted by candidates, including the practical work in practical examinations, shall be the property of the Authority and as such, shall be handled by the Authority at any time and in any way it deems appropriate. While the Authority will exercise reasonable care to protect and preserve the scripts, in the event of any loss or damage, as a result of which the candidate's performance cannot be assessed based on the scripts, the candidate concerned will waive all claims, if any, against the Authority.
- 4.17 Personal data of candidates will be used for the purpose of conducting the Examination. The personal data, including examination results, may also be used for the following purposes :
 - (1) assisting tertiary institutions and other government/public organizations

- in their admission processes;
- (2) assisting government/public organizations in respect of their requests for information in granting scholarships;
 - (3) certifying candidates' examination results in response to legitimate requests; and
 - (4) conducting educational research and analysis in an anonymous format in which the identities of candidates are not traceable.

In compliance with the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance, access to all personal data will be made available, on payment of a fee, to anyone who can establish his/her right to be informed of such data as are retained by the Authority.

- 4.18 All correspondence should be addressed to the Secretary General. (Address : Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority, 12th Floor, Southorn Centre, 130 Hennessy Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.)

DISQUALIFICATION

- 5.1 A candidate may be disqualified from part or whole of the Examination or suffer a mark or grade penalty, without refund of the examination fee paid if the candidate
- (1) provides false personal particulars in his/her entry form;
 - (2) improperly obtains knowledge of examination papers prior to the Examination;
 - (3) is found to have unauthorised article(s) on/in the examination desk or on his/her person;
 - (4) communicates or attempts to communicate improperly with any person inside or outside the examination room during an examination session;
 - (5) copies from notes, books or materials stored in electronic devices brought into the examination room or from the answers of another candidate during an examination session;
 - (6) attempts to take away from the examination room any examination material, such as answer sheets, backing sheets or graph paper;
 - (7) leaves the examination room without permission;
 - (8) starts to work on the question paper before being instructed to do so or continues to write after being told to stop working at the end of an examination session;
 - (9) passes off work done by someone else as his/her own, in any part of a project where original work is required;
 - (10) breaks any of the examination instructions as laid down in the Instructions to Candidates referred to in Regulation 4.10 (2);
 - (11) disobeys the instructions of the centre supervisor or an invigilator;
 - (12) disregards the Authority's written warning in connection with misbehaviour in any examination conducted by the Authority.

- 5.2 Appeals against decisions to disqualify or to refuse entry to examinations within the purview of the Authority should be made in writing to the Secretary General.

RESULTS

- 6.1 The performance of candidates in individual subjects will be recorded in terms of six grades, namely, A, B, C, D, E and F, of which A is the highest and F the lowest.
- 6.2 Achievements below grade F will be designated as "unclassified".
- 6.3 The same calibre of work will be expected at Advanced Supplementary level as is expected at Advanced level. The grading system adopted by the Authority will ensure that the AS-level grades are comparable to those of their corresponding A-level subjects.
- 6.4 There will be no conversion from A-level results to the corresponding AS-level results.
- 6.5 Grade E or above in all A-level and AS-level subjects is recognised as equivalent to an A-level pass and an Advanced Subsidiary level pass (or a former Advanced Supplementary level pass) respectively in a G.C.E. examination conducted by a British awarding body.
- 6.6 The results will be issued in July in the year of the Examination.
- 6.7 A results notice will be issued to each candidate at the time of the publication of results. This will record
- (1) the results obtained in individual subjects sat; and
 - (2) subjects entered for, but not sat.
- The language medium used by candidates will not be recorded on the results notice.
- 6.8 Applications for rechecking and remarking must be submitted within a period prescribed by the Authority. Each candidate may apply for remarking (rechecking of marks and remarking of scripts) and rechecking of marks only for a number of subjects as stipulated by the Public Examinations Board. A fee will be charged per subject/component. The fee will be refunded if the candidate's result is upgraded. Applications must be supported by adequate reasons.
- 6.9 Certificates are normally issued to candidates in October in the year of the Examination.
- 6.10 Grades awarded for individual subjects will be recorded on the certificate. The language medium used by candidates in the Examination will not be recorded. Subjects for which the candidate was absent and subjects with results designated as "unclassified" will not be recorded. Component grades for Chinese Language & Culture, Liberal Studies and Use of English will be reported on the certificate. Candidates who were absent from all subjects or who obtained unclassified results in all subjects will not be issued a certificate.

- 6.11 Where a candidate has been exempted from part(s) of the requirements of an examination, his/her results for the affected part(s) will be assessed. The details of any such assessment will be listed on a second page to the candidate's certificate, and an indication will be printed on the first page that a second page has been used. However, the reason for granting the exemption will not be recorded on the certificate. In the case of special assistance (e.g. extra time allowance, provision of Braille or enlarged question papers), such assistance provided will not be recorded on the certificate as long as the candidate has completed the full requirements of the examination.
- 6.12 On application by a candidate, a duplicate results notice may be issued to replace one which has been lost, subject to the payment of a fee.
- 6.13 On application by a candidate, a statement of results may be issued, subject to the payment of a fee.
- 6.14 The Examination Report will be available for sale to the general public, normally in December in the year of the Examination.

AMENDMENTS TO REGULATIONS

- 7.1 The Regulations are subject to revision.
- 7.2 Major amendments to the Regulations will be published before 15th September in the year preceding the Examination. Candidates will be notified of subsequent amendments, if any.