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# Marking Schemes

*This document was prepared for markers' reference. It should not be regarded as a set of model answers. Candidates and teachers who were not involved in the marking process are advised to interpret its content with care.*

## Paper 1 (Reading)

### Part A (compulsory section)

1. i) D [79]

ii) B [78]

2. the panel (advising the government on tree management) had not been consulted before removing the banyans [41]

3. cracks were found (in the wall behind the trees) [69]

4. (the) banyans // (the) banyan trees // (the) trees [70]

5. i) True [68]

ii) False [56]

iii) Not Given [83]

6. A [79]

7. transformed into a temple [28]

8. banyans // banyan trees [41]

9. banyans would grow everywhere // banyans are ubiquitous // banyans are tough [22]

10. i) ubiquitous [74]

ii) imposing [19]

11.

| Summary | Correction | |
|---|---|---|
| i) Thin airborne <u>branches</u> seek food; making banyan trees easily identifiable. | roots | [21] |
| ii) Over 1,100 banyans growing out of stone walls on Hong Kong Island | ✓ | [21] |
| iii) were recorded by Jim Chi-yung. Finding <u>protection</u> from another | nutrition // water | [11] |
| iv) tree or the soil enables it to produce a <u>thin</u> trunk. Since banyans | thick // dense | [51] |
| v) grow in <u>few</u> situations they are the most dominant form of greenery | different // varied | [32] |

12. i) traditional // Hakka [77]

ii) mortar [74]

iii) seeds [57]

iv) grow [5]

13. i) B [51]

ii) A [22]

iii) B [58]

14. (a/the) root [50]

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15. Negative + concreting over the roots defaces heritage [44]

16. chopping down / removal of (four) healthy banyans (nearby / in Bonham Road) [55]

17. because they were outraged // because they wanted to express anger for cutting down the trees / to show their support towards the banyans [15]

18. i) False [52]

ii) Not Given [59]

iii) False [47]

19. banyans are not suitable for burning / could not be used as timber [55]

20. the (bigger) tree wraps its branches around / embrace another (smaller) tree's body // when the two trees become one, they cannot be separated [76]

21. accommodation is made when building roads // Register of Old and Valuable Trees is set up (by the government) [67]

22. banyans grow / survive in diverse / difficult conditions [32]

23. i) D [72]

ii) F [73]

iii) G [52]

iv) E [74]

v) C [52]

**Part B1 (easier section)**

24. wares [57]

25. his native village // (in) Fujian [82]

26. B [83]

27. umbrellas [56]

28. (the) throw-away culture [46]

29. D [42]

30. His children support him financially [58]

31. i) C [86]

ii) B [43]

iii) D [79]

32. A [50]

33. rules to limit hawkers // rules to ban new licences // a ban on new licences [23]

34. i) True [61]

ii) False [67]

iii) True [58]

iv) Not Given [55]

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| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 35. | i) | current | [5] |
| | ii) | draw | [18] |
| | iii) | tighter | [27] |
| 36. | i) | districts // areas | [32] |
| | ii) | realised // believed | [72] |
| | iii) | hawking // hawkers // licensing | [50] |
| | iv) | commercial | [15] |
| | v) | residents | [8] |
| | vi) | unfair | [66] |
| 37. | i) | business | [49] |
| | ii) | law | [13] |
| | iii) | obtain // get | [33] |
| 38. | i) | True | [57] |
| | ii) | Not Given | [45] |
| | iii) | False | [65] |
| 39. | hawkers | | [41] |
| 40. | i) | B | [49] |
| | ii) | C | [50] |
| | iii) | A | [50] |
| 41. | i) | G | [57] |
| | ii) | E | [38] |
| | iii) | C | [44] |
| | iv) | B | [45] |
| | v) | A | [38] |
| | vi) | F | [52] |
| 42. | Yes + hawking is a tourist attraction / brings economic benefits // No + they cause hygiene hazard / safety hazard / unfair competition | | [18] |

**Part B2 (more difficult section)**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 43. | i) | (the) general reader(s) / the (general) public | [84] |
| | ii) | lead to widespread misconceptions | [72] |
| | iii) | (use techniques to) make (bodacious) claims that are not scientific | [61] |
| | iv) | readers need to be critical | [76] |
| 44. | sarcastic // sceptical // questioning // is against / mocks the (Brain Gym) programme | | [38] |
| 45. | i) | brain gym | [48] |
| | ii) | Brain gym is (routinely) taught in British schools | [28] |

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46. i) They give credence to absurdities / claims that mislead the public [17]

ii) They have poor understanding of statistics and evidence [64]

47. Scientists and doctors are smaller in number (compared to individuals) // Scientists and doctors are fighting an uphill battle against individuals who are large in number [5]

48. i) obsessed [46]

ii) medicine [15]

iii) sciencey-sounding claims (and stories) [34]

iv) ultimate [45]

v) hole [29]

vi) taught [40]

49. rest of the text / book // the book [4]

50. bigger fish [47]

51. i) death // risk // statistics // science that will kill or cure you [62]

ii) evidence-based medicine had saved millions of lives [15]

iii) the (mainstream) media // sciencey-sounding claims and stories (with no scientific evidence) [22]

iv) homeopathy [34]

v) (Some) customers (of alternative therapists) might die // [24]
public understanding of nature of evidence is undermined

52. B [73]

53. (to) pull the wool over the eyes (of) [16]

54. social problems / political problems are medicalised [31]

55.

| Summary | Correction | |
|---|---|---|
| i) those who <u>reject</u> great power and authority and those in the | have / enjoy / accept | [39] |
| ii) mainstream media. He considers the former more <u>prevalent</u> | powerful / harmful | [14] |
| iii) as their <u>pointless</u> mistakes have serious outcomes. He believes the | basic / fundamental | [27] |
| iv) latter doggedly support <u>meaningful</u> stories about science | meaningless / pointless | [28] |
| v) with such a fundamental misconception of the facts. | ✓ | [20] |

56. They make basic mistakes with grave consequences [39]

57. seeing evidence behind popular deceptions // [11]
having knowledge about research / level of evidence

58. C [59]

59. (as one continues) reading the book / Bad Science [24]

60. One can still be making mistakes but they will be more critical // [4]
Readers may not be convinced but they will be a more critical reader

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61. i) C [54]

ii) F [36]

iii) D [52]

iv) B [39]

v) E [20]

62. Pessimistic + doctors and scientists are deceived by pharmaceutical industries / powerful people make basic mistakes and there can be grave consequences // [6]

Optimistic + the book can reduce readers' misconception on science and medicine

*Note: Figures in square brackets represent the percentage of candidates awarded a point for the item. Points within this } bracket can be in any order.*

/ = alternative acceptable word(s) / phrase(s) within an answer

// = alternative answer(s)

( ) = word(s) or phrase(s) which are **NOT** essential to the answer

___ = underlined word(s) must be present in the answer

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| Marks | Content (C) | Language (L) | Organisation (O) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | • Content entirely fulfils the requirements of the question<br>• Totally relevant<br>• All ideas are well developed/supported<br>• Creativity and imagination are shown when appropriate<br>• Shows a high awareness of audience | • Very wide range of accurate sentence structures, with a good grasp of more complex structures<br>• Grammar accurate with only very minor slips<br>• Vocabulary well-chosen and often used appropriately to express subtleties of meaning<br>• Spelling and punctuation are almost entirely correct<br>• Register, tone and style are entirely appropriate to the genre and text-type | • Text is organised extremely effectively, with logical development of ideas<br>• Cohesion in most parts of the text is very clear<br>• Cohesive ties throughout the text are sophisticated<br>• Overall structure is coherent, extremely sophisticated and entirely appropriate to the genre and text-type |
| 6 | • Content fulfils the requirements of the question<br>• Almost totally relevant<br>• Most ideas are well developed/supported<br>• Creativity and imagination are shown when appropriate<br>• Shows general awareness of audience | • Wide range of accurate sentence structures, with a good grasp of simple and complex sentences<br>• Grammar mainly accurate, with occasional common errors that do not affect overall clarity<br>• Vocabulary is wide, with many examples of more sophisticated lexis<br>• Spelling and punctuation are mostly correct<br>• Register, tone and style are appropriate to the genre and text-type | • Text is organised effectively, with logical development of ideas<br>• Cohesion in most parts of the text is clear<br>• Strong cohesive ties throughout the text<br>• Overall structure is coherent, sophisticated and appropriate to the genre and text-type |
| 5 | • Content addresses the requirements of the question adequately<br>• Mostly relevant<br>• Some ideas are well developed/supported<br>• Creativity and imagination are shown in most parts when appropriate<br>• Shows some awareness of audience | • A range of accurate sentence structures, with some attempts to use more complex sentences<br>• Grammatical errors occur in more complex structures but overall clarity not affected<br>• Vocabulary is moderately wide and used appropriately<br>• Spelling and punctuation are sufficiently accurate to convey meaning<br>• Register, tone and style are mostly appropriate to the genre and text-type | • Text is mostly organised effectively, with logical development of ideas<br>• Cohesion in most parts of the text is clear<br>• Sound cohesive ties throughout the text<br>• Overall structure is coherent and appropriate to the genre and text-type |
| 4 | • Content just satisfies the requirements of the question<br>• Relevant ideas but may show some gaps or redundant information<br>• Some ideas but not well developed<br>• Some evidence of creativity and imagination<br>• Shows occasional awareness of audience | • Simple sentences are generally accurately constructed<br>• Occasional attempts are made to use more complex sentences<br>• Structures used tend to be repetitive in nature<br>• Grammatical errors sometimes affect meaning<br>• Common vocabulary is generally appropriate<br>• Most common words are spelt correctly, with basic punctuation being accurate<br>• There is some evidence of register, tone and style appropriate to the genre and text-type | • Parts of the text have clearly defined topics<br>• Cohesion in some parts of the text is clear<br>• Some cohesive ties in some parts of the text<br>• Overall structure is mostly coherent and appropriate to the genre and text-type |

| Marks | Content (C) | Language (L) | Organisation (O) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | • Content partially satisfies the requirements of the question<br>• Some relevant ideas but there are gaps in candidate's understanding of the topic<br>• Ideas not developed, with possible repetition<br>• Does not orient reader effectively to the topic | • Short simple sentences are generally accurate<br>• Only scattered attempts at longer, more complex sentences<br>• Grammatical errors often affect meaning<br>• Simple vocabulary is appropriate<br>• Spelling of common words is correct, with basic punctuation mostly accurate | • Parts of the text are generally defined<br>• Some simple cohesive ties used in some parts of the text but cohesion is sometimes fuzzy<br>• A limited range of cohesive devices are used appropriately |
| 2 | • Content shows very limited attempts to fulfil the requirements of the question<br>• Intermittently relevant<br>• Some ideas but few are developed<br>• Ideas may include misconception of the task or some inaccurate information<br>• Very limited awareness of audience | • Some short simple sentences accurately structured<br>• Grammatical errors frequently affect meaning<br>• Very simple vocabulary of limited range, often based on the prompt(s)<br>• A few words are spelt correctly, with basic punctuation being occasionally accurate | • Parts of the text reflect some attempts to organise topics<br>• Some use of cohesive devices to link ideas |
| 1 | • Content inadequate and heavily based on the task prompt(s)<br>• A few ideas but none developed<br>• Some points/ ideas are copied from the task prompt or the reading texts<br>• Almost total lack of awareness of audience | • Multiple errors in sentence structures, spelling and/or word usage, which make understanding impossible | • Some attempt to organise the text<br>• Very limited use of cohesive devices to link ideas |
| 0 | • Totally inadequate<br>• Totally irrelevant or memorised<br>• All ideas are copied from the task prompt or the reading texts<br>• No awareness of audience | • Not enough language to assess | • Mainly disconnected words, short note-like phrases or incomplete sentences<br>• Cohesive devices almost entirely absent |



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## Paper 3 (Listening and Integrated Skills)

### Part A (compulsory section)

**Task 1** (12 marks)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | April 30th // end of April | [67] |
| 2. | (only) 50 dollars | [67] |
| 3. | Monday | [93] |
| 4. | take photos | [64] |
| 5. | D | [74] |
| 6. | (around) 70,000 years ago | [50] |
| 7. | (by) canoe | [8] |
| 8. | on foot // walking | [57] |
| 9. | (from) island to island | [59] |
| 10. | lack of food // to find food | [79] |
| 11. | fighting (with) other humans // escape from other humans | [33] |
| 12. | ☑ Grow food ☑ Make clothes ☑ Build houses ☑ Make weapons | [50] |

**Task 2** (14 marks)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 13. | Paqua Monna | [37] |
| 14. | languages | [71] |
| 15. | customs | [27] |
| 16. | C | [74] |
| 17. | light | [68] |
| 18. | strong | [67] |
| 19. | 5 | [82] |
| 20. | 14 | [44] |
| 21. | May 1950 | [24] |
| 22. | (the) stars | [44] |
| 23. | fish | [77] |
| 24. | in bamboo (water) containers | [28] |
| 25. | Lost food source ✓ Lost water ✓ Lost sail ✓ | [70] |
| 26. | D | [81] |

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Task 3 (14 marks)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 27. | (strongly) connected to (your / our / one's) cultural background | [23] |
| 28. | Singapore | [37] |
| 29. | explore his (Peruvian) identity | [34] |
| 30. | speak with her grandparents // get to know her grandparents | [49] |
| 31. | give a speech at his cousin's wedding | [8] |
| 32. | lesson(s) every week with a private tutor | [18] |
| 33. | language exchange partner | [36] |
| 34. | use a language learning app (on his way to work) | [33] |
| 35. | reading and writing Chinese characters | [30] |
| 36. | write a daily diary in Chinese | [17] |
| 37. | watch YouTube series in French every week / regularly | [9] |
| 38. | it's never too late to learn | [53] |
| 39. | motivation is everything // without motivation you'll never succeed | [60] |
| 40. | not one / no single (right) way of learning // have to be ready to try out lots of ways to learn // try out different ways to succeed | [48] |

Task 4 (13 marks)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 41. | largest annual human migration (on Earth) // more people travel than the population of the United States | [8] |
| 42. | (estimated) 400,000,000 | [68] |
| 43. | (economic reforms meant that) they left their hometowns to work (in the city) // (before) most people lived in towns in which they were born | [24] |
| 44. | the number of university students studying outside their hometown has increased | [13] |
| 45. | buying a ticket ... they sell out (quickly) (especially online) // the scarcity of tickets | [46] |
| 46. | risk of accidents // safety issues ... of (over) crowded trains // many people have to stand (on train) | [29] |
| 47. | passengers called his family to (come and) meet him at next stop / station | [21] |
| 48. | a stranger shared / offered to share his lunch box | [48] |
| 49. | they (got chatting about their love of reading and later) got married // became husband and wife | [37] |
| 50. | stay where they are // avoid Chunyun (altogether) | [24] |
| 51. | reduce cost by sharing their car (with friends and strangers) | [10] |
| 52. | international travel | [11] |
| 53. | (may feel that) (despite the stress) it is worth it to spend time with loved ones / family // (the reward of) spending time with loved ones / family makes it all worth it | [9] |

*Note: Figures in square brackets represents the percentage of candidates awarded a point for the item. Points within ( ) brackets can be in any order.*

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**Part B1 (easier section)**

**Task 5** ***(17 marks)***

**Task Completion = 15 marks**

*Note: unless stated, candidates must place the information in the correct section to be awarded a point.*

| Item | | DF page reference |
|---|---|---|
| 5.1 | 27th April | 3* |
| 5.2 | 10am | 3* |
| 5.3 | Visitors' Centre | 3* |
| 5.4 | 2 hours | 3* |
| 5.5 | Chinese | 8 |
| 5.6 | English audio guides | 8 |
| 5.7 | light clothing / clothes | 5 |
| 5.8 | walking or running shoes | 8 |
| 5.9 | water | 5 |
| 5.10 | sunglasses | 5 |
| 5.11 | mosquito repellent | 8 |
| 5.12 | (a) hat | 9 |
| 5.13 | pregnant woman | 9 |
| 5.14 | person with serious health issues | 9 |
| 5.15 | (we recommend you) consult a doctor (before joining the walk) | 9 |

** Information from page 3 of the Data File is from the tapescript*

**Note: Points within this } bracket can be in any order**

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**Task 5: Language (L) = 2 marks**

| Marks | Language |
|---|---|
| 2 | • Generally understandable though may be some errors.<br>• Most words are spelt correctly. |
| 1 | • Grammatical errors sometimes affect understanding.<br>• Spelling of simple words is correct, more complex ones not. |
| 0 | • Multiple errors throughout, spelling and/or word usage which make understanding impossible.<br>OR<br>• Not enough evidence in candidate's work to be able to award '1'. |

**Task 6** ***(18 marks)***

**Task Completion = 9 marks**

| Item | | DF page reference |
|---|---|---|
| 6.1 | the start time has been changed (from 7:30am) to 9:30am | 3* |
| 6.2 | because not enough people are signing up to join the tour | 3* |
| 6.3 | because the tour starts too early | 3* |
| 6.4 | Request: Will the staff give out (free) refreshments / cool water and ice cream? | 11 |
| 6.5 | Reason: (the) hot weather (in Hong Kong) | 11 |
| 6.6 | Reason: participants will be doing a lot of walking | 11 |
| 6.7 | Request: Will there be a refund if there are not sufficient bird sightings or there is poor weather? | 10 |
| 6.8 | Reason: previous participants left negative reviews due to not seeing many birds | 10 |
| 6.9 | Reason: coupons and discounts won't make up for the time they lost (so only a refund would be suitable) | 10 |

** Information from page 3 of the Data File is from the tapescript*

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**Task 6: Language (L) = 5 marks**

| Marks | Language |
|---|---|
| 5 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Generally successful in adapting phrases from the Data File to create grammatically correct sentences through: word formation changes, tense changes, pronoun changes etc.<br>**Own Language**<br>• A range of accurate sentence structures with a grasp of simple and complex sentences.<br>• Grammar mainly accurate with occasional common errors that do not affect overall clarity.<br>• Spelling and punctuation are mostly correct. |
| 4 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Sometimes successful in adapting phrases from the Data File to create grammatically correct sentences. This is done through some of: word formation changes, tense changes, pronoun changes etc.<br>**Own Language**<br>• A range of accurate sentence structures with some attempts to use more complex sentences.<br>• Grammatical errors occur in more complex structures but overall clarity not affected.<br>• Spelling and punctuation are sufficiently accurate to convey meaning. |
| 3 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Occasionally successful in adapting phrases from the Data File to create grammatically correct sentences, though more often errors occur due to failing to change the original texts to the requirements of his/her own text.<br>**Own Language**<br>• Simple sentences are generally accurately constructed. Occasional attempts are made to use more complex sentences. Structures used tend to be repetitive in nature.<br>• Grammatical errors sometimes affect meaning.<br>• Most common words are spelt correctly, with basic punctuation being accurate. |
| 2 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Writing characterised by occasional attempts to adapt language from the Data File or by chunks taken verbatim from the Data File.<br>**Own Language**<br>• Short simple sentences are generally accurate. Only scattered attempts at longer, more complex sentences.<br>• Grammatical errors often affect meaning.<br>• Spelling of simple words is correct, more complex ones not, with basic punctuation mostly accurate. |
| 1 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Writing characterised by being mostly a series of chunks taken verbatim from the Data File.<br>**Own Language**<br>• Short simple sentences may be accurate.<br>• Grammatical errors often affect meaning.<br>• Spelling of simple words is correct, more complex ones not, with basic punctuation often faulty. |
| 0 | • Writing characterised by being a series of chunks taken verbatim from the Data File.<br>• Multiple errors in sentence structures, spelling and/or word usage which make understanding impossible.<br>OR<br>• Not enough evidence in candidate's work to be able to award '1'. |

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**Task 6: Coherence and Organisation (C) = 2 marks**

| Marks | Coherence and Organisation |
|---|---|
| 2 | • Overall coherence of the text is very good with a clear focus on the task throughout.<br>• Relations between main points and supporting points is always clear.<br>• Strong cohesive ties are used to enhance coherence when necessary. |
| 1 | • Overall coherence of the text is reasonable with a reasonably clear focus on the task throughout.<br>• The relations between main points and supporting points are generally clear.<br>• Cohesive ties used generally enhance coherence, although these may occasionally be fuzzy. |
| 0 | • Overall coherence of the text is weak.<br>• Supporting details are generally not clearly related to main points.<br>• Cohesive ties used contribute little to the coherence of the text.<br>OR<br>• Not enough evidence in the candidate's work to be able to award '1'. |

**Task 6: Appropriacy (A) = 2 marks**

| Marks | Appropriacy |
|---|---|
| 2 | • Register, tone and style are generally appropriate through manipulation of parts of the Data File and own language.<br>• The candidate has produced a text appropriate for the task. |
| 1 | • Register, tone and style are reasonably appropriate to the text through some manipulation of parts of the Data File and through own language.<br>• Tone may be inconsistent due to parts being copied verbatim from the Data File. |
| 0 | • Little or no evidence of an ability to manipulate register, tone or style in order to produce an appropriate text.<br>• The candidate has written a text which is characterised by having copied chunks of the Data File indiscriminately. Does not give the impression of the writer's own text written to fulfil the task. |

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**Task 7** ***(18 marks)***

**Task Completion = 9 marks**

| Item | | | DF page reference |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7.1 | At the Insects and Reptiles Exhibition, you can… | learn about (different) insects and reptiles | 7 |
| 7.2 | | experience a different side of Hong Kong | 7 |
| 7.3 | | meet Oggie, the salt water crocodile | 7 |
| 7.4 | dragonflies at the exhibition: Red Baller and Blue Tail | | 3* / 5 |
| 7.5 | (some of) the dragonflies at the exhibition are rare (in Hong Kong) as they migrate during the winter | | 5 |
| 7.6 | there will be a dragonfly photo-taking competition (at the exhibition) | | 3* |
| 7.7 | the best dragonfly photo wins $500 | | 3* |
| 7.8 | (World City Travel early booking offer:) book your ticket two weeks in advance for a 30% discount | | 6 |
| 7.9 | tickets are free for children under 6 years old when accompanied by parents | | 6 |

* *Information from page 3 of the Data File is from the tapescript*

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**Task 7: Language (L) = 5 marks**

| Marks | Language |
|---|---|
| 5 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Generally successful in adapting phrases from the Data File to create grammatically correct sentences through: word formation changes, tense changes, pronoun changes etc.<br>**Own Language**<br>• A range of accurate sentence structures with a grasp of simple and complex sentences.<br>• Grammar mainly accurate with occasional common errors that do not affect overall clarity.<br>• Spelling and punctuation are mostly correct. |
| 4 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Sometimes successful in adapting phrases from the Data File to create grammatically correct sentences. This is done through some of: word formation changes, tense changes, pronoun changes etc.<br>**Own Language**<br>• A range of accurate sentence structures with some attempts to use more complex sentences.<br>• Grammatical errors occur in more complex structures, but overall clarity is not affected.<br>• Spelling and punctuation are sufficiently accurate to convey meaning. |
| 3 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Occasionally successful in adapting phrases from the Data File to create grammatically correct sentences, though errors often occur due to failing to change the original texts to the requirements of his/her own text.<br>**Own Language**<br>• Simple sentences are generally accurately constructed. Occasional attempts are made to use more complex sentences. Structures used tend to be repetitive in nature.<br>• Grammatical errors sometimes affect meaning.<br>• Most common words are spelt correctly, with basic punctuation being accurate. |
| 2 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Writing characterised by occasional attempts to adapt language from the Data File or by chunks taken verbatim from the Data File.<br>**Own Language**<br>• Short simple sentences are generally accurate. Only scattered attempts at longer, more complex sentences.<br>• Grammatical errors often affect meaning.<br>• Spelling of simple words is correct, more complex ones not, with basic punctuation mostly accurate. |
| 1 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Writing characterised by being mostly a series of chunks taken verbatim from the Data File.<br>**Own Language**<br>• Short simple sentences may be accurate.<br>• Grammatical errors often affect meaning.<br>• Spelling of simple words is correct, more complex ones not, with basic punctuation often faulty. |
| 0 | • Writing characterised by being a series of chunks taken verbatim from the Data File.<br>• Multiple errors in sentence structures, spelling and/or word usage which make understanding impossible.<br>OR<br>• Not enough evidence in candidate's work to be able to award '1'. |

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**Task 7: Coherence and Organisation (C) = 2 marks**

| Marks | Coherence and Organisation |
|---|---|
| 2 | • Overall coherence of the text is very good, with a clear focus on the task throughout.<br>• Relations between main points and supporting points is always clear.<br>• Strong cohesive ties are used to enhance coherence when necessary. |
| 1 | • Overall coherence of the text is reasonable, with a reasonably clear focus on the task throughout.<br>• The relations between main points and supporting points generally clear.<br>• Cohesive ties used generally enhance coherence although these may occasionally be fuzzy. |
| 0 | • Overall coherence of the text is weak.<br>• Supporting details are generally not clearly related to main points.<br>• Cohesive ties used contribute little to the coherence of the text.<br>OR<br>• Not enough evidence in the candidate's work to be able to award '1'. |

**Task 7: Appropriacy (A) = 2 marks**

| Marks | Appropriacy |
|---|---|
| 2 | • Register, tone and style generally appropriate through manipulation of parts of the Data File and own language.<br>• The candidate has produced a text appropriate for the task. |
| 1 | • Register, tone and style reasonably appropriate to the text through some manipulation of parts of the Data File and own language.<br>• Tone may be inconsistent due to parts being copied verbatim from the Data File. |
| 0 | • Little or no evidence of an ability to manipulate register, tone or style in order to produce an appropriate text.<br>• The candidate has written a text which is characterised by having copied chunks of the Data File indiscriminately. Does not give the impression of the writer's own text written to fulfil the task. |

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**Part B2 (more difficult section)**

**Task 8** ***(17 marks)***

**Task Completion = 8 marks**

| Item | | DF page reference |
|---|---|---|
| 8.1 | the incident occurred on 27th March at 5:50pm in Sydney Harbour | 3* / 5 / 7 |
| 8.2 | the catamaran crashed into rocks | 6 |
| 8.3 | Reason for accident: a sudden change in weather (conditions) | 6 |
| 8.4 | no passengers were on board: the catamaran was training new crew members | 7 |
| 8.5 | and scouting whale migration routes | 7 |
| 8.6 | Review Board conclusion: Captain Moby (was) not at fault | 3* |
| 8.7 | (Review Board conclusion:) he kept the crew onboard safe and was instrumental in minimising damage to the catamaran | 10 |
| 8.8 | (Review Board conclusion:) he was / is extremely professional | 3* |

** Information from page 3 of the Data File is from the tapescript*

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**Task 8: Language (L) = 5 marks**

| Marks | Language |
|---|---|
| 5 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Successful manipulation of phrases from the Data File to create grammatically correct sentences, achieved through a wide variety of changes made to the original texts.<br>**Own Language**<br>• A wide range of accurate sentence structures using own language, with an excellent grasp of more complex structures.<br>• Grammar extremely accurate with very occasional slips.<br>• Spelling and punctuation are mostly correct. |
| 4 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Generally successful in adapting phrases from the Data File to create grammatically correct sentences through some of: word formation changes, tense changes, pronoun changes etc.<br>**Own Language**<br>• A range of accurate sentence structures with a grasp of simple and complex sentences.<br>• Grammar mainly accurate with occasional common errors that do not affect overall clarity.<br>• Spelling and punctuation are mostly correct. |
| 3 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Sometimes successful in adapting phrases from the Data File to create grammatically correct sentences. This is done through some of: word formation changes, tense changes, pronoun changes etc.<br>**Own Language**<br>• A range of accurate sentence structures with some attempts to use more complex sentences.<br>• Grammatical errors occur in more complex structures but overall clarity not affected.<br>• Spelling and punctuation are sufficiently accurate to convey meaning. |
| 2 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Occasionally successful in adapting phrases from the Data File to create grammatically correct sentences, though more often errors occur due to failing to change the original texts to the requirements of his/her own text.<br>**Own Language**<br>• Simple sentences are generally accurately constructed. Occasional attempts are made to use more complex sentences. Structures used tend to be repetitive in nature.<br>• Grammatical errors sometimes affect meaning.<br>• Most common words are spelt correctly, with basic punctuation being accurate. |
| 1 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Writing characterised by occasional attempts to adapt language from Data File or by chunks taken *verbatim* from the Data File.<br>**Own Language**<br>• Short simple sentences are generally accurate. Only scattered attempts at longer, more complex sentences.<br>• Grammatical errors often affect meaning.<br>• Spelling of simple words is correct, more complex ones not, with basic punctuation mostly accurate. |
| 0 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Writing characterised by being mostly a series of chunks taken *verbatim* from the Data File.<br>**Own Language**<br>• Short simple sentences may be accurate.<br>• Grammatical errors often affect meaning.<br>• Spelling of simple words is correct, more complex ones not, with basic punctuation often faulty.<br>OR<br>• Not enough evidence in candidate's work to be able to award '1'. |

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**Task 8: Coherence and Organisation (C) = 2 marks**

| Marks | Coherence and Organisation |
|---|---|
| 2 | • Overall coherence of the text is very good.<br>• It is clearly on topic and congruent with the subject.<br>• Relations between main points and supporting points are always clear.<br>• Strong cohesive ties are used to enhance coherence when necessary. |
| 1 | • Overall coherence of the text is reasonable.<br>• It is generally on topic and congruent with the subject.<br>• Relations between main points and supporting points are generally clear.<br>• Cohesive ties used generally enhance coherence, although these may occasionally be fuzzy. |
| 0 | • Overall coherence of the text is weak.<br>• It is mostly off topic and not clearly congruent with the subject.<br>• Supporting details are generally not clearly related to main points.<br>• Cohesive ties used contribute little to the coherence of the text.<br>OR<br>• Not enough evidence in candidate's work to be able to award '1'. |

**Task 8: Appropriacy (A) = 2 marks**

| Marks | Appropriacy |
|---|---|
| 2 | • Register, tone and style are generally appropriate to the text through manipulation of parts of the Data File and own language.<br>• Consistently demonstrates audience awareness. |
| 1 | • Register, tone and style are reasonably appropriate to the text through some manipulation of parts of the Data File and through own language.<br>• The tone may be inconsistent. |
| 0 | Little or no evidence of an ability to manipulate register, tone or style in order to produce an appropriate text. |

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**Task 9** ***(18 marks)***

**Task Completion = 9 marks**

| Item | | DF page reference |
|---|---|---|
| 9.1 | we value our customers // we put (our) customers first | 8 |
| 9.2 | in addition to a full refund, we are offering a compensation package | 6 / 7 / 8 |
| 9.3 | Compensation includes: lifetime membership of World City Travel | 3* |
| 9.4 | a 30% discount on all tours (for life) | 3* |
| 9.5 | a free photo print by (Dr) David Atkinson // an "Aqua Vita" photo print | 11 |
| 9.6 | participants can also choose another, complimentary, cruise | 10 |
| 9.7 | (for the complimentary cruise:) the first two weeks of May are available | 8 |
| 9.8 | June and July are available and include an additional 50% duration | 7 / 8 |
| 9.9 | details of the available cruises are on the World City Travel website | 10 |

** Information from page 3 of the Data File is from the tapescript*

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**Task 9: Language (L) = 5 marks**

| Marks | Language |
|---|---|
| 5 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Successful manipulation of phrases from the Data File to create grammatically correct sentences, achieved through a wide variety of changes made to the original texts.<br>**Own Language**<br>• A wide range of accurate sentence structures using own language, with an excellent grasp of more complex structures.<br>• Grammar extremely accurate with very occasional slips.<br>• Spelling and punctuation are mostly correct. |
| 4 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Generally successful in adapting phrases from the Data File to create grammatically correct sentences through some of: word formation changes, tense changes, pronoun changes etc.<br>**Own Language**<br>• A range of accurate sentence structures with a grasp of simple and complex sentences.<br>• Grammar mainly accurate with occasional common errors that do not affect overall clarity.<br>• Spelling and punctuation are mostly correct. |
| 3 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Sometimes successful in adapting phrases from the Data File to create grammatically correct sentences. This is done through some of: word formation changes, tense changes, pronoun changes etc.<br>**Own Language**<br>• A range of accurate sentence structures with some attempts to use more complex sentences.<br>• Grammatical errors occur in more complex structures, but overall clarity is not affected.<br>• Spelling and punctuation are sufficiently accurate to convey meaning. |
| 2 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Occasionally successful in adapting phrases from the Data File to create grammatically correct sentences, though more often errors occur due to failing to change the original texts to the requirements of his/her own text.<br>**Own Language**<br>• Simple sentences are generally accurately constructed. Occasional attempts are made to use more complex sentences. Structures used tend to be repetitive in nature.<br>• Grammatical errors sometimes affect meaning.<br>• Most common words are spelt correctly, with basic punctuation being accurate. |
| 1 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Writing is characterised by occasional attempts to adapt language from Data File or by chunks taken *verbatim* from the Data File.<br>**Own Language**<br>• Short simple sentences are generally accurate. Only scattered attempts at longer, more complex sentences.<br>• Grammatical errors often affect meaning.<br>• Spelling of simple words is correct, more complex ones not, with basic punctuation mostly accurate. |
| 0 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Writing characterised by being mostly a series of chunks taken *verbatim* from the Data File.<br>**Own Language**<br>• Short simple sentences may be accurate.<br>• Grammatical errors often affect meaning.<br>• Spelling of simple words is correct, more complex ones not, with basic punctuation often faulty.<br>OR<br>• Not enough evidence in candidate's work to be able to award '1'. |



**Task 9: Coherence and Organisation (C) = 2 marks**

| Marks | Coherence and Organisation |
|---|---|
| 2 | • Overall coherence of the text is very good.<br>• It is clearly on topic and congruent with the subject.<br>• Relations between main points and supporting points are always clear.<br>• Strong cohesive ties are used to enhance coherence when necessary. |
| 1 | • Overall coherence of the text is reasonable.<br>• It is generally on topic and congruent with the subject.<br>• Relations between main points and supporting points are generally clear.<br>• Cohesive ties used generally enhance coherence, although these may occasionally be fuzzy. |
| 0 | • Overall coherence of the text is weak.<br>• It is mostly off topic and not clearly congruent with the subject.<br>• Supporting details are generally not clearly related to main points.<br>• Cohesive ties used contribute little to the coherence of the text.<br>OR<br>• Not enough evidence in candidate's work to be able to award '1'. |

**Task 9: Appropriacy (A) = 2 marks**

| Marks | Appropriacy |
|---|---|
| 2 | • Register, tone and style generally are appropriate to the text through manipulation of parts of the Data File and own language.<br>• Consistently demonstrates audience awareness. |
| 1 | • Register, tone and style are reasonably appropriate to the text through some manipulation of parts of the Data File and through own language.<br>• The tone may be inconsistent. |
| 0 | Little or no evidence of an ability to manipulate register, tone or style in order to produce an appropriate text. |

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**Task 10** ***(18 marks)***

**Task Completion = 9 marks**

| Item | | DF page reference |
|---|---|---|
| 10.1 | the Adventure Fishing Tour runs from 6th December to 27th January, with a break on Christmas Day | 6 / 8 / 10 |
| 10.2 | the Tour will take place on the D79X yacht, known as the "supercar of the sea" | 7 / 9 / 11 |
| 10.3 | the D79X has a top speed of 65 knots | 9 |
| 10.4 | and an oversized terrace with a built-in spa | 9 |
| 10.5 | the Tour stops at 2 white sand beaches | 3* |
| 10.6 | where participants can catch shellfish | 3* |
| 10.7 | commentary is by biologist (Dr) David Atkinson | 7 |
| 10.8 | famous for the 2013 TV wildlife documentary series / wildlife documentaries such as "The Life of Whales" | 7 / 11 |
| 10.9 | includes a free buffet lunch by iSea Caterers, featuring tuna, scallops and lobster | 8 / 10 |

** Information from page 3 of the Data File is from the tapescript*

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**Task 10: Language (L) = 5 marks**

| Marks | Language |
|---|---|
| 5 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Successful manipulation of phrases from the Data File to create grammatically correct sentences. Achieved through a wide variety of changes made to the original texts.<br>**Own Language**<br>• A wide range of accurate sentence structures using own language, with an excellent grasp of more complex structures.<br>• Grammar extremely accurate with very occasional slips.<br>• Spelling and punctuation are mostly correct. |
| 4 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Generally successful in adapting phrases from the Data File to create grammatically correct sentences through some of: word formation changes, tense changes, pronoun changes etc.<br>**Own Language**<br>• A range of accurate sentence structures with a grasp of simple and complex sentences.<br>• Grammar mainly accurate with occasional common errors that do not affect overall clarity.<br>• Spelling and punctuation are mostly correct. |
| 3 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Sometimes successful in adapting phrases from the Data File to create grammatically correct sentences. This is done through some of: word formation changes, tense changes, pronoun changes etc.<br>**Own Language**<br>• A range of accurate sentence structures with some attempts to use more complex sentences.<br>• Grammatical errors occur in more complex structures but overall clarity not affected.<br>• Spelling and punctuation are sufficiently accurate to convey meaning. |
| 2 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Occasionally successful in adapting phrases from the Data File to create grammatically correct sentences, though more often errors occur due to failing to change the original texts to the requirements of his/her own text.<br>**Own Language**<br>• Simple sentences are generally accurately constructed. Occasional attempts are made to use more complex sentences. Structures used tend to be repetitive in nature.<br>• Grammatical errors sometimes affect meaning.<br>• Most common words are spelt correctly, with basic punctuation being accurate. |
| 1 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Writing characterised by occasional attempts to adapt language from the Data File or by chunks taken *verbatim* from the Data File.<br>**Own Language**<br>• Short simple sentences are generally accurate. Only scattered attempts at longer, more complex sentences.<br>• Grammatical errors often affect meaning.<br>• Spelling of simple words is correct, more complex ones not, with basic punctuation mostly accurate. |
| 0 | **Data File Manipulation**<br>Writing characterised by being mostly a series of chunks taken *verbatim* from the Data File.<br>**Own Language**<br>• Short simple sentences may be accurate.<br>• Grammatical errors often affect meaning.<br>• Spelling of simple words is correct, more complex ones not, with basic punctuation often faulty.<br>OR<br>• Not enough evidence in candidate's work to be able to award '1'. |

**Task 10: Coherence and Organisation (C) = 2 marks**

| Marks | Coherence and Organisation |
|---|---|
| 2 | • Overall coherence of the text is very good.<br>• It is clearly on topic and congruent with the subject.<br>• Relations between main points and supporting points are always clear.<br>• Strong cohesive ties are used to enhance coherence when necessary. |
| 1 | • Overall coherence of the text is reasonable.<br>• It is generally on topic and congruent with the subject.<br>• Relations between main points and supporting points are generally clear.<br>• Cohesive ties used generally enhance coherence, although these may occasionally be fuzzy. |
| 0 | • Overall coherence of the text is weak.<br>• It is mostly off topic and not clearly congruent with the subject.<br>• Supporting details are generally not clearly related to main points.<br>• Cohesive ties used contribute little to the coherence of the text.<br>OR<br>• Not enough evidence in candidate's work to be able to award '1'. |

**Task 10: Appropriacy (A) = 2 marks**

| Marks | Appropriacy |
|---|---|
| 2 | • Register, tone and style are generally appropriate to the text through manipulation of parts of the Data File and own language.<br>• Consistently demonstrates audience awareness. |
| 1 | • Register, tone and style are reasonably appropriate to the text through some manipulation of parts of the Data File and through own language.<br>• The tone may be inconsistent. |
| 0 | Little or no evidence of an ability to manipulate register, tone or style in order to produce an appropriate text. |



| | I. Pronunciation & delivery | II. Communication strategies | III. Vocabulary & language patterns | IV. Ideas & organisation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | Projects the voice appropriately.<br>Pronounces all sounds/sound clusters and words clearly and accurately.<br>Speaks fluently and naturally, with very little hesitation using intonation with some sophistication to enhance communication. | Uses appropriate body language to display and encourage interest.<br>Uses a full range of strategies skilfully to initiate and maintain interaction and to respond to others. | Makes accurate use of an impressive range of vocabulary.<br>Uses varied and highly accurate language patterns.<br>Rephrases skilfully when necessary. | Expresses an impressive range of well-developed complex ideas clearly and fluently.<br>Expands and elaborates with impressive detail.<br>Consistently responds effectively to others, sustaining and extending conversational exchanges effortlessly. |
| 6 | Projects the voice appropriately.<br>Pronounces all sounds/sound clusters and words clearly and accurately.<br>Speaks fluently and naturally, with only occasional hesitation using suitable intonation to enhance communication. | Uses appropriate body language to display and encourage interest.<br>Uses a full range of strategies effectively to initiate and maintain interaction and to respond to others. | Makes accurate use of a wide range of vocabulary.<br>Uses varied and accurate language patterns; only minor slips made, which do not impede communication.<br>Rephrases effectively when necessary. | Expresses a wide range of well-developed relevant ideas clearly and fluently.<br>Expands and elaborates in detail.<br>Consistently responds effectively to others, sustaining and extending conversational exchanges. |
| 5 | Projects the voice appropriately.<br>Pronounces almost all sounds/sound clusters and words clearly and accurately.<br>Speaks fluently and naturally, with only occasional hesitation using intonation appropriately to enhance communication. | Uses appropriate body language to display and encourage interest.<br>Uses a wide range of strategies to initiate and maintain interaction and to respond to others. | Makes varied and generally appropriate use of vocabulary.<br>Makes use of generally accurate and appropriate language patterns.<br>Self-corrects effectively when necessary. | Expresses a range of relevant ideas clearly and fluently. Most ideas developed and linked.<br>Expands and elaborates appropriately.<br>Responds appropriately to others, sustaining and extending conversational exchanges. |
| 4 | Usually projects the voice satisfactorily.<br>Pronounces most sounds/sound clusters and words clearly and accurately; less common words usually comprehensible.<br>Speaks reasonably fluently although with some hesitation in longer utterances. Uses intonation sufficiently to convey meaning. | Uses some features of body language to support communication.<br>Uses a range of appropriate strategies to initiate and maintain interaction and to respond to others. | Makes generally appropriate use of vocabulary.<br>Makes use of generally accurate language patterns. Errors do not generally impede communication.<br>Self corrects when concentrating carefully or when asked to do so. | Expresses some relevant ideas clearly. Most ideas are developed and linked.<br>Elaborates on most contributions appropriately.<br>Generally responds appropriately to others. Sustains most and may extend some conversational exchanges. |



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| | I. Pronunciation & delivery | II. Communication strategies | III. Vocabulary & language patterns | IV. Ideas & organisation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | Poor voice projection may cause difficulties for the listener. Pronounces simple sounds clearly but may have some problems with sound clusters.<br>Less common words may be misunderstood unless supported by contextual meaning.<br>Uses intonation and pacing sufficiently well to be understood by a supportive listener. | Uses some features of body language to support communication.<br>Uses some simple strategies to participate in, and occasionally initiate, interaction mainly by using formulaic expressions. | Usually makes appropriate use of simple vocabulary.<br>Sometimes uses simple language patterns accurately and appropriately. Errors do not usually impede communication.<br>May show some ability to self correct but done inconsistently or only partially successfully. | Expresses some relevant ideas clearly. These may be linked.<br>Responds to some simple questions and may expand on these if asked directly. |
| | **PRODUCTION MAY BE TOO LIMITED TO ALLOW ACCURATE AWARDING OF HIGHER MARKS** | | | |
| 2 | Poor voice projection may cause difficulties for listener.<br>Pronounces simple sounds and some sound clusters well enough to be understood most of the time.<br>Produces familiar stretches of language with sufficiently appropriate intonation and pacing to be understood. | Uses restricted features of body language when prompted to respond.<br>Uses some simple formulaic expressions, generally in response to others.<br>Participates briefly in conversation, generally when prompted, but tends to use formulaic expressions to do so. | Makes appropriate use of vocabulary from limited and familiar range, often derived from context.<br>May use some very basic language patterns accurately in brief exchanges. Errors may impede communication.<br>May be unable to self correct. | Attempts to express simple relevant ideas, sometimes successfully.<br>Attempts to expand on some responses briefly.<br>Makes some contribution when prompted. |
| 1 | Poor voice projection is likely to be a problem.<br>Pronounces some simple and common words accurately enough to be understood.<br>Uses intonation appropriately in the most familiar of words and phrases.<br>Hesitant speech is likely to be a problem. | Uses restricted features of body language when prompted to respond.<br>Can use only simple and narrowly-restricted formulaic expressions, and only to respond to others. | Makes use of a narrow range of simple vocabulary, sometimes appropriately.<br>Uses a narrow range of language patterns, usually in short and rehearsed utterances. Errors often impede communication. | Occasionally produces brief ideas relevant to the topic.<br>Makes some brief responses when prompted. |
| 0 | Does not produce any comprehensible English speech. | Does not use any interactional strategies. | Does not produce recognizable words or sequences. | Does not produce relevant material. |



## Candidates' Performance

### Paper 1

Paper 1 tests candidates' reading skills, and consists of three parts: Part A, Part B1 and Part B2. Candidates have 1.5 hours to complete Part A, which is compulsory, and either Part B1 (consisting of items of a lower level of difficulty than Part A) or Part B2 (consisting of items of a higher level of difficulty than Part A). The weighting for Part A and Part B is 50% per part. The total number of candidates who attempted Paper 1 was 45,357, of whom around 48% chose B1 and around 52% chose B2. Candidates who attempt Parts A and B2 are able to attain the full range of levels, while Level 4 is the highest level attainable for candidates who attempt Parts A and B1.

Overall Results

A statistical analysis of Paper 1 was carried out. The overall results are given in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Paper 1 overall results

| | Full Mark | Mean Score (%) | Standard Deviation (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Part A | 42 | 51.5 | 22.1 |
| Part B1 | 42 | 47.2 | 21.7 |
| Part B2 | 42 | 35.8 | 17.4 |

Part A (Compulsory section)

Part A consisted of two reading passages on the theme of banyan trees in Hong Kong. The first passage was a newspaper article on public safety related to specific cases of banyans in Hong Kong. The second passage was an online article considering the physical, social and cultural significance of Hong Kong banyans. A range of items such as multiple choice, short responses, gap-fill, True/False/Not Given, and proofreading were included. Candidates were also required to identify and match the views of people / organisations included in Text 2.

The items in Part A that were most successfully answered by 70% or more of candidates were: Q.1(i) and (ii), Q.4, Q.5(iii), Q.6, Q.10(i), Q.12(i) and (ii), Q.20, Q.23(i)-(ii) and (iv). These represented a range of questions identifying relatively simple factual information, identifying straightforward references, identifying examples from the text, and understanding attitudes and opinions. This suggested that a good majority of candidates possessed an acceptable range of fundamental reading skills in English. Indeed, approximately two-thirds of the question items in Part A were answered correctly by at least 50% of candidates, suggesting a good grounding in their reading skills.

A number of examiners and markers noted that some candidates lost marks due to grammatical issues in their responses, notably with singular / plural forms. For example, the reference questions Q.4 and Q.8 required a plural noun and Q.14 a singular noun as indicated in the question prompt. Also, in the gap-fill text, Q.12(iii) required the plural 'seeds' not 'seed' (not included in the stated paragraph) and subject-verb agreement in Q.12(iv) required 'grow' not 'grows'. Examiners and markers also noted that candidates apparently overlooked the need to complete the sentence stem in a grammatically correct manner in sentence completion questions (e.g. Q.7). This resulted in a loss of marks.

It was noted that candidates at the lower range appeared to struggle with Q.11, a proofreading question. Candidates often chose vocabulary they apparently did not fully understand (e.g. Q.11(i) 'aerial' and (ii) 'masonry'). However, over 50% of candidates corrected Q.11(iv) appropriately.

As in previous years, there were candidates who produced answers with spelling errors when copying words from the text into their question-answer book, for example, when completing gap-fill items (e.g.

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Q.12(ii) 'mortar' versus 'motor'). This led to a loss of marks. It was also apparent that some candidates did not read the question with care, such as Q.15 requiring candidates to first state whether Jim's attitude was positive / negative / neutral before including a reason from the text.

Finally, examiners and markers felt that the more open questions / inference questions helped distinguish candidates in the higher range, such as Q.9, Q.15 and Q.22, with only 20-40% of candidates answering correctly.

Part B1 (Easier section)

Part B1 comprised two reading passages linked by the theme of hawking in Hong Kong, a theme and discourse considered to be accessible for most readers. The first passage was a collection of three brief biographies of hawkers in Hong Kong. The second text was an online news article outlining the history of hawking in Hong Kong from the 1950s onwards. Candidates were required to identify factual information in a range of item types such as gap-fill, True/False/Not Given, multiple choice and short responses. Candidates were also required to match paragraph headings and identify and match the views and opinions of the people in Text 4.

Q.25, Q.26, Q.31(i) and (iii) and Q.36(ii) were all answered correctly by at least 70% of candidates. Almost all of these items were related to the brief biographies of the first text demonstrating a similar range of skills as the Part A items mentioned above. Success in these items further strengthened the impression of a satisfactory level of fundamental reading skills amongst candidates. Q.40 and Q.41 tested more global understanding of the longer Text 4 and were moderately well answered with between 38%-57% of candidates answering correctly.

Many candidates had greatest difficulty with Q.35(i) and (ii), Q.36(iv) and (v) and Q.37(ii). With Q.35(i) candidates apparently looked for alternatives with the same word form '-ing' (e.g. 'exploring' and 'maintaining') rather than also considering the meaning. Lower-range candidates often adopted the strategy of selecting unfamiliar vocabulary in the gap-fill questions (e.g. Q.36(iv) 'hygiene', Q.36(v) 'hazards', Q.37(iii) 'rummaging') rather than considering the context and meaning.

Examiners and markers identified Q.33 and Q.42 as questions helpful in distinguishing candidates in the higher range. Q.33, a sentence completion item, required some kind of textual manipulation from the passage rather than just straight copying from the passage. Only 18% of candidates answered Q.42 appropriately. Many candidates responded with rather generic reasons not explicitly stated in the text rather than specific reasoning drawn from the text.

Part B2 (More difficult section)

Part B2 comprised one text taken from the introduction of the book *Bad Science*, a criticism of the lack of critical thinking in society in relation to the public's understanding of science. Candidates were required to work out the metaphors used and respond to a range of items including identifying the implied meaning of phrases and identify examples of, causes of and consequences of the issues relating to the public's current understanding and misunderstanding of science.

In Part B2, candidates were more successful in answering items asking for specific detail and information from the text with between 50%-84% of candidates responding correctly. These included Q.43(i)-(iv) Q.46(ii), Q.51(i) and Q.58. Candidates were also relatively successful when answering questions on global understanding of the text, (e.g. Q.61(i)-(iv)), where between 36% and 54% of candidates answered correctly.

Examiners and markers noted that candidates of a lower-range of ability seemed to struggle with Q.55, a proofreading question, with only between 14% and 39% of candidates appropriately identifying the corrections.

Examiners and markers felt that Q.44-47, Q.49, Q.51(ii)-(v), Q.56, Q.59, Q.60 and Q.62 were a good test of the higher-range candidates. These, as would be expected, included assessing candidates' understanding of more figurative language (e.g. Q.44, Q.47, Q.49, Q.59 and Q.60), candidates' ability to



select and manipulate ideas from the text as well as distinguish specific detail from more general ideas (e.g. Q.51 and Q.62). In both these cases, more indiscriminate lifting from the text often resulted in over-copying, where an answer often lacked focus or incorporated inaccurate / irrelevant content. Between 4% and 39% of candidates answered these items successfully. The complex ideas tested in such items were at the heart of Part B2's text, and the questions successfully probed understanding of the very highest-order elements of the paper.

Recommendations

This year, there were far fewer cases of candidates using letters more than once in matching questions. However, as in previous years, candidates are reminded to read instructions carefully. There are a number of issues candidates should consider here:

(i) Candidates should comply with instructions for a word or a phrase to be taken from specific paragraphs in the passages (e.g. Q.48(v) 'gap').
(ii) Candidates also need to ensure spelling is correct when lifting language from the passages.
(iii) Candidates need to include all the required elements such as when asked to identify a person's attitude / opinion and provide a reason from the text. Candidates should first state positive / negative / neutral in the case of Q.15, yes / no in the case of Q.42, optimistic / pessimistic in the case of Q.62 before then including a reason from the text rather than just presenting a rather general point not explicitly based on ideas from the text.

Candidates also need to recognise when a question calls for a more specific response and avoid copying excessively (e.g. Q.22 and Q.51). Additionally, candidates need to be aware that they may need to manipulate language lifted from the text such as amending pronouns (e.g. Q.33 and Q.45(ii)).

Candidates are also reminded to pay attention to the grammatical features of the sentence stem such as plurality in sentence-completion items and in gap-fill texts.

## Paper 2

Paper 2 tests candidates' writing skills and consists of two parts: Part A and Part B. Candidates have 2 hours to complete both parts of the paper. The total number of candidates attempting Paper 2 was 45,131.

Overall Results

Parts A and B were assessed in three domains: content, language and organisation on a scale between 0 and 7 for each domain. A statistical analysis of Paper 2 was carried out. The overall results are given in Table 2.

Table 2: Paper 2 overall results

| | Full Mark | Mean Score (%) | Standard Deviation (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Part A | 42 | 51.6 | 18.8 |
| Part B | 42 | 51.0 | 19.9 |

Part A

Part A was a short writing task. Candidates assumed the role of a guest who had seen an advertisement for the Seaside Hotel and had booked to stay for one night at the hotel. Upon arrival at the hotel they found that their room was very different from that shown in the advertisement. Their task was to write an email to the manager of the hotel explaining why they were disappointed with the stay and what they wanted the manager to do about it. They were provided with an image from the hotel website showing what a room in the hotel was supposed to look like and what amenities were provided.

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Most candidates were able to draw on the information provided in the website and then describe how the room they had been given was different, i.e. worse. They were able to write about the bed, the view and the decoration (from the picture) as well as the amenities advertised (Wi-Fi, air conditioning, room service and the fact that the room was meant to be non-smoking). Candidates were not required to discuss everything in the advertisement. However, some explanation of how the room failed to meet expectations should have been given. Some complaints included no ocean view, cleanliness problems and faulty amenities. Most candidates asked for a refund or partial refund on the fee they had paid for the room. Good answers also requested that the manager update the information on the website. Content considered not relevant to the required answer was such details as the hotel dining should be improved or staff retrained. Better answers also showed an awareness of audience by making it clear that they were writing from the perspective of a hotel guest to the hotel manager.

Some candidates were able to make use of appropriate language to describe their experience (e.g. contrasting the use of the past simple and past perfect tenses), describing their feelings and the issues (adjectives and adverbs), and use vocabulary appropriate to the context. Top marks were gained by candidates who were able to vary the language they used and who were able to adopt a style and tone appropriate to the context, i.e. an email indicating dissatisfaction while retaining a polite and respectful tone.

The task prompt guided candidates to write the email addressing the two parts of describing their experience and requesting follow-up action and most candidates followed this structure. Stronger candidates were able to use a variety of cohesive devices within and across paragraphs to effectively link ideas. The examiners were looking for clear and concise descriptions that prioritised the problems that the writer felt were most concerning. A lot of information was given in the prompt and some candidates tended to write too much. The examiners were looking for the ability to write concisely, which is both a feature of the genre and a quality more appropriate to the purpose of the email than an overly-long piece.

Part B

Part B comprises four questions (Q.2-Q.5).[1] In this part of the examination, candidates were required to choose one question and write about 400 words.

The mean score achieved for each question is given in Table 3.

Table 3: Summary of Paper 2 Part B statistics

| Question | Text type and Topic | Mean (%) | Popularity (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | Essay: why smaller family size is more desirable now than in the past | 55.8 | 42 |
| 3 | Blogpost: how aspiring musicians can promote their music | 48.8 | 15 |
| 4 | Letter to the Editor: whether to support dog-friendly public spaces | 46.0 | 26 |
| 5 | School magazine article: a video that went viral overnight on social media | 48.4 | 17 |

The most popular question was Question 2, which was attempted by 42% of the candidature (see Table 3).

The following is a summary of candidates' general performance in each question.

[1] After the implementation of the optimising measures of the English Language curriculum and assessment, the number of questions in Paper 2 Part B has been reduced from 8 to 4.



*Question 2: Essay*

Candidates were provided with the information that a hundred years ago families had on average five children while now that number is less than one. They were required to write an essay on why having fewer children is more desirable now than in the past.

Most candidates wrote relatively long answers and described in detail the possible reasons why families choose to have fewer children than in the past. Reasons given were related to economics, cultural norms, the desire to focus more on a career or for more leisure time, while some candidates wrote about changes in society and social norms. The examiners were looking for ideas that were relevant to the topic at hand and well developed with logical reasoning.

Candidates showed an ability to use a range of linguistic forms to discuss the issue and elaborate on their opinions. This included using different sentence structures and appropriate adjectives and adverbs to express their viewpoint. Stronger essays were marked by greater grammatical accuracy, more varied vocabulary and more complex sentence structures. Stronger candidates were able to show a logical development of ideas and to write persuasively. Generally speaking, most candidates were able to produce an essay which followed a logical structure with an introduction, a body which provided their ideas with elaboration and a concluding paragraph.

*Question 3: Blogpost*

Question 3 required candidates to assume that they were a successful musician and writer of a music blog. From this perspective they had to write a blogpost on how musicians can get more people to listen to their music.

Candidates seemingly had few problems understanding the requirements of the task. They were expected to offer advice and suggestions on how musicians can promote their music (e.g. following your dream, being passionate about what you do, not living with regrets) or being active in promotion (e.g. via social media, by busking or playing in local clubs and bars). Candidates also included suggestions about personal approaches like being persistent or creating music they love. There was scope for many different ideas to be included and stronger candidates were able to do this both creatively and with imagination (e.g. competing in a talent show like 'Britain's Got Talent' or organising giveaways at a music event). Weaker candidates tended to write the text as though it were an essay and not a blogpost, thereby not writing in the engaging tone that was required for the task.

Candidates showed an ability to use a range of linguistic forms to provide advice in an upbeat and constructive way. This included using appropriate vocabulary to describe different approaches to promotion such as marketing, social media, streaming and live performance. As candidates were meant to be writing from the position of a successful musician, some candidates wrote in the first person describing their personal experiences and offering advice on this basis thus enlivening their piece beyond the prosaic essay-type pieces of weaker candidates.

*Question 4: Letter to the Editor*

The question required candidates to write a letter to the editor of a local newspaper providing their opinions on whether the current trend of more public areas allowing people to bring their dogs should be encouraged. They had to take a position in support of or against this trend.

Most candidates showed that they understood the purpose of the task and were able to write the letter expressing their views on the issue and elaborating on them using logical reasoning and exemplification. Most of those who supported the dog-friendly trend cited reasons such as people's desire to take their dogs wherever they go, people's need for support dogs to be with them, dogs' needs for exercise and human companionship, and businesses (e.g. restaurants) wanting to increase custom by allowing dog owners to bring their pets. Those who argued against (who were fewer) included points related to hygiene, safety and some people's preference not to be near dogs. There were other innovative ideas and these were rewarded so long as they were relevant and logical.

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Most candidates were able to structure the letter appropriately, with an opening to describe the situation and their motivation for writing, a statement and elaboration of their points and a closing with some kind of call for either more or fewer dog-friendly venues. Most candidates had a good grasp of the tone and style for a letter of this nature, i.e. one which would be published in the public domain. They were able to use language accordingly, making good use of vocabulary specific to the issues. Weaker candidates seemingly regarded the question as simply a discursive essay and included points both in favour and against, often incoherently. In other cases, ideas were not well elaborated or supported.

*Question 5: Magazine Article*

For this question, candidates had to imagine that a video they had posted on social media had gone viral and received 100,000 likes overnight. They were required to write an article for their school magazine describing their experience. The purpose of the article was to share their story and give inspiration to and connect with others.

Most candidates were able to structure their article with an opening describing what happened, a description of what the video was composed of and why the video was posted, why they thought it had become so popular, and what kind of comments had been received (positive or negative). Candidates also wrote about how the experience had affected them (e.g. the challenges or opportunities that might arise from sudden fame). The candidates who best fulfilled the task requirements gave some descriptions of the video's content and how or why it went viral.

In terms of language, examiners were expecting varied sentence structures and the use of suitable vocabulary related to the topic of social media posting, such as *trending, buzzworthy, phenomenon, hype* and *impactful*. Better articles were able to engage the audience, who was expected to be their peers, and provide some kind of evaluation of how and what they might learn from such an experience in terms of their use of social media. While some candidates chose to write in a more formal tone and register, others' approach was more informal tinged with humour so as to connect with readers on a personal level.

Recommendations

When responding to a writing prompt, candidates should choose a topic and text type that they are familiar with. They should take time to brainstorm ideas, think about how to express them through the text type, and who the intended audience is. For instance, the tone of a letter to the editor of a newspaper, where the audience would be adult readers looking for a mature treatment of the topic, may well be different to an opinion piece for a school magazine, where the audience is fellow secondary school students. Both aim to persuade and convince the reader, but the writer may well use different strategies and rhetorical devices to do so.

Weaker candidates are best advised to spend sufficient time on the generation of ideas and of appraising which of these ideas are most relevant to the task requirements. While complexity of syntax and lexis is an important criterion in judging the piece of writing, the fundamental consideration should always be to express the ideas clearly and accurately. Too often, examiners see candidates' scripts which have been over-ambitious in the language used thus making it difficult for the reader to follow. Candidates with stronger writing proficiency should first and foremost focus on achieving the purpose of the task effectively. They should beware of the temptation to write overly-long texts or to decorate their writing with low frequency vocabulary in an attempt to impress the examiner to the detriment of the overall clarity, structure and organisation of the piece.

Finally, good time management is needed to complete one short and one long writing task, with the longer and more complex task requiring more time to articulate, develop and elaborate ideas with detail. One of the positive outcomes of the reduction in the number of questions to choose from in Part B is the decrease in cognitive load on candidates. With more resources dedicated to choosing, planning, writing and proofreading, it is hoped that every candidate can produce their best performance even under strict examination conditions.



## Paper 3

Paper 3 consisted of three parts: Part A, Part B1 and Part B2. All candidates were required to complete Part A and then choose either Part B1 or Part B2. Part B1 was designed to be the easier section, while Part B2 was designed to be the more difficult section. The total number of candidates attempting Paper 3 was 44,777, of whom around 28% chose B1 and around 72% chose B2.

Overall Results

A statistical analysis of Paper 3 was carried out. The overall results are given in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Paper 3 overall results

| | Full Mark | Mean Score (%) | Standard Deviation (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Part A | 53 | 43.4 | 23.8 |
| Part B1 | 53 | 38.0 | 23.2 |
| Part B2 | 53 | 35.8 | 19.6 |

Part A (Compulsory section)

In Part A, candidates had to listen to four recordings related to the theme of human migration. Unless otherwise stated, synonyms or similar wordings were accepted as correct answers to those stated here.

Task 1 (Mean = 58.4%)

Candidates were required to listen to a conversation between two school friends, who were visiting a museum to decide which exhibitions to recommend for a school field trip.

Items 1-4 asked candidates to write short phrases regarding details of a museum exhibition called *The Great Human Migration*. These items proved to be straightforward for most candidates (67%, 67%, 93% and 64% correct respectively).

Item 5 was a multiple choice item, in which candidates had to choose the location of the exhibition on a map, which proved to be relatively easy (74% correct).

Items 6-12 were related to the content of the exhibition. For Item 12, candidates were required to tick three options from a list of things that ancient humans learnt to do as they reached new environments. To do so, candidates had to listen to the recording for synonyms and paraphrases of the phrases that appeared in the list. This proved to be moderately challenging for candidates (50% correct).

Task 2 (Mean = 56.7%)

For Task 2, candidates were required to listen to a lecture on a famous expedition.

For Items 13-15, candidates were required to write short phrases related to the topic of the traits shared by Polynesian people. For Item 13, candidates were required to listen to the spelling of the name of the expedition. This proved to be challenging (37% correct). Many candidates wrote the name as one word despite the fact that the speaker explicitly stated on the recording that the name consisted of two separate words. Item 15 (27% correct) proved to be significantly more challenging for candidates than Item 14 (71% correct). For Item 15, some candidates incorrectly wrote 'cultures' (not the same meaning as 'customs') or the singular form 'custom', the correct answer being the plural form 'customs'.

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For Item 16, candidates had to complete a multiple-choice question, selecting the route of the expedition. A map of the locations was provided to give context for candidates. Most candidates found this item straightforward (74% correct).

For Items 19-20, candidates were required to write figures for the dimensions of the boat. Item 19 (82% correct) proved to be more straightforward for candidates than Item 20 (44% correct). For Item 20, some candidates incorrectly wrote 'forty', the correct answer being 'fourteen'.

For Items 21-24, candidates were required to write a short phrase relating to information about the expedition. For Item 24 (28% correct), many candidates did not write an answer or incorrectly wrote the singular form 'container' instead of the plural form 'containers'. The use of the singular noun here rendered the answer factually incorrect.

Task 3 (Mean = 32.6%)

For Task 3, candidates were required to listen to a podcast interview with three people (Charles, Anna and Philip) about their experiences as language learners.

For Item 27, candidates were required to write a short phrase regarding a definition of heritage language learning. As expected, this proved to be challenging for most candidates (23% correct), as, by its nature, a definition often contains abstract ideas and complex phrasing.

For Items 29-31, candidates were required to write the reasons why Charles, Anna and Philip were learning a foreign language. Items 29 and 30 were challenging for some candidates (34% and 49% correct respectively). For Item 29, some candidates incorrectly wrote 'explore my identity' rather than 'explore his identity', referring, as it does, to Charles. For Item 30, candidates needed to provide the plural form 'grandparents' in their answer. Many incorrectly wrote the singular form 'grandparent'. Item 31 proved to be extremely challenging for most candidates (8% correct). Some candidates incorrectly wrote 'speech on cousin's wedding' (meaning a speech on the topic of the cousin's wedding) rather than 'speech at his cousin's wedding'.

For Items 32-33, candidates were required to write the methods which Charles, Anna and Philip used to learn a foreign language. Both items were challenging for candidates (18% and 36% correct respectively). For Item 32, many candidates omitted the frequency of the private lessons ('every week') and in Item 33, many candidates omitted the fact that the language exchange was with a partner or another person.

For Items 34-37, candidates were required to complete a table with short phrases regarding a difficulty Charles, Anna and Philip encountered when learning a foreign language and the solution they found. Items 34 and 35 were challenging for many candidates (33% and 30% correct respectively). For Item 34, some candidates omitted some of the key information, writing 'app' rather than 'language learning app' or wrote 'language learning apps' (i.e. multiple apps), which was factually incorrect. Items 36 and 37 proved to be extremely challenging for candidates (17% and 9% correct respectively). For Item 36, some candidates simply wrote 'a daily diary' thus omitting the critical piece of information that it was in Chinese. Similarly, in Item 37, many candidates omitted that the YouTube series was in French.

Task 4 (Mean = 26.7%)

For Task 4, candidates were required to listen to a radio programme about *Chunyun*, the period when millions of people travel during the Chinese Spring Festival. Item 41 was an extremely challenging item for candidates (8% correct). Candidates had to include three main elements for the migration which were (i) largest, (ii) annual, and (iii) human. Many candidates did not include 'annual' or 'human', meaning the answer was incomplete.

For Items 43-44, candidates were required to write short phrases regarding two reasons why many more people travel during the Spring Festival now, when compared to the past. These were very challenging for most candidates (24% and 13% correct respectively).



For Item 43, candidates needed to include three elements which were (i) people, (ii) the idea of leaving their hometown (or travelling to the city), and (iii) a purpose (i.e. to work). Candidates tended to omit one of the three elements. For Item 44, candidates needed to include three elements: (i) the number of university students, (ii) studying outside their hometown, and (iii) has increased. Many candidates omitted one of these three elements or did not include that the students were university students.

For Items 45-46, candidates were required to write short phrases regarding the two main issues that people face when travelling by train during *Chunyun*. For each item, candidates had to write the issue and the reason for the issue. Candidates found Item 45 to be more straightforward than Item 46 (46% and 29% correct respectively).

For Item 45, candidates needed to include the idea of (i) buying a ticket and (ii) the tickets selling out quickly or being scarce. Most candidates managed to correctly include the first idea but often wrote ungrammatical answers such as 'sale out', which rendered the answer unclear. Other candidates wrote 'sold', omitting the adverb 'out' and hence did not convey the idea that all the tickets were sold. For Item 46, candidates needed to include the idea of (i) there being a risk of accidents and (ii) trains being overcrowded or a lot of people having to stand. Some candidates just wrote 'accidents' for the first part rather than 'risk of accidents', thus failing to include the idea of the accidents being potential.

For Items 47-49, candidates were required to summarise the outcome for three stories. In order to do so, candidates were required to follow the narrative, distinguish between the main points and minor details and summarise the outcome of the story in one short sentence or phrase. Item 47 (21% correct) was more challenging for candidates than items 48-49 (48% and 37% correct respectively).

For Item 47, candidates needed to include the following elements: (i) passengers, (ii) called the man's family, and (iii) to meet him at the next station. Many candidates omitted some of the above elements.

For Item 49, candidates needed to capture the idea of getting married. Some candidates included other elements from the story such as chatting about their love of reading but did not include the central idea of the story (i.e. that they got married).

For Items 50-52, candidates were required to write short phrases regarding three suggested ways for how to cope with the problems of *Chunyun*. These items proved to be very challenging for most candidates (24%, 10%, and 11% correct respectively).

For Item 51, candidates needed to include two elements: (i) reduce costs and (ii) by sharing cars. Many candidates included the optional information 'with friends and strangers' writing answers such as 'reduce costs by travelling with friends and strangers' or 'sharing cars with friends and strangers', thus failing to include both elements of the necessary information.

For Item 53 candidates were required to write a short phrase regarding how most Chinese feel about *Chunyun*, according to the presenter of the radio programme. This was very challenging for most candidates (9% correct). Candidates tended to omit the idea of spending time with loved ones being worth it, writing incorrect answers such as 'spending time with family', 'people don't like travelling', or 'travelling is stressful'.

Recommendations for Part A

Candidates should always be aware that they are communicating with the examiner and that they have to demonstrate clearly that they have understood the relevant part of the recording both fully and precisely. In order to do this, candidates need to pay attention to the 'basics' of language in order to effectively communicate their answers. Firstly, attention should be paid to spelling in their answers. In this connection, in this year's paper, there was an item specifically testing candidates' ability to write down an unusual proper noun spelled out on the recording. This basic listening-to-writing skill has been tested frequently in the past and will likely be tested again in the future. Similarly, the understanding of numbers, whether simple numbers like fourteen and forty or numbers in the tens of thousands continue to be a challenge for some candidates. As stated in past reports, candidates should also pay careful attention to the grammatical accuracy of their answers both in terms of being precise and in being clear.

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One relevant example this year was the difference between singular and plural in countable nouns. In certain items, if a candidate writes a singular noun (e.g. 'container' for Item 24 or 'grandparent' for Item 30) when the recording states the plural, the answer will be deemed to be factually incorrect. In other items, a plural countable noun with generic reference is required in the answer (e.g. 'humans' in Item 11 or 'stars' in Item 22) in order to make a general statement. If candidates write the singular noun in such items, the answer will be marked incorrect as the answer incorrectly expresses the noun with specific reference.

Candidates should also expect to be tested on their listening skills beyond re-stating specific phrases heard on the recording. Rather, they can expect to be tested on their global understanding of phases of the recording and on their ability to interpret what they have heard. For instance, in Items 47-49, candidates not only had to decipher main and supporting detail but also had to analyse all of the details of the story to consider what the point of the story was.

Part B

In both Parts B1 and B2, candidates took the role of Nico Lin, who works for World City Travel, a company which organises wildlife tours in Hong Kong and around the world. As a secretary to the manager at World City Travel, Nico is asked to complete three tasks related to the travel products of the company.

A recording of a World City Travel Zoom meeting was common to both parts. An identical note-taking sheet with headings was also provided to both sets of candidates. A separate Data File was provided for the two parts, containing texts in a variety of genres that held the instructions and information necessary – in combination with the recording – to complete the assigned tasks. Candidates were judged on their ability to complete the tasks by identifying and extracting key information from the texts and the recording and then integrating that into the texts they wrote, as well as their attention to the requirements of the tasks, plus the genre features, organisation and suitability for the intended audience of their written texts.

Candidates were expected to produce organised, coherent texts that were appropriate to the specified genre and audience. The use of concise, precise English was essential. This challenged candidates to demonstrate their ability to organise and synthesise information, write appropriate texts, and communicate effectively in a given context.

The performance of the candidates in each Part and Task will be discussed below.

Part B1 (Easier section)

In Part B1, candidates were required to write three texts for the company. Candidates were asked to complete an email to provide the participants of a Guided Nature Walk with the information necessary to prepare for the walk. Candidates were also asked to write an email to the manager of the Hong Kong Botanical Gardens to ask him some questions related to a Bird Watching Tour and notify him of a change to the starting time. Finally, candidates had to write a blog post to promote a new Insects and Reptiles Exhibition.

To complete these tasks, candidates were required to extract relevant information from the recording and the Data File. The written texts in the Data File included emails, a visitor guide, a webpage, a social media advertisement, SMS and WhatsApp messages and an exchange of messages on Skype.



The candidates' performance is summarised in Table 5:

Table 5: Paper 3 Part B1 results

| Task | Full Mark | Mean Score (%) | Standard Deviation (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 17 | 62.1 | 31.5 |
| 6 | 18 | 25.8 | 23.5 |
| 7 | 18 | 27.5 | 23.0 |

From Table 5, it can be seen that candidates' strongest performance was on Task 5, whereas Task 6 proved to be the most challenging for this year's B1 candidates. The overall mean was 38.0% for all of Part B1. The paper proved to be successful in discriminating weaker from stronger candidates and in terms of its own internal reliability.

Task 5

In Task 5, candidates had to use the listening notes from the Zoom meeting as well as three written texts – the Hong Kong Wetland Park visitor guide, the WhatsApp chat and the screenshot of the Skype chat in the Data File – to complete an email template.

With a mean of 62.1%, this task was the best performed in Part B1. Many candidates demonstrated that they could effectively manipulate content from the Data File and use the notes from the recording of the Zoom meeting to complete the email. The most challenging item for this task was Item 5.3, requiring candidates to note down the meeting venue of the walk. Weaker candidates missed the comment on the recording that the company had changed the meeting venue from the main entrance of the park to the visitor centre.

Items 5.11 and 5.12 were also demanding for candidates. For item 5.11, many were unable to infer that mosquito repellent was one of the items to bring along to the walk: in the chat message, Ms Goh pointed out that there would be a lot of mosquitoes around the month of June, but participants tended to forget mosquito repellent, so the company should 'remind them about that'.

Similarly, stronger candidates had no problem in locating the answer of Item 5.12, whereas less able candidates seemed to overlook this piece information among the Skype messages. Here, David Atkinson, an employee of the company, stated that it could be very hot on the day of the walk, so 'remind everyone to bring a hat!'

World City Travel were advised to end the email with a warning: to recommend that pregnant women and people with serious health issues consult a doctor before joining the walk (Items 5.13-5.15). Most candidates understood who to address in the warning, but many were unable to rephrase the information to suit the prompts given. Weaker candidates tended to struggle with word order and grammatical accuracy for these items.

Task 6

In Task 6, candidates were asked to write to Peter Chan, the manager of the Hong Kong Botanical Gardens. Candidates had to notify him that World City Travel had changed the starting time of the Bird Watching Tour and inform him of two requests regarding the tour.

The mean for this task was low (25.8%), although most candidates did demonstrate a good understanding of the genre. They started the email with a clear statement of the purpose of writing and ended it politely by asking for a reply from Mr Chan. However, many candidates focused on making the two requests without mentioning the change of time. Only a minority of candidates expressed the necessary information and explained clearly as to why they would like to start the tour later. Stronger candidates did well in clarifying why the company had to make the change whereas weaker candidates were mostly

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only able to apologise that the tour had to be postponed. Many candidates had difficulty in expressing the time change: some stated, for example, that the tour would last for two hours, from 7:30am to 9:30am.

As for the requests that candidates were asked to make, they were required to understand and interpret the tour participant's email, including the participant's purpose in recounting her experience in Singapore to suggest that the Hong Kong Botanical Gardens should also offer refreshments during the tour. This proved challenging for the candidates. Many were misled by the statement: 'I know that some gardens don't allow food' in the email. They instead asked the manager to let participants eat food during the tour. Candidates struggled to identify and relay the two reasons given for the request: that the weather in Hong Kong would be just as hot as in Singapore and that there would be a lot of walking on that day.

The second request was about the possibility of receiving a refund when there were not sufficient bird sightings or if the weather was poor (Item 6.7). Just over half of the candidates located the relevant information from the emails to make the request. Many candidates had difficulty in describing why they were enquiring about the possibility of a refund: that participants of previous tours had complained about not seeing many birds (Item 6.8), and that the coupons and discounts offered in compensation did not make up for their lost time (Item 6.9). Again, these were challenging items for the candidates.

Some candidates this year were unable to present their ideas in a coherent way. Many used 'they' in their email without clarifying who 'they' referred to. A number of candidates copied directly from the emails and were unable to manipulate the language enough to produce a coherent piece of text.

Task 7

In this task, candidates had to write a blog post to promote the new Insects and Reptiles Exhibition at Kowloon Park. They were given texts in a variety of genres that held the information necessary for completing the task, including a copy of the social media advertisement, the exhibition page on the Kowloon Park website, a screenshot of SMS messages and notes from a Zoom meeting. Candidates needed to synthesise information from the range of sources and reformulate the extracted points from the texts.

Most candidates were able to produce a concise post to promote the exhibition. They were able to write an opening paragraph to encourage readers to go to the exhibition. They told readers that they would be able to learn about different insects and reptiles (Item 7.1) and meet Oggie, the salt water crocodile (Item 7.3). Few candidates were able to follow the comment that they should 'experience a different side of Hong Kong' (Item 7.2) as a reason for going.

Candidates performed less well on items from the listening input. The recording mentioned that visitors would see a lot of dragonflies in the exhibition, with two rare species they should look out especially for (Item 7.4). A minority of candidates managed to state the two species. Most simply copied the names of all four different species listed on the Kowloon Park website.

Other challenging items from the recording were items 7.6 and 7.7. Many candidates were aware that there would be a photo-taking competition and urged visitors to join it to win $500. However, they did not specify that the photos had to be of dragonflies. The recording repeated that the winner would go to the participant with the best dragonfly photo but the majority of candidates thought the participants only had to submit photos taken in the exhibition. Many candidates were able to write about the special discount for visitors, but failed to include the conditions for getting the discounts.

Part B2 (More difficult section)

Candidates were tasked with writing an incident report for a catamaran accident, a follow-up email to the participants of a cancelled Sydney Whale Watching Cruise and a script for a YouTube advertisement promoting an Adventure Fishing Tour.

To complete these tasks, candidates were required to extract relevant information from the recording and the Data File. The Data File contained a variety of written source materials, including emails, a radio



communication transcript, a news article, SMS messages, a booking calendar, a sales brochure extract, meeting minutes, an extract from the company handbook and a biography.

The candidates' performance is summarised in Table 6:

Table 6: Paper 3 Part B2 results

| Task | Full Mark | Mean Score (%) | Standard Deviation (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 17 | 38.7 | 20.8 |
| 9 | 18 | 37.5 | 23.0 |
| 10 | 18 | 31.5 | 21.6 |

From Table 6 above, with an overall mean of 35.8%, Part B2 proved to be difficult for this year's candidates. Tasks 8 and 9 were more successfully attempted by candidates, whereas Task 10 emerged as the most challenging. The paper proved to be successful in discriminating weaker from stronger candidates and in terms of its own internal reliability.

Task 8

Candidates' performance on Task 8 was statistically the best among the three tasks, with a mean of 38.7%. In the task, candidates were required to write an internal report discussing the catamaran incident. Candidates needed to include the background information, causes, and results of the Review Board investigation. Based on the extract from the company handbook, candidates needed to synthesise information from a range of sources, including information from the listening input, the transcript of the radio communication between Captain Moby and the control centre, a news article from the Sydney Times, SMS messages between David Atkinson and Captain Moby, and minutes of a World City Travel Staff Meeting.

Overall, many candidates struggled to identify relevant content points from the source materials to include in the report. Furthermore, some candidates were unable to synthesise the relevant information in their own words.

Stronger candidates were able to use the correct format, including a clear title, formal register, appropriate language tone and style, and organise their ideas under relevant headings. They demonstrated a strong command of the language and an ability to effectively communicate the required information, successfully synthesising information from the Data File and expressing it in their own words.

Weaker candidates struggled to maintain a formal register and appropriate language style and failed to organise their ideas in a coherent manner. They also exhibited an over-reliance on direct copying from the Data File. For example, they lifted a lot of details verbatim from the radio communication transcript and the meeting minutes without demonstrating their own understanding and analysis of the information. In addition, some candidates wrongly concluded that Captain Moby was responsible for the incident, and thus they included 'human error' as one of the causes of the incident.

Item 8.5, which was one of the reasons why the crew members involved were present at the location, proved to be the most difficult: many candidates only included the other reason (Item 8.4) '*the catamaran was training new crew members.*' In addition, the two items from the recording (Items 8.6 and 8.8), which were about the Review Board's conclusions, were also found to be difficult for many candidates as it seemed they were unable to jot down and understand the exact meaning while listening to the recording.

Task 9

In Task 9, candidates were asked to write an email to the participants of the cancelled Sydney Whale Watching Cruise to inform them about the compensation offered by the company. The mean score for

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this task was 37.5%, indicating it was slightly more challenging than Task 8. Alongside the candidate's notes from the recording, the Data File provided a variety of texts for this task, including a news article, SMS messages, emails, a booking calendar, meeting minutes and a biography.

Candidates who performed well on this task were able to employ a user-friendly subject line that demonstrated their understanding of the purpose of the task and target audience. In contrast, weaker candidates included an inappropriate subject line that only covered part of the email's content, or they failed to include a subject line altogether.

Stronger candidates began their email with a clear opening paragraph with an appropriate tone stating the purpose of the email: to provide details about the compensation package provided due to the cruise cancellation. For example:

*'Thank you for choosing World City Travel and signing up for our upcoming Sydney Whale Watching Cruise. Unfortunately, we regret to inform you that because of our recent catamaran accident, the Cruise has been cancelled. As we highly value our customers, we are offering you the following compensation package in addition to a full refund.'*

However, weaker candidates simply started with a formulaic statement without clearly mentioning the purpose of the email. For instance:

*'I am writing to inform you the follow-up procedures for the cancelled Sydney Whale Watching Cruise.'*

Item 9.5 proved to be the most difficult item. Candidates were required to combine information from different lines of the biography to formulate the idea that *'the participants will be given an "Aqua Vita" photo print.'* However, as many candidates simply copied phrases from the text apparently without fully comprehending their meaning, they gave incomplete answers such as:

*'Members will be given a print.'*

*'The compensation package includes a photo print by David.'*

Copying chunks of information from the Data File also affected the tone of the text. For example, some candidates copied *'the company is providing a killer compensation package'* and *'you won't even dream of choosing another cruise provider'*, which suggests they did not fully comprehend these phrases. This made the email inappropriate in terms of tone and style.

Some candidates mistakenly mentioned the *'Adventure Fishing Tour'* as one of the possible complimentary cruises that the participants could choose, failing to realise that the *'Fishing Tour runs from December to January'* instead of from April to July, the period in which they could choose a tour.

Items 9.7 and 9.8 required candidates to synthesise the information from the booking calendar in their own words. Stronger candidates were able to phrase the ideas in grammatically correct sentences, while weaker candidates tended to use clumsy, incorrect and even incomplete sentences.

Task 10

Task 10 posed the biggest challenge of the three tasks in Part B2, with a mean score of 31.5%. Candidates were instructed to write a script for a YouTube advertisement promoting the Adventure Fishing Tour, based on a news article, SMS messages, emails, an extract from a sales brochure, meeting minutes, a biography and the listening input.

Stronger candidates were able to start the script with a promotional, attractive tone. For example:

*'Attention all adventure-seekers! Are you looking for an exhilarating fishing experience like no other? Look no further than the Adventure Fishing Tour offered by World City Travel, running from 6th December to 27th January. This unique tour offers something for everyone – from deep sea fishing to catching shellfish, all set on the new D79X luxury yacht...'*



Weaker candidates appeared to misinterpret the task instructions and wrote a general informative piece about the Adventure Fishing Tour rather than a promotional script. This resulted in a descriptive, factual text rather than a compelling advertisement.

Items 10.2, 10.3 and 10.4, in which candidates were required to identify the yacht used for the tour and how the yacht's facilities would enhance the customer experience, were found to be particularly challenging. Many candidates tended to include all the yachts from the sales brochure without realising that the *'supercar of the sea'* mentioned in David Atkinson's biography, i.e. the D79X, would be used. Even though some candidates correctly identified the yacht, they simply copied the description of the D79X, such as *'a whole 10 knots faster than its sister ship'*. However, as the audience of the text would not have access to the brochure, they would not know how fast the 'sister ship' was, making the idea unintelligible.

Another difficulty of the task concerned the use of information from different sources. For instance, some candidates only mentioned the dates of the tour but not the contractual break for Item 10.1, while some did not realise that the caterer had been changed to *'iSea Caterer'*, as mentioned in the meeting minutes, for Item 10.9.

Overall, the challenges in Task 10 seemed to stem from candidates' difficulties in synthesising information from multiple sources, identifying the key points relevant to the specified task, and then conveying these in a creative, convincing manner appropriate for the YouTube format.

Recommendations for Part B

To successfully navigate the tasks, candidates should first understand the situation and instructions given to identify the text type, purpose of writing, target audience, and task requirements, and then draft an outline to guide the flow and structure of their texts.

It is critical that candidates remember the information extracted from the Data File sources may have been written for a variety of different purposes, and therefore should not be simply copied verbatim when they complete tasks which serve another purpose. Rather, they must discerningly identify the relevant ideas and manipulate the language of the Data File source into a format and tone appropriate to the task they are writing.

Before the recording is played, candidates should orient themselves with the tasks and review the note-taking headings provided. This will help them better anticipate what information they will need to take down while listening to the recording. Immediately after the recording, candidates should also dedicate time to tidying up their notes while their memory is still fresh, ensuring their notes are correct.

Ultimately, the most successful candidates demonstrated an ability to understand the instructions, analyse and select relevant information, and synthesise that content into a text tailored to the specified purpose and audience. Attentive preparation and careful, thoughtful execution are key to achieving a strong performance on such tasks.

## Paper 4

The number of candidates who attended this paper was 45,514. The examination period lasted eight days and a total of 24 versions of the question papers were used.

The examination was divided into Part A Group Interaction and Part B Individual Response. Candidates were given ten minutes for preparation, eight minutes for a four-candidate group interaction (six minutes for a three-candidate group) and each candidate was given one minute for the individual response. In Part A, the discussion tasks for the group interaction were based on short texts on a variety of themes. Candidates were required to discuss their given topic by, for example, sharing their opinions, giving

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suggestions, solving problems, offering advice and providing reasons and examples for their ideas. In Part B, each candidate was given one minute to respond to a question asked by the examiner.

Candidates were assessed in four domains: Pronunciation & delivery; Communications strategies; Vocabulary & language usage; and Ideas & organisation. This year, the mean scores for each domain (out of a total of 14) were 7.8, 7.7, 7.4 and 8.0 respectively. The percentage mean score was 59.6% and the standard deviation was 17.5%.

Part A Group Interaction

Candidates' performance in terms of the four domains of assessment is discussed as follows:

Pronunciation & delivery

Stronger candidates demonstrated an ability to speak in a fluent manner and were skilled at using intonation to enhance communication, for example: when inviting another candidate to speak, seeking to move on to the next topic, expressing agreement with or contradicting the previous speaker, and expressing surprise and enthusiasm.

Weaker candidates sometimes spoke inaudibly with prolonged hesitation and had difficulty maintaining meaningful utterances. This was compounded by the fact that they often did not follow the flow of the conversation.

Some common pronunciation errors observed include missing /s/ (e.g. *'nowaday'*); missing /ɪd/ (e.g. *'not interest in'*); inability to articulate the initial /ɵ/ (e.g. *'think'*); confusing /l/ and /n/ (e.g. *'the light market' instead of 'the night market'*).

Communication strategies

Some nonverbal communication strategies that were commonly displayed by stronger candidates included acknowledging other speakers, maintaining eye contact both while speaking and as a means of gaining the floor, nodding in agreement and using appropriate hand gestures. These nonverbal features helped demonstrate an interest in what others were saying as well as a desire to take the floor, to respond to others, and to build on what others have said.

Weaker candidates tended to read from their notecards or interact with the examiners rather than their peers. When invited by others to speak, their responses were often limited to simple phrases (e.g. *'yes', 'no', 'I don't know', 'I agree with you'*) with occasional nods, making few if any attempts to initiate conversational exchanges. The lack of eye contact, often a product of being over-reliant on the notecard, gave an impression that such candidates were lacking in confidence to take a turn. Indeed, the lack of eye contact often meant that such candidates were passed over at critical moments in the discussion and therefore contributed less than they could have.

Stronger candidates were able to summarise or make reference to a previous point before supplementing with their own response. Such candidates also tended to be more observant and proactive in responding to the current state of play in the discussion, whether by inviting a quiet groupmate to speak, asking for clarification or paraphrasing someone else's point.

Vocabulary & language patterns

Stronger candidates were able to deliver a good command of English with an impressive range of vocabulary (e.g. *'play an indispensable role', 'in the age of unprecedented growth', 'a legitimate concern', 'a sense of tranquility'*).

Although grammatical mistakes were often present in the candidates' spontaneous spoken discourse, errors generally did not impede communication and groupmates were often able to guess the meaning of unclear utterances from the context. The most common grammatical errors included: countable / uncountable nouns (e.g. *'homeworks', 'wash a hair'*); subject-verb agreement (e.g. *'you has'*); using noun forms as verbs (*e.g. 'young people can choice'*), construction of verb phrases which contain modal verbs (e.g. *'can gave', 'can improving'*); use of to-infinitives (e.g. *'to took a photo', 'like to enjoying'*). Weaker candidates often used Chinese sentence patterns translated to English (e.g. *'I with you the same page', 'different country people', 'I very agree with you'*).

Ideas & organisation

Most candidates were able to give relevant ideas and express agreement or disagreement with the previous speaker. Weaker candidates had difficulty expressing their ideas clearly or only spoke briefly when they were prompted by groupmates.

Stronger candidates were able to expand their responses by using their personal experiences (e.g. getting car sick if the location is far away (QP 7.1); enjoying the 'ding ding' sound of the tram as a selling point for driverless trams (QP 2.2); and having cosplay as a reading club activity (QP 4.2)). Some candidates also showed an ability to elaborate on their ideas quite creatively with details (e.g. schools should install a sleeping corner in the staffroom for teachers to experience the benefits of using sleeping pods (QP 7.2); one benefit of urban farming in school is that students can cherish the food they grow and this also increases the reputation of the school as being eco-friendly (QP 6.2)).

Part B Individual Response

The one-minute individual response gives candidates an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to speak English for an extended period of time without interruption or the support of other candidates.

Most candidates were able to respond well within the allotted time often in a structured manner. Stronger candidates were able to respond by justifying their answers and sharing their personal experiences. At times, they impressed the examiners with their knowledge of a wide repertoire of reading and viewing materials (e.g. up-to-date local and international news), especially when citing examples to support their ideas.

Recommendations

Candidates are encouraged to use and practise their English Language skills in different low-stakes environments (e.g. by volunteering to present at school assemblies in English; organising and taking part in English talent shows; and conducting news broadcasts in English during recess). Candidates should also regularly read, listen and view authentic English language materials through a variety of channels including popular internet websites, social media and podcasts in order to contextualise the learning of English within their everyday lives and personal interests.

**School-based Assessment Report (SBA)**

The 2024 examination marks the full implementation of the Speaking and SBA components of the English Language Paper after the three years in which different modifications had to be implemented to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic. This year, students were required to complete two assessment tasks, one in the second term of S5 and one in S6. One of the assessment tasks had to be based on at least one print text and the other on at least one non-print text. In addition, one of the assessment tasks had to be an individual presentation and the other one a group interaction.

This year, a total of 42,628 students took part in the SBA. There were 469 moderation groups and the mean of the moderated SBA marks was 64.2%. The standard deviation was 17.2%. According to the statistical moderation reports and the district coordinators' reports, the marks submitted by the participating schools were on the whole accurate and reliable. 82.9% of the schools were 'within the expected' range and 9% were in the 'slightly lower than expected' range. At the higher end, 7.5% of the schools were in the 'slightly higher than expected' range with only 0.6% in the 'higher than expected' range. Regarding the spread of marks, 96.8% were in the 'expected' range with only 1.5% in the 'slightly narrower than expected' category and 1.1% in the 'narrower than expected' category.

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General Comments

The overall performance in the individual presentations was satisfactory. It is encouraging to note that with the exception of a very few students, the majority were able to complete the required tasks within the specified time limit. The large majority were able to give a presentation of at least 3 minutes, while some of the more capable students even gave presentations of around 7 to 9 minutes. There were still cases in which students simply read aloud everything on their note cards without any or very little audience awareness. Some students even memorised their presentations and as a result their presentations were stilted and unnatural.

High-achieving students delivered clear, well-organised presentations with relevant, logical ideas and strong language command. Such candidates used accurate pronunciation, appropriate intonation, and their appropriate use of eye contact and body language helped maintain the interest of the audience.

Mid-range students produced generally comprehensible presentations with a basic structure, relevant information, and mostly clear pronunciation of high-frequency words. However, their vocabulary and language patterns were relatively limited, with some grammatical errors. They struggled with less common words and maintained less eye contact due to reliance on notes.

Students at the other end of the spectrum struggled with pronunciation, vocabulary and language patterns. These students often mispronounced sound clusters and word endings, even with common words. Their phrasing and intonation hindered audience understanding. Limited vocabulary and frequent grammatical errors further impeded clear expression of ideas. Most candidates were overly reliant on note cards, simply reading their written text without audience awareness.

As for group interactions, some students were not truly collaborating. They simply delivered mini-presentations of their own ideas without building on those presented by previous speakers. Using generic phrases like 'I agree' without thoughtful response did not earn them high marks. Turn-taking was mechanical, and students were too reliant on notes, failing to actively listen or interact. Effective group interaction requires students to use various communication strategies to engage with each other and complete the given task, rather than treating it as a series of individual presentations. Active listening and responsive interaction are key to successful group discussions.

Students at the top end were able to express a wide range of relevant and interesting information, ideas and arguments clearly and fluently. Their pronunciation was accurate and they spoke fluently and naturally with appropriate use of intonation. They listened carefully when other members were speaking and were able to respond and elaborate on what had been said. Some tried to help the quieter members by asking for their opinions. As they had a wide range of vocabulary and could use different language patterns, they had no difficulty in taking an active part in the discussion. A few, however, took rather long turns.

Most students in the mid-range took turns to present their ideas, sometimes with some elaboration. Although the majority of them had some problems with pronunciation and the use of language patterns, these generally did not affect understanding. A few of the students were rather passive but they were still able to reply to direct questions and occasionally used some simple turn-taking strategies to take part in the discussion.

Students at the lower end of the scale were quiet and did not participate much in the group interactions. The majority had difficulty understanding what was being said and could not formulate their ideas into coherent utterances due to their low level of English. Very often when they got a turn to speak, they took such a long time to say something that another member would start talking instead. Many of them simply resorted to the use of a narrow range of formulaic expressions like 'I agree' or 'I don't know', or just shaking their heads when they were asked a direct question or when they were given a turn to speak.

Recommendations

To determine the areas for improvement, students first need to know their own strengths and weaknesses. To achieve this, students could do a three to five-minute individual presentation on any topic that they are interested in and video record themselves. They could then watch the recording and evaluate their performance according to the four domains used for the SBA: Pronunciation and Delivery, Communication Strategies, Vocabulary and Language Patterns, and Ideas and Organisation. They could also ask a friend to evaluate their performance and give them some comments. Once they have a rough idea of their ability in each domain, they can then decide which domain they want to work on most and make a plan as to what they need to do to improve.

For more capable students with high English proficiency, the focus should be on enhancing the quality and effectiveness of their individual presentations. This can be achieved by incorporating more expressive elements like intonation, vocal variety, pacing and pauses. They could also experiment with more creative ways to capture the audience's attention at the start. It is also important to ensure their presentations are well-timed and not overly rehearsed, allowing for more natural and spontaneous delivery. For group interactions, capable students should avoid dominating the discussion but instead employ strategies to encourage participation from all members, such as using simpler language and providing assistance when needed. This can help the entire group complete the task successfully. Overall, capable students should aim to push themselves to perform better while also supporting the participation of their less proficient peers.

Mid-range students are already aware of the basic skills that they need to do individual presentations, so the areas that they need to work on include their vocabulary, language patterns and the elaboration of ideas. They need to stop depending on their note cards and they should only write down a few key words to remind themselves of what they want to say. As for group interactions, students need to pay more attention when other members are speaking so that they can respond to them and continue on from what they are saying. They need to be more active and confident and take more turns to speak. They could also try to include other members in the discussion by asking them questions. With more practice, they can move up to the next level.

For weaker students, speaking sufficiently loudly so that everyone can hear their contributions and making an effort to acquire basic skills are key. Improving pronunciation by practising reading aloud, listening to recordings / e-books, and gradually increasing fluency can be effective. Learning simple sentence structures, practising individual presentations, and learning to engage in group discussions by listening, agreeing / disagreeing, asking questions, and expressing ideas can also help build confidence and make steady improvements. With consistent practice in these areas, weaker students can work towards achieving a better result in the assessment.