

2018 Seminar on HKDSE Core Subject (English Language) - Highlights of Questions and Answers

Writing

1. What are the main differences between the tasks in Part A & Part B?

Part A is the compulsory question which all candidates should attempt and more specific guidelines are provided in the Part A task. The questions in Part B are set with reference to the elective modules. Despite this, we use the same sets of assessment guidelines to mark Parts A & B.

2. What is the meaning of low-frequency linguistic features?

Making appropriate language choices is an important consideration for effective writing. Some candidates often use phrases without considering their appropriacy or the tone of writing and this may affect readability. Here is one example from the 2017 HKDSE English Language Question Papers: 'The justifications to which my propensity can be ascribed are two-fold' ('propensity' is a low frequency vocabulary, as are 'ascribed' and 'two-fold'. The impression this gives is of very formal or legal language, which is inappropriate for the context).

Listening

3. For Part 3B, is it necessary to specify the sources when summarising the data?

It is not necessary to cite the source. Instead, candidates should include relevant information from the data file and recording in order to get high marks in Task Completion.

4. Are candidates allowed to quote the keywords from the data file even though they are expected to paraphrase the data file in order to get a higher language marks?

It would depend on the task requirements. Candidates should read the task instructions carefully and make their own judgement. In awarding marks to Language, markers will focus on candidates' performance in 'Data File Manipulation' and 'Own Language'.

5. What kind of radio should candidates bring for the listening examination?

For radio-broadcast centres, candidates must bring their own FM radio set equipped with earphones to take the examination.

Please refer to the Handbook for Candidates for more details:

[http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/DocLibrary/HKDSE/Candidate Handbook/2 18Instructions to Candidates E.pdf](http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/DocLibrary/HKDSE/Candidate%20Handbook/2%2018Instructions%20to%20Candidates%20E.pdf)

2018 Seminar on HKDSE Core Subject (English Language) - Highlights of Questions and Answers

6. What should candidates do if the reception is interrupted 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' to take the examination.

Speaking

7. What kind of questions will the examiners ask in Part B Individual Response?

The examiners will ask one or more questions based on the theme of the group discussion. Candidates may refer to the HKDSE English Language Question Papers for sample questions for Individual Response.

8. If only 3 candidates participate in the Part A Group Interaction, will the time for discussion be shorten?

The time allowed for the group interaction is 8 minutes for a group of 4 candidates while 6 minutes for a group of 3 candidates.

9. What should candidates do if all candidates speak at the same time in the Group Interaction?

Examination procedures are in place to allow all candidates a fair chance to participate in the group interaction. All candidates should take turn to voice their views politely during the group interaction. They also need to demonstrate their communication strategy to discuss with others in English.

10. How to define 'domination' in the Group Interaction?

It refers to a candidate making extended speeches and not allowing other candidates to take part in the discussion. Examiners may intervene if they feel that any candidate is dominating the group interaction. The marking of dominating candidates will also be handled appropriately.

11. Will there be a mark deduction if candidates with special needs are arranged Oral Examination Assistants to facilitate the group discussion?

No.

2018 Seminar on HKDSE Core Subject (English Language) - Highlights of Questions and Answers

School-based Assessment (SBA)

12. If candidates fail in SBA, can they still attain level 5 in English Language?

Standards-referenced reporting (SRR) is adopted for the HKDSE English Language Exam, and there is no pass or failure.

The HKDSE English Language subject consists of four papers and the SBA. The weighting of SBA is 15% of the total subject result. The subject level attained by a candidate is determined by his/her total subject mark, which is the sum of the marks of all the components and the corresponding cut score of the level concerned in that examination year. For details, you may refer to Question 11 in FAQ for HKDSE:

<http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/HKDSE/faq/q3/>

13. Are private candidates required to complete the SBA?

Private candidates are not required to complete the SBA component of the subjects entered. Their subject marks will be based entirely on their public examination results.