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**HKDSE 2014**

**Paper 3 observations**

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**Part A**

- 4 tasks, 60 marks (total)
- This year's Part A carries the most marks of any Paper 3 Part A that have been seen (2013: 58; 2012: 53). The overall format and structure are very similar to that of the 2012 and 2013 exams.

**General observations**

- The Part A Situation does not assign a specific role to students (like 2012's Part A; unlike 2013's Part A).
- There has been an attempt to incorporate a progression of difficulty through the four tasks.
- Task formats include the now-familiar meeting/interview note sheet, a flow chart and various tables.
- As in 2012 and, to a lesser extent, 2013, Part A is dominated by gap-filling/sentence completion question formats. The only other formats are Yes/No/Maybe (✓/X/? ) boxes in Task 2 (as seen in 2013 Task 3), and a *Listening for attitudes and opinions* tick-box question in Task 4.
- As last year, there are no open-ended questions (these last featured in the 2012 exam).
- Only Task 1 has an example answer for students this year (2013: Tasks 1, 3 and 4).
- Tasks 3 and 4 are two-page tasks.
- The recording speed seems a little faster overall than last year's exam (although the speed of the recording varies from task to task—and sometimes within the task).
- Voices on the recording are mostly familiar from last year's exam. Accents include Hong Kong, British (Southern and Northern England) and North American.
- The quality of the scripts and the acting/reading of the voice actors on the recording is rather poor; there are some instances in this year's recording where students may miss out on marks as a result of misunderstanding/mishearing something that has been said on the recording, due to no real fault of their own.

## Part B

- Part B is also very similar to the 2012 and 2013 exams. As in 2013, each task in Parts B1 and B2 carries 18 marks.
- The most notable change from last year's exam is that Part B2 has 13 Data File items. This alone means that B2 in this year's exam is likely to have proven more challenging to students.

### Part B recording

- Length of recording: a little under 8 minutes (shorter than last year).
- Speed: a little faster than last year, closer to speed of 2012 Part B—resulting in increased difficulty for students, as there is a lot of information to take down.
- Not as much repetition/rephrasing as in 2013.

## Part B1

- 3 tasks
- Total marks for Part B1 = 54 marks
- Similar approach to task formats as in 2012 and 2013 exams: Task 5 has a lot of prompts for students; Tasks 6 and 7 involve free writing.

### B1 Data File

There are 9 items in this year's B1 DF, the same number as in 2013. With the exception of a foreword from a book, the DF item text types are all very familiar, having appeared before in either HKDSE or HKCEE exams. DF items do not appear in the order students will use them, as in 2012 and 2013.

## Part B2

- 3 tasks
- Total marks for Part B2 = 54 marks
- Similar approach to task formats as in 2012 and 2013 exams: all tasks in Part B2 involve free writing

### B2 Data File

There is a notable increase in the number of DF items in this year's B2 DF; up to 13 from last year's 10, although the overall word count has only increased slightly. The text types in the B2 DF are also mostly very familiar, having appeared before in either HKDSE or HKCEE exams, but as in B1, DF

items do not appear in the order students will use them.

As in 2012 and 2013, B2 students are given a ‘starting point’ for each task, but not told all the DF items which will be relevant to each task; since there are more DF items this time, this makes the students’ job harder.

## Statistics

### Difference in amount students need to write

	Task 5	Task 6	Task 7	Task 8	Task 9	Task 10
<b>2012</b>	-	120	150	150	200	200
<b>2013</b>	-	120	150	150	120	200
<b>2014</b>	-	120	150	150	150	200

### Difference in number of content points

	Task 5	Task 6	Task 7	Task 8	Task 9	Task 10
<b>2012</b>	14	12	15	15	13	14
<b>2013</b>	16	9	18	13	9	13
<b>2014 (estimated)</b>	14	13	10	20	14	16

### Data Files

- No. of Data File items: B1 = 8; B2 = 13 (not including ‘Listening note-taking sheet’)
- Although the number of DF items in 2014’s B2 has increased significantly, the word count is only a little longer; in fact, the word count of B1 has had a more significant increase.

#### Data File word counts:

	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
<b>Part B1</b>	1040	1224	1487
<b>Part B2</b>	1738	1836	1872

- As in 2013, longer DF items are less common (all DF items are under 300 words)
- There are no headings for each task in DF2 (‘email’ from superior with instructions for the tasks). (Headings were used in 2013 but not in 2012.)
- As in 2013, B1 has explicit instructions to students about where the information can be found for each task (i.e. which Data File items), while B2 only gives students a starting point (i.e. one Data File item).
- Text types in B1: letter of complaint, web page, online forum, foreword from a book, statistics (graph), interview transcript, page from a newsletter.
- Text types in B2: statistics (pie chart), advertisement, magazine article, interview transcript, extract from book, newspaper article, magazine article, letter to the editor, newspaper article, report, email.