

ATTENTION

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HKDSE English Language Exam Analysis Report 2022 (Papers 1–3)

Go Beyond the Limits! Steps to success!

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2022 HKDSE · Paper 1 (Reading)

Overview

	Part A	Part B1		Part B2
	Text 1	Text 2	Text 3	Text 4
Text Type	Feature article	Classified ads	Feature article	Feature article
Topic	Decline of Hong Kong's comic industry	Jobs		Artificial intelligence
Title	<i>Hong Kong's comic industry is proverbially in shreds. The biggest saboteur? The internet</i>	—	<i>Graduate job seeking: The rise of the 'slasher'</i>	<i>Ethical concerns mount as AI takes bigger decision-making role in more industries</i>
Source	<i>Coconuts Hong Kong</i>	—	<i>The Guardian</i>	<i>The Harvard Gazette</i>
Word Count	1,175	188	847	1,177
Questions	23	5	14	23
Marks	42	11	31	42

Reading Passages



Part A

Part A comprises one text: a feature article on the decline of Hong Kong's comic industry (Text 1).

Number of passages: So far, there have been seven papers with one Part A passage (2012, 2013, 2014, 2017, 2019, 2020 and 2022), three papers with two (2015, 2016 and 2018) and one paper with three (2021).

Text type: Candidates should be comfortable with reading a feature article, where an impartial writer interviews multiple individuals on a certain topic.

Topic: This year's passage is on the familiar topic of the comic industry in Hong Kong and the city's culture in general. While some of the candidates may find the English names of Hong Kong comics and artists unfamiliar, an image from the famous 'Old Master Q' series should be extremely helpful as a starting point.

Level of difficulty: In general, candidates find multiple shorter texts easier to read than one long text. Since this year's Part A has one single text only, one may argue that candidates' cognitive load is heavier compared to the previous year. In addition, some weaker candidates may be put off by the advanced words in the title, including 'proverbially', 'in shreds' and 'saboteur', in spite of the fact that an inability to comprehend them does not really affect overall understanding. Other potentially challenging vocabulary include 'rabid' (paragraph 1), 'hotly tipped' (paragraph 2), 'undiscerning', 'reprieve', 'predicament', 'relic' (paragraph 3), 'heyday' (paragraph 4), 'juggle', 'merchandising', 'veterans', 'dwindle' (paragraph 5), 'culprit', 'pirated' (paragraph 6), 'threshold' (paragraph 7), 'syndication' (paragraph 8), 'collated', 'obliterated' (paragraph 9), 'proliferation' (paragraph 10), 'conceive' (paragraph 13) and 'shrugs' (paragraph 15).

Part B1

Part B1 comprises four classified ads (Text 2) and a feature article (Text 3) on the rise of ‘slashers’ on the job market.

Number of passages: There are two passages in Part B1 this year, which is the same as last year. Judging from what we have seen in all HKDSE papers except for the first one (2012), the tendency is to have multiple passages in Part B1 to make the tasks less daunting to less able candidates.

Text type: The passages that appear in this year’s Part B1—classified ads and feature article—are both reasonably accessible. The former could prove difficult for some struggling candidates who may not be familiar with such terms as ‘diploma’, ‘related disciplines’ and ‘long shifts’, while some candidates might be intimidated by the unfamiliar word ‘slasher’ in the title of the latter text.

Topic: Both passages address the theme of jobs. While some candidates may not have any work experience, the positions advertised in Text 2 are fairly common, whereas ‘slashing’ (Text 3) is a recent trend among young people. No major trouble in comprehension is expected.

Level of difficulty: 2022 HKDSE candidates who attempted Part B1 should have found the passages manageable for the most part. With the exception of the workplace-related concepts mentioned above (under ‘Text type’), Text 2 is quite easy to understand, with bullet points to assist. Text 3 does contain a number of advanced vocabulary items, e.g. ‘employable’ (paragraph 5), ‘accounting for’, ‘deeply ingrained’ (paragraph 8), ‘threshold’ (paragraph 9) and ‘patronised’ (comment 3), but the paragraphs are short and the first sentence in each paragraph clearly indicates the main point to be covered.

Part B2

Part B2 comprises one text: a feature article on the ethical concerns about using AI in decision-making and whether and how much government regulation is necessary (Text 4).

Number of passages: So far, there have been seven papers with one Part B2 passage (2013, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2020 and 2022), two papers with two (2012 and 2018) and two papers with three (2016 and 2021).

Text type: Candidates should be comfortable with reading a feature article, where an impartial writer interviews multiple individuals on a certain topic. This is relatively straightforward especially when compared to 2019 and 2020, where the texts had a distinct personal voice and a great deal of self-deprecating humour, sarcasm, etc.

Topic: The theme of AI is not entirely foreign to candidates, but many might not be aware of its role in recruitment and banking. In addition, the focus of the text is on the ethical problems associated with AI and how they might be addressed. This debate may be familiar to learned adults but are likely to elude the average candidate. In fact, one of the 2021 Part B2 passages (Text 8) involves a similar debate on whether humans should ‘terraform’ Mars. Candidates might want to keep abreast of these controversies in case they appear in future papers.

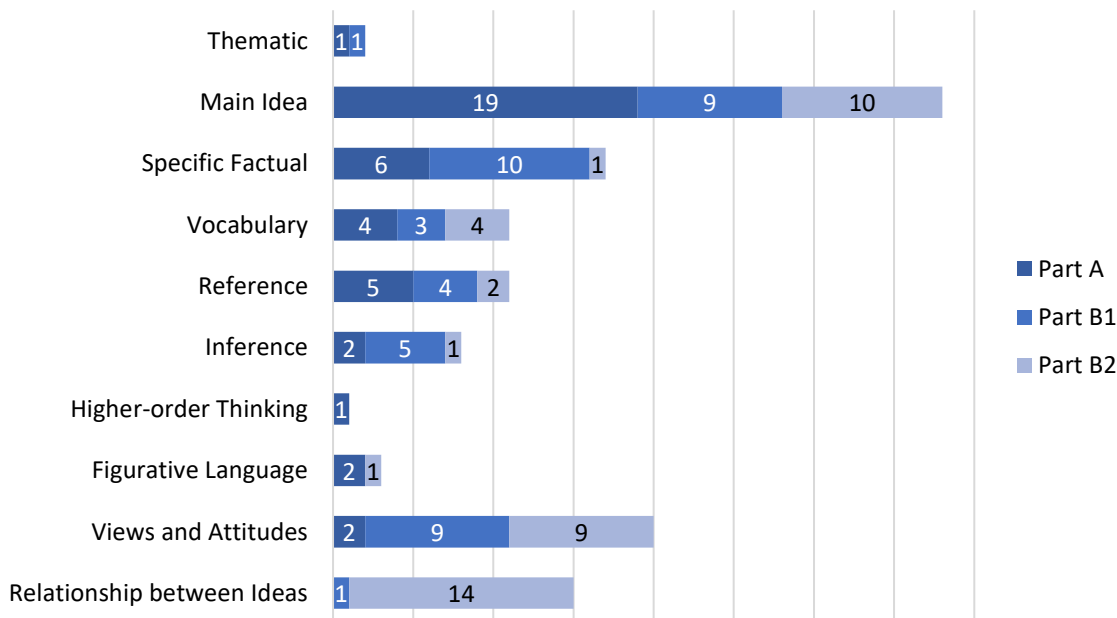
Level of difficulty: As expected, the Part B2 passage contains a considerable number of advanced vocabulary items, e.g. ‘game-changing’, ‘creditworthiness’ (paragraph 2), ‘*en masse*’, ‘calibrated’, ‘replicates’, ‘confers’ (paragraph 6), ‘ubiquity’ (paragraph 8), ‘overarching’ (paragraph 10) and ‘dimensions’ (paragraph 12). Having said that, stronger candidates are more likely to have trouble distinguishing between the opinions of the numerous experts quoted in the text than comprehending the unfamiliar words.

Questions

Question Types

This year's Paper 1 looks rather different from previous years' for specific factual questions are no longer the most common question type. This is a far cry from last year, when a candidate who attempted Parts A and B1 could get a maximum of 26 marks just by getting all the specific factual questions right. In this year's Part A, there is an unusually large number of main idea questions—19 marks in total (28 marks if Parts A and B1 are attempted and 29 marks if Parts A and B2 are attempted). Relationship between ideas questions remain popular in Part B2, accounting for a whopping 14 marks.

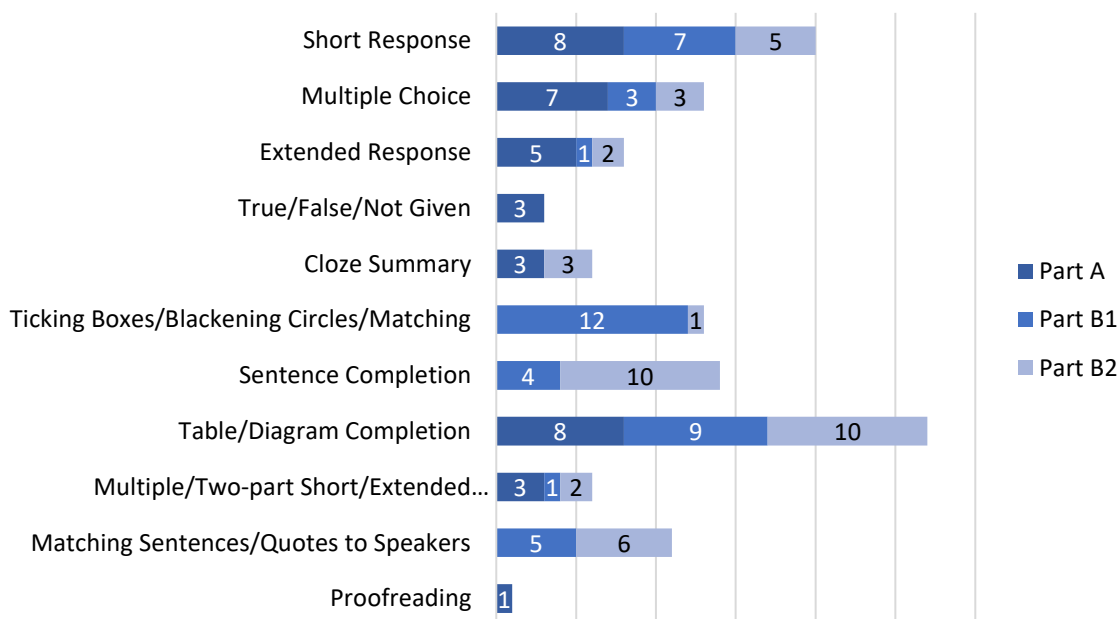
Question Type	Part A [42 marks]	Part B1 [42 marks]	Part B2 [42 marks]
Thematic	Q23	Q24	—
Main Idea	Q1 [3], Q7 [3], Q11 [5], Q18 [4], Q22 [4]	Q35 [3], Q42 [6]	Q43 [3], Q49 [3], Q53 [3], Q58
Specific Factual	Q4 [2], Q10 [3], Q16	Q25 [4], Q26 [4], Q30, Q32	Q60
Vocabulary	Q2, Q3, Q6, Q9	Q27, Q29, Q33	Q46, Q55, Q57, Q59
Reference	Q8, Q14 [3], Q15	Q31, Q34, Q37, Q41	Q48, Q63
Inference	Q17, Q20	Q28, Q38 [4]	Q45
Higher-order Thinking	Q12	—	—
Figurative Language	Q5, Q13	—	Q44
Views and Attitudes	Q19, Q21	Q39 [5], Q40, Q42 [3]	Q47, Q52, Q64 [6], Q65
Relationship between Ideas	—	Q36	Q50 [5], Q51, Q54 [2], Q56 [2], Q61 [3], Q62



Question Formats

As expected, 2022 Paper 1 is comprised mainly of short response and multiple-choice questions. However, sentence completion and table/diagram completion questions appear to be gaining currency, taking up a total of 21 marks if Parts A and B1 are attempted and 28 marks if Parts A and B2 are attempted. There is also a relatively large number of ticking boxes/blackening circles/matching questions in Part B1 (12 marks).

Question Format	Part A [42 marks]	Part B1 [42 marks]	Part B2 [42 marks]
Short Response	Q2, Q4 [2], Q6, Q8, Q9, Q13, Q15	Q27, Q29, Q30, Q31, Q34, Q37, Q41	Q44, Q46, Q48, Q55, Q57
Multiple Choice	Q1 [3], Q3, Q16, Q19, Q23	Q24, Q33, Q40	Q47, Q59, Q65
Extended Response	Q5, Q12, Q17, Q20, Q21	Q36	Q52, Q62
True/False/Not Given	Q10 [3]	—	—
Cloze Summary	Q7 [3]	—	Q43 [3]
Ticking Boxes/Blackening Circles/Matching	—	Q25 [4], Q26 [4], Q38 [4]	Q60
Sentence Completion	—	Q32, Q35 [3]	Q45, Q49 [3], Q51, Q53 [3], Q58, Q63
Table/Diagram Completion	Q18 [4], Q22 [4]	Q42 [9]	Q50 [5], Q56 [2], Q61 [3]
Multiple/Two-part Short/Extended Response	Q14 [3]	Q28	Q54 [2]
Matching Sentences/Quotes to Speakers	—	Q39 [5]	Q64 [6]
Proofreading	Q11 [5]	—	—



Noteworthy Questions and Recommendations

Part A

Question(s)	Analysis	Recommendation(s)
2, 6, 9	These are vocabulary questions whose level of difficulty is slightly increased by the broader question words 'which <i>word or phrase</i> '. This means that possible answers are not limited to single words.	—
5	This is a figurative language question involving 'relic' as a metaphor for the comic industry in Hong Kong. Candidates have to infer the meaning of 'relic' from the hint 'only accessible at cultural exhibitions and auction houses', then associate this metaphor with the bleak outlook of the industry.	Stronger candidates should be trained to pay attention to both the literal and figurative meanings of a given expression so as to provide full answers.
7, 18, 22	These are main idea questions set in various formats, namely cloze summary, diagram completion and table completion. The instructions differ slightly from question to question: Question 7 says '[write] <i>ONE word taken from [paragraphs 4 and 5]</i> in each blank below', Question 18 says 'Write a <i>word or phrase taken from paragraphs 8 and 12</i> in each blank below' and Question 22 says 'Write a <i>word or a phrase</i> in each blank below. Note that the suitable word or phrase <i>may or may not appear in the text</i> '. In other words, candidates may need to write in their own words with the correct grammar. According to the 2021 Exam Report, less able candidates struggled with the appropriate parts of speech. It is likely that many candidates may find this question challenging.	Candidates must read the instructions extra carefully when filling in any blanks. Since it appears that a greater emphasis is laid on grammatical accuracy in 2022 (as stated in the rubrics in Q7, Q18 and Q22), they should make an effort in this area. Please also note that Q11 is a proofreading question which requires perfect grammar and spelling.

Part B1

Question(s)	Analysis	Recommendation(s)
25	This is a specific factual question. Candidates are required to match each job description to a classified ad. Those who are unfamiliar with workplace-related vocabulary may fail to associate 'temporary' with '6-month contract' or 'long shifts' with 'long working hours'.	—
26	This is a ticking boxes/table question which requires candidates the ability to sort or categorize.	This question is a similar version of 2021 HKDSE B1 Q45, which requires candidates to sort and categorize. Candidates who attempt B1 are recommended to have extra practice in this area.
27	This is a vocabulary question. Instead of asking candidates to locate a synonym for or explain the meaning of a given word or phrase, the question requires them to find a word or phrase that serves a particular purpose—in this case, to show that there are chances for promotion.	—

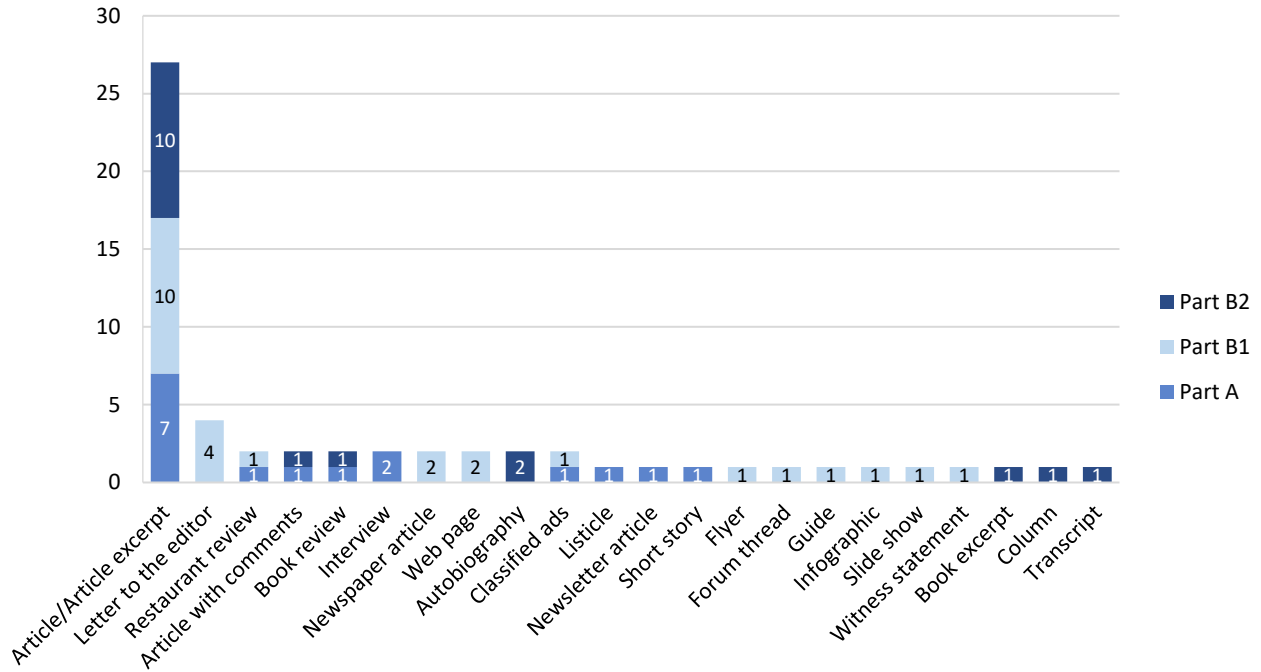
Question(s)	Analysis	Recommendation(s)
34	This is a reference question. In fact the answer is given in the second part of the book title—‘How to Start a Business in Your Spare Time’. However, to be able to copy the right chunk, candidates have to understand the play on words: ‘five [p.m.] to nine [a.m.]’ (i.e. one’s leisure time) rather than ‘nine [a.m.] to five [p.m.]’ (i.e. standard working hours).	—
42 (v)	This is a views and attitudes question with summaries of the main idea of each person’s view. The verb ‘patronised’, which probably is beyond most, if not all candidates attempting Part B1. Nonetheless, some may be able to arrive at the correct answer by identifying correspondences between the summary (‘Millennials are being ... <i>by the writer</i> ’) and the text (‘I feel patronised <i>by this article</i> ’).	In answering main idea questions, candidates should be reminded to look for similarities between a given summary and the reading passage so that they might obtain some answers without fully understanding the words.

 Part B2

Question(s)	Analysis	Recommendation(s)
49, 50	These are questions set in the sentence/table completion format. Question 49 is a main idea question whereas Question 50 is a relationship between ideas question. As is the case of Part A, Part B2 contains many more items mandating grammatical accuracy than usual. These two are cases in point. Question 49 (iii) is particularly challenging since candidates have to change ‘without having to hire any experts in finance’ to ‘requires no expertise in finance’ so as to suit the contextual requirements. Question 50 (i), 50 (iii) and 50 (v) also pose considerable difficulty due to the stem ‘whether’, which necessitates the use of indirect questions and a change in word order.	Teachers of stronger candidates could consider going beyond lexical transformation drills—as is required by ‘traditional’ cloze summary items—and focus more on sentential transformation. In a nutshell, candidates should be trained to ‘say the same thing in a different way’ accurately.
64	This is a views and attitudes question set in the familiar ‘matching quotes to speakers’ format, with one significant change: ‘a person may be used more than once’. This makes the question slightly harder. In addition, some of the individuals appear in various paragraphs and candidates must develop a ‘global’ understanding of their views in order to obtain the correct answers.	—
65	This is a views and attitudes question. The main concern is whether or not the writer has an opinion of his/her own. Before anything, candidates should understand that in a feature article, the writer is often ‘invisible’, rendering three of the options—‘ironic’, ‘critical’ and ‘supportive’—irrelevant.	Teachers should inculcate in students a habit of writing grammatically in the reading paper even though that is usually not required.

HKDSE Paper 1 Statistics (2012–2022)

Text Types



Number of Texts

Year	Part A	Part B1	Part B2
2012	1	1	2
2013	1	2	1
2014	1	2	1
2015	2	2	1
2016	2	5	3
2017	1	3	1
2018	2	2	2
2019	1	3	1
2020	1	2	1
2021	3	2	3
2022	1	2	1
Average	1.5	2.4	1.5

Reading Passages Word Count

Year	Part A	Part B1	Part B2
2012	994	888	1,103 (194+909)
2013	1,088	818 (412+406)	1,090
2014	956	894 (378+516)	1,105
2015	1,022 (729+293)	914 (225+689)	1,114 (997+117)
2016	988 (237+751)	881 (65+90+299+117+310)	1,116 (380+444+292)
2017	1,057	768 (354+25+389)	1,190
2018	1,090 (160+930)	1,066 (581+485)	1,213 (447+766)
2019	1,088	971 (170+421+380)	1,163
2020	1,033	1,052 (362+690)	1,217
2021	1,000 (338+278+384)	994 (687+307)	1,037 (139+379+519)
2022	1,175	1,035 (188+847)	1,177
Average	1,045	935	1,139

Number of Questions & Marks

Year	Part A		Part B1		Part B2	
	Questions	Marks	Questions	Marks	Questions	Marks
2012	20	47	20	45	33	46
2013	25	41	20	41	20	41
2014	30	47	29	41	25	41
2015	31	40	24	40	22	40
2016	18	41	28	43	29	43
2017	21	41	22	43	15	43
2018	22	42	23	42	26	42
2019	18	42	23	42	25	42
2020	19	42	22	42	21	42
2021	27	42	19	42	20	42
2022	23	42	19	42	23	42
Average	23	42	23	42	24	42

Question Types

Parts A+B1

Question Type	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Thematic	2	1	1	2	0	0	3	2	2	0	2
Main Idea	6	3	1	12	7	2	4	6	7	18	28
Specific Factual	13	21	28	10	17	25	15	11	36	26	16
Vocabulary	4	2	4	4	3	8	6	4	4	7	7
Reference	3	3	6	5	4	2	6	6	5	5	9
Inference	10	12	16	12	7	2	8	6	8	11	7
Higher-order Thinking	0	0	1	2	0	2	0	0	0	2	1
Figurative Language	0	1	0	2	0	1	1	4	4	1	2
Views and Attitudes	1	0	0	4	5	1	0	1	9	10	11
Sequencing	1	1	2	1	0	0	2	0	4	0	0
Language Usage	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
Relationship between Ideas	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	5	4	1

Parts A+B2

Question Type	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Thematic	1	1	0	3	0	1	2	1	0	4	0
Main Idea	9	6	3	13	8	2	4	4	11	8	29
Specific Factual	10	14	20	3	13	21	8	9	21	16	7
Vocabulary	8	2	1	5	5	2	8	6	2	8	8
Reference	4	3	9	5	2	1	4	7	5	5	7
Inference	14	12	18	13	12	9	14	10	12	19	3
Higher-order Thinking	3	2	1	2	0	3	0	0	1	2	1
Figurative Language	1	2	3	3	3	2	7	3	6	1	3
Views and Attitudes	2	0	0	5	3	1	0	2	13	1	11
Sequencing	1	2	1	1	0	0	1	0	4	0	0
Language Usage	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Relationship between Ideas	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	9	20	14

 **Question Formats**

Parts A+B1

Question Format	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Short Response	10	13	26	30	13	12	14	11	9	14	15
Multiple Choice	11	9	11	7	13	13	11	10	11	17	10
Extended Response	1	4	5	2	6	7	7	1	3	4	6
True/False/Not Given	2	4	4	2	2	2	2	3	10	10	3
Cloze Summary	2	3	0	1	4	3	4	3	10	17	3
Ticking Boxes/Blackening Circles/Matching	1	3	1	0	1	2	3	3	7	9	12
Sentence Completion	3	1	2	0	0	0	2	4	4	1	4
Matching Subheadings/Main Points to Paragraphs/Texts	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	2	0	0	0
Labelling Pictures	1	1	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Table/Diagram Completion	1	0	0	0	0	3	1	2	11	8	17
Multiple/Two-part Short/Extended Response	0	0	0	0	1	5	0	1	2	4	4
Sequencing	2	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	4	0	0
Matching Sentences/Quotes to Speakers	2	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	9	0	5
Proofreading	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	4	0	1
Timeline Completion	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0

Parts A+B2

Question Format	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Short Response	17	11	26	24	17	6	17	13	9	16	13
Multiple Choice	15	11	11	6	13	9	11	9	11	15	10
Extended Response	9	7	4	5	7	7	9	6	7	4	7
True/False/Not Given	2	3	2	2	2	2	1	2	8	12	3
Cloze Summary	2	4	1	2	1	1	5	2	5	8	6
Ticking Boxes/Blackening Circles/Matching	0	0	0	1	0	2	2	0	12	0	1
Sentence Completion	1	0	2	0	2	2	1	2	1	0	10
Matching Subheadings/Main Points to Paragraphs/Texts	0	0	2	0	1	0	1	2	4	3	0
Labelling Pictures	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Table/Diagram Completion	1	0	0	0	0	4	0	1	10	20	18
Multiple/Two-part Short/Extended Response	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	3	4	6	5
Sequencing	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	4	0	0
Matching Sentences/Quotes to Speakers	1	1	1	1	0	2	1	1	5	0	6
Proofreading	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	4	0	1
Timeline Completion	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0

2022 HKDSE · Paper 2 (Writing)

Part A

Question 1

Question	Text Type	Role	Target Audience	Register
1	Leaflet	A staff member of a theme park	First-time visitors of the theme park	Informal

On the day after the HKDSE writing examination, reports quoted teachers as saying that it marked the first time HKDSE candidates had to write a travel guide for Part A. While this is technically not untrue, a closer look at the question itself would reveal that it in many ways resembles a promotional leaflet, which is a familiar text type even at the junior secondary level. Candidates are not required to write about the attractions in a relatively objective style—as a writer who works for *Lonely Planet* and the like would have to—but had to make use of ‘promotional’ language to appeal to guests of the theme park that they work for. This means that rhetorical questions (e.g. ‘Do you want to take a break from the hustle and bustle of the city?’), emotive adjectives (e.g. ‘The scenery at Waterfall Station is breathtaking’, ‘You’re sure to have a magical experience by the lake’) and vivid descriptions involving the five senses (e.g. ‘You can see glittering stars from faraway galaxies at night and wake up to the pleasant chirping of birds’) are highly appropriate. Candidates who are accustomed to descriptive and persuasive writing, e.g. blog entry, speech, article, appeal letters, should find this question accessible in terms of its stylistic requirements.

With respect to content and organisation, whether a candidate can be awarded high marks very much hinges upon his/her ability to utilize the given map and, more importantly, come up with additional attractive details. In the first section—‘About Hong Kong Adventure Farm’—apart from the year of establishment given by the question, candidates might want to mention why the theme park was set up, the accolades it has garnered, etc. The second section—‘Top three things to see and do’—gives candidates considerable flexibility as to what to cover. For example, a candidate who decides to write about the restaurant at Farmers’ Market Station should not only say that visitors can eat ‘great food’, but point out what is so special about the produce, the chef, the décor, the prices, the view, etc. It is worth noting that this Part A task is so far the only occasion on which a word guide *within the question* was provided: candidates are recommended to write about 50 words for the first section and 150 words for the second. This should be helpful to weaker candidates, who could struggle to strike a proper balance between the two aspects of the question.

Part A General Observations and Recommendations

Part A is a guided short writing task. Candidates are provided with prompts that mandate or suggest ideas to be included. The map this year, the poster on an annual school fair in 2021 and the aspects of a dining experience (food, service, dining environment and price) in 2020 are but a few examples. Regardless of their ability, candidates should first ensure that they have ‘ticked all the boxes’ and there are no big ‘gaps’ in their content, before going beyond the prompt to demonstrate their creativity.

The focus is almost always on informal and/or personal writing in Part A. Students could be encouraged to write about their daily life, family, school activities, etc., on a regular basis, and even incorporate personal anecdotes in more ‘serious’ texts, such as letters to the editor and school magazine articles, where appropriate.

Part B

Question	Text Type	Role	Target Audience	Register
2	Article	YouTuber	Readers of <i>Teen Magazine</i>	Informal
3	Letter of advice	Agony aunt/uncle	Young person	Semi-formal / Informal
4	Speech	Captain of the school's basketball team	Members of the school's basketball team	Informal
5	Letter to the editor	Chairperson of the school's Heritage Club	Readers of <i>Hong Kong Post</i>	Formal / Semi-formal
6	Biography	Not specified	Visitors of the website of <i>Nine Dragons</i>	Semi-formal / Informal
7	Journal entry	Member of a drama class	The writer himself/herself / Teacher of the drama class	Informal
8	Short story	Not specified	Judges of the 'Stories of Survival' short story competition	Not applicable
9	Letter	Member of the Parent-Teacher Association	President of the Parent-Teacher Association	Formal

Question 2: Popular Culture

Candidates are required to write an article for *Teen Magazine* about their own YouTube channel called 'Teen Chat', which covers why the channel was started and what they have learnt as a YouTuber. As this is an article aimed at a teenage audience, either a semi-formal or an informal style is appropriate. Some rhetorical questions (e.g. 'Have you ever imagined getting 10,000 likes on YouTube?') and/or interior-monologue-like expressions (e.g. 'I told myself: this isn't going to work') to engage the audience are advisable.

The question states that the YouTube channel concerned 'explores a wide range of topics from a teenage perspective' without specifying what the topics are. This means that candidates may give their own examples of topics that they have covered in their YouTube videos to illustrate what they have learnt, e.g. receiving negative comments on a video on a certain controversial topic teaching them to be more sensitive to different opinions.

Question 3: Workplace Communication

This is a letter of advice question. Candidates assume the role of an agony aunt/uncle working for *Jobs Online* magazine to answer the queries of Kam Chai, a 25-year-old reader who has been dreaming about opening a café. His dilemma is whether to accept a promotion which he is not very interested in or resign now. Candidates' reply should not be too formal as their objective is to make Kam Chai at ease. They should not dismiss his worries; instead, they should acknowledge that the choice is tough but reassure him that there is a way out.

Candidates can choose to directly answer the question posed by Kam Chai at the end ('Should I leave now or wait a few years?') and put forward reasons. Alternatively, they can show an understanding of the complexity of the situation and refrain from offering a direct answer, in which case they will have to tell Kam Chai what he should consider before making a decision himself. In any case, lecturing should be kept to a minimum. The recipient should be encouraged to think, e.g. 'Have you considered ...?', 'Perhaps your friends are not so keen on opening a café at this point in time'.

Question 4: Sports Communication

For this question, candidates have to write a speech as captain of the school's basketball team to be delivered to members of the team at the end-of-season celebration, after coming second in a tournament. An informal style is preferable as the team is probably quite close-knit, having been through thick and thin. The tone should be one of acknowledgement and encouragement; in spite of the team losing the final match, any reprimanding would be utterly inappropriate.

In terms of content and organisation, there is a lot of room for creativity. Candidates may recount how the team progressed from the first round to the final match and the challenges that the team overcame as a whole; they may single out particularly outstanding team members and praise them; they may briefly mention why the team was defeated by the eventual champion and focus on the takeaways; and so on. Detailed descriptions of the experience are key to an impactful speech.

Question 5: Social Issues

This is a letter to the editor question about whether young people are losing interest in traditional art forms, such as lion dance, calligraphy and the art of tea drinking. As the Heritage Club chairperson at school, candidates have to express their views on the matter. Candidates may choose to be formal or semi-formal as is the case of any letter to the editor.

This question is relatively 'open' in that it does not say explicitly that candidates are expected to argue for or against the idea (that young people are losing interest in traditional art forms). While one may put forward arguments to show how young people are indifferent to (or, equally possible, passionate about) art as a youngster dedicated to cultural preservation, one could choose to identify the causes for the decline in interest instead. Observations and experiences pertaining to the Heritage Club and/or the school in general are relevant. Suggestions as to how those art forms may be revived could also be proposed.

Question 6: Poems and Songs

Candidates are required to write a biography for a musical group called *Nine Dragons* to be posted on their website, covering background information about the group, their style of music and future plans. This is a new text type in the HKDSE. Considering the fact that those who visit the website of *Nine Dragons* are mostly their fans, candidates may adopt a friendly style as in a 'fan page'. Alternatively, they may opt for a semi-formal style and introduce the group more plainly, though not without 'promotional' phrases, e.g. 'Their first record was immensely popular and sold 400,000 copies'. Candidates should bear in mind that a biography is not a feature article and hence no quotes from the band members and/or other individuals are necessary.

This question provides ample opportunities for candidates to showcase their creativity and knowledge of music. Some might want to discuss the significance of the name, which could suggest that the band comprises nine members and/or takes inspiration from Hong Kong culture (Kowloon literally means 'nine dragons'). A discussion on the group's famous songs and past achievements is highly appropriate.

Question 7: Drama

This question represents yet another new text type for the HKDSE. Candidates have to compile an entry in their drama journal in which they discuss the roles of the hero and the villain and say which one they prefer playing. Drama journals are commonly kept by (aspiring) stage actors and actresses to reflect on their performance and identify areas of improvement. They may be entirely private, similar to a diary, or a piece of ‘assignment’ mandated by a drama teacher who reads and assesses. Either is permissible in approaching this question, though the former might lend itself to a significantly greater amount of introspection.

Since the question specifies that the writer has played both the hero and the villain in different plays, a substantial portion of the entry should be devoted to those experiences. The plays and characters should be named to add to the authenticity of the text. Candidates may say that both roles are enjoyable but must arrive at an unequivocal conclusion as to which role is more preferable, as is required by the question.

Question 8: Short Stories

This question requires candidates to write, as an entry in a short story competition, a story about a hiker who, while hiking in the mountains, gets caught in a storm. Additionally, the theme of the competition—‘Nature: friend or enemy?’—as well as a picture of thunderstorms were given.

As opposed to previous short story questions, where candidates had more freedom to interpret the prompt and convey a message of their own, this task appears rather constraining, for the story must include events to show that nature is a friend and/or enemy of the hiker and/or the human race. The given theme notwithstanding, candidates can still shine through the use of varied and appropriate vocabulary to describe the surroundings, the storm, the hiker’s emotions, etc.; they can opt for first-person or third-person omniscient narration to suit their needs; and they can construct a gripping plot line about a hiker fighting for his/her life and surviving (or meeting his/her end!).

Question 9: Debating

This is a formal letter question of an argumentative nature. Candidates are given the rather ambiguous role of a ‘member’ of the Parent-Teacher Association (usually a parent but could be a teacher too) and asked to write a letter to the President (presumably a parent) expressing their views on a four-day school week proposal, which entails one additional holiday per week but longer school days. The style should be business-like, without contractions, exclamations, rhetorical questions, etc.

This question is set in a school context and thus reasonably accessible to candidates. Although a four-day school week is almost unheard of, a four-day work week has been gaining currency in the West. Candidates who are well-versed in global trends may have some knowledge of the benefits and concerns of a four-day week. On top of the argument for or against the proposition (e.g. that lesson time will be reduced), stronger candidates might want to capitalize on their role as member of the PTA and include some relevant personal experiences (e.g. ‘My son, who studies in S5, has had to attend numerous extra tutorials for want of teaching time. I can foresee that the problem will only worsen with a four-day week.’). As such, they can enrich the content of the letter and sound more convincing.

Part B General Observations and Recommendations

- **Bullet points and pictorial prompts:** From 2019 to 2021, bullet points and pictorial prompts were the norm in Part B of the writing paper, but 2022 marked a departure from that, with no bullet points at all and two questions without a pictorial prompt. This is more of a change of form rather than substance, though.
- **Relevance of elective modules:** A recent trend is that the questions have become more closely linked to the elective module that they belong to. This is especially true of the Sports Communication module. This year, candidates have to write a speech to be delivered by a basketball team captain to his/her team members after losing a final match. In 2021, the question under this module was a letter to apply for the position of a sports coach. Specialized vocabulary is essential if a candidate is to describe the basketball final match precisely or discuss his/her athletic history and suitability for the job. Those who are accustomed to writing essays and articles on general issues pertaining to sports may not be as comfortable with these contexts. Another case in point is the Poems and Songs module, the question under which is a biography of a musical group, necessitating vocabulary pertaining to showbiz, musical genres, etc. This is different from, for instance, the 2021 topic, which began with a poem but dealt with quite a general topic (friendship). More extensive teaching of elective modules and/or sourcing of relevant, authentic reading materials may be advisable so as to better prepare candidates for the 2023 examination.
- **A ‘general’ orientation:** From the 2024 examination onwards, there will only be a total of four questions and they will be ‘de-linked’ from the elective modules. If the sample paper is an accurate guide, it appears that the questions will provide candidates with a greater degree of flexibility (e.g. Question 2: ‘Write an article about Star Ferry’) in terms of interpretation. In this respect, many of the Part B questions in 2022 are similar. For example, candidates who attempt Question 4 or 5 are free to structure their speech or letter to the editor as they see fit, as long as the given context is addressed. This could pose difficulties to weaker candidates who work better with clear guidelines (‘do this, then do that’).

2022 HKDSE · Paper 3 (Listening and Integrated Skills)

Part A

Part A of Paper 3 in 2022 consists of four short listening tasks revolving around a tour company called Hidden Hong Kong Tours.

Task	Context	Question Formats	Task Type	Marks
1	Two founders of the tour company meeting to finalize the details of a tour	Gap-filling, table, ticking boxes, MCQ	Note sheet	13
2	A founder of the tour company interviewing the owner of a local porcelain factory	Gap-filling, table, ticking boxes	Note sheet	12
3	A conversation between two founders of the tour company about a local medicine factory	Gap-filling, table, ticking boxes, MCQ	Note sheet	14
4	A conversation between two founders of the tour company about a previous interview with a retired toy factory worker	Gap-filling, table, Q&A	Note sheet	13

Task 1

Task 1 is the easiest task in Part A. Candidates listen to two of the founders of Hidden Hong Kong Tours talking about a cultural tour of an umbrella store. Question formats include note-taking, table-filling, ticking boxes and multiple-choice. The clear enunciation and slow delivery of the speakers, as well as the frequent repetition of key information, mean that most candidates should have no trouble following the conversation.

Question(s)	Analysis	Recommendation(s)
5	This is a dictation-style item requiring candidates to copy an address in full. The fact that the address is repeated once makes it easier for candidates, though some may forget to capitalize the words properly and lose marks.	Candidates should be reminded to capitalize proper nouns and familiarized with the spellings of local place names.
6	This is a multiple-choice question where candidates have to read a given map and identify the location of the umbrella store. Weaker candidates who are unfamiliar with how directions are given in English, e.g. 'walk past ...', 'take the first right', 'across the building', etc., may struggle to figure out the answer.	—
10	'Ticking boxes' questions seem to be in vogue and this is the first among five in the 2022 paper. A general observation is that the speakers usually mention all of the given items but only some (in the case of this year's paper, two) should be ticked. Candidates must distinguish between the answers and the distractors. It is worth noting that there is only one mark for Q10, whereas the very similar Q8–Q10 in 2020 has one mark for each tick.	To improve accuracy as far as 'ticking boxes' is concerned, candidates could listen to the recording again and understand how the speakers mention something but say that it is not relevant.

Task 2

In Task 2, candidates listen to an interview of the founder of a local porcelain factory. Question formats include note-taking, table-filling and ticking boxes. Similar to Task 1, there is a substantial amount of repetition to aid candidates.

Question(s)	Analysis	Recommendation(s)
15	It is often seen that the Question-Answer Book uses different wordings as on the recording, e.g. in Q15, the speaker does not say 'bright colours' directly; she says 'gold, pink, yellow, sky blue and turquoise ... those sorts of colours' instead.	Candidates should not expect to hear the exact same words that appear in the Question-Answer Book on the recording. They have to be flexible and make sense of the conversation. They should be trained to listen for synonyms and paraphrases.
25	This is a 'ticking boxes' question that involves matching pictures to verbal descriptions and rather challenging vocabulary. To tick the correct boxes, candidates have to associate a dragon pattern to 'Chinese mythology' (an unfamiliar term) or 'magical creatures'. The terms 'landscapes' and 'family emblems' are probably foreign to many as well.	—

Task 3

Task 3 involves a conversation between two of the founders of Hidden Hong Kong Tours on a medicine factory.

Question(s)	Analysis	Recommendation(s)
27, 39	See Task 1 Question 10 and Task 2 Question 15	See Task 1 Question 10 and Task 2 Question 15
28, 30	These are multiple-choice questions which are similar to 'ticking boxes' questions (see Task 1 Question 10) in that all options are mentioned by the speakers but only one is correct.	Once again, candidates should listen for understanding, not just for keywords, so as to avoid distractors.
33, 34, 36, 37	Weaker candidates who are unfamiliar with scientific vocabulary may fail to spell the words 'humidity' (Q33), 'mould' (Q34), 'bacteria' (Q36) and 'brew' (Q37).	—

Task 4

Task 4 is the most difficult task in Part A. Candidates listen to a conversation between two of the founders of Hidden Hong Kong Tours about a previous interview of a retired toy factory worker. As has been the norm since 2015, this task contains items in the question-and-answer format, but the 2022 edition appears to be more manageable as 9 of the 13 items involve table-filling. Compared to previous years, where the conversations were at near-natural speed, this year's speakers are markedly slower, further lowering the level of difficulty.

Question(s)	Analysis	Recommendation(s)
43, 44, 46	As there are no hints given in the table, candidates have to summarize the ideas in the recording and fill in the blanks using their own words.	It is important for candidates to acquire the skills of summarizing and evaluating information, as these skills seem to be heavily tested in the exam.

Question(s)	Analysis	Recommendation(s)
47–50	Similar to Q43, Q44 and Q46, candidates have to fill in the blanks by summarizing the ideas, and they need to first identify the positive and negative information, which makes these questions more challenging.	—
52	This is a new question type requiring candidates to deduce somebody’s feelings from an account of events that happened to him/her. It is mentioned that (1) the factory worker enjoyed being with his colleagues, (2) they were all fired and (3) he was retained as a security guard to watch over the empty factory building. A ‘global’ understanding of this story is necessary in order to come up with an adjective that best describes his feelings, e.g. ‘lonely’.	Candidates should be reminded to take more notes in the margins in Task 4 so as to avoid missing key points that may prove useful. They should also have a variety of adjectives describing feelings and attitudes ready in case such questions are set.

Part B

Part B of Paper 3 in 2022 presents candidates with a workplace situation. Candidates assume the role of Nico Lin, who works for Shiny Diamond Lighting Ltd as a copywriter. Parts B1 and B2 consist of three tasks each and it appears that the practice of allocating one ‘Task Completion’ mark to each content point has been maintained.

Task	Context	Text Type	Word Limit	Marks
5	Writing to the students at the Hong Kong Design School and encouraging them to apply to join the company as trainees	Formal email	100	18
6	Writing a leaflet about how a neon sign is made	Leaflet	120	18
7	Completing a webpage about the company	Webpage	—	17
8	Writing a webpage about the company history	Webpage	150	18
9	Responding to an email by the chairperson of the Wan Yuen Estate Residents’ Association	Formal email of reply	170	17
10	Completing a speech about the future of lighting displays	Speech	180	18

Listening Note-taking Sheet

Candidates listen to a podcast where Pris Fong, the founder of Shiny Diamond Lighting Ltd, and Rick Lai, a neon light master who works for the company, are interviewed. This year, there are five note-headings, compared to six in 2021. Each note-heading is relevant to Part B1 or Part B2 only. Unlike 2021, no bullet points are given under any of the note-headings to further assist candidates.

Part B1 Data File

The Part B1 Data File contains seven items (excluding the note-taking sheet), three fewer than its Part B2 counterpart. Less text-heavy sources include some customer comments (page 5) and extracts from the company handbook in point form (page 9). These should be easy to understand even for the less able candidates. However, this year's instructional email differs from those in the past years in that it does not name all the sources that candidates should refer to for each task. The 'boss' writes that the customer comments (page 5) and WhatsApp messages (pages 6–7) are 'catch-all' sources that candidates may refer to for some or all of the tasks. While this makes the tasks slightly more challenging than expected, there are guidelines above the WhatsApp messages telling candidates which task(s) a particular message thread is relevant to ('Hi Nico! These are the messages about the **Recruitment Email** and the **How-to Leaflet**.').

Part B1 Task 5

'Traditionally', Task 5 required no extended writing but this 'tradition' has been broken again (it was first broken in 2020), with Task 7 being the guided task. This means a candidate who decides to finish the tasks in order will not have an easier task to ease himself/herself into this part of the examination.

Task 5 is an email to recruit Hong Kong Design School students as trainees at Shiny Diamond Lighting Ltd. The salutation 'Dear Student' is given (which is rare in recent years), but candidates have to supply their own valediction, e.g. 'Yours faithfully, / Best regards, Nico Lin'. Candidates need to be familiar with the writing conventions of business emails and remember to, for example, include their last name when signing off and use 'Yours faithfully' instead of 'Yours sincerely'. The WhatsApp messages (page 6) provide candidates with a 'standard' question to start the email, which hints at a more relaxed, engaging style of writing and reduces the level of difficulty as far as 'Appropriacy' is concerned.

However, in terms of 'Task Completion', some candidates may be confused by the relatively vague instructions ('Write it so that it gets their interest and is clear about how they should apply'). This may lead them to think that these are the only points required, when the company handbook (page 9) actually outlines some prerequisites (e.g. 'experience in sculpture needed') and interview arrangements that they also have to mention in the email.

Part B1 Task 6

Task 6 is a leaflet detailing how a neon sign is made. Three headings—'Planning the sign', 'Making the sign' and 'Displaying the sign'—are given for candidates to better organize their ideas. The company handbook (page 9) also contains the same headings so even weaker candidates should find it easy to locate the content points. For the 'Making the sign' section, some synthesis of information is required as the 'Glass Heater' machine is named in the company handbook (page 9) but its function (bend the glass tubes) is only described in Rick Lai's interview (page 10). In addition, candidates ought to be careful not to copy irrelevant information that may affect the communicative purpose and hence the 'Appropriacy' score, e.g. 'One time, a customer returned a faulty sign. It was so embarrassing!' (page 10).

Part B1 Task 7

In Task 7, candidates have to complete a company webpage which provides customers with information about popular neon designs and answers to some frequently asked questions. Since the content points are clearly identified by the webpage and candidates only have to write a few words or a short sentence at a time, the task should pose no trouble. Some less able candidates who tend to struggle when following the recording may lose 'Task Completion' marks because quite a few of the answers come from the listening note-taking sheet. There are 14 questions, but the task carries 17 marks. Since the task does not require candidates to write much, it is not known how the extra three marks for Language and Appropriacy will be accessed or allocated.

Part B2 Data File

The Part B2 Data File is considerably more complex than that for Part B1. In line with usual practice, the instructional email does not specify all sources that candidates have to consult to complete each task, instead suggesting a ‘starting point’ only. Relatively long texts include an email with attachment (pages 9–10) and the minutes of a meeting (page 11). This year, candidates are also given a performance report (page 7) with two line graphs that they have to put into words.

Part B2 Task 8

Task 8 presents a significant challenge as candidates have to compile a webpage about the history of Shiny Diamond Lighting Ltd and organize ideas scattered across the Data File chronologically. Their ability to distinguish between relevant and irrelevant points is put to the test. For instance, the mountain climbing incident in 1980, which inspired Pris Fong to establish the company, is covered in the newspaper clipping (page 5) and extracts from her diary (page 6). Candidates must ignore accounts of the incident itself, e.g. ‘camping here overnight, but it’s freezing’, ‘I am indebted to my guide for carrying me’ and ‘the ankle is badly sprained’, and only select ideas that pertain to the founding of the company. The performance report (page 7) provides two graphs and two ranking tables to illustrate the company’s growth from 1990 to 2022. As the purpose of this webpage is to paint the company in a positive light, candidates should only mention how much the staff and profit have grown during the period, leaving out the slight decline from 2000 to 2010. The names of other ‘Top 5’ lighting companies should not be mentioned. In addition to all this, when explaining the company’s name, candidates have to put the sketch portraying the icy peak as a diamond into words, e.g. ‘the icy peak of Manaslu looked like a shiny diamond in the sun, and that is why Pris Fong decided to name her new company “Shiny Diamond Lighting Ltd”’.

Part B2 Task 9

Task 9 is an email in response to the chairperson of the Wan Yuen Estate Residents’ Association, who has written to express the Association’s concerns about a lighting display to be installed by Shiny Diamond Lighting Ltd. While defending one’s company against accusations is a common requirement in Part B2 of this paper, such tasks usually involved writing a letter to the editor or an article; this is the first time candidates have been asked to write directly to the person levelling the criticisms. To allay the recipient’s concerns, candidates need to demonstrate some tact in terms of their writing style. In the meeting minutes (page 11), for example, ‘Shiny Diamond seemed to have been unfairly blamed for something which was not our fault’ ought to be avoided. (The last line of that section—‘She also recommended avoiding Mr Khatoon’s language about “fault” and “blame”’—makes it so explicit that this would-be testing point is rendered null and void.) Candidates might also be tempted to write about the 2015 incident involving a lighting display at length, which would run contrary to the purpose of this email, i.e. to reduce anxiety. The last part of the EPD Light Emission Guidelines (page 7) about light surface temperature also acts as a distractor and should not be included in the email reply, because that is not the concern of the residents.

Part B2 Task 10

In Task 10, candidates are required to write a speech on the future of lighting displays. This task stands out from all other Part B2 tasks as an entire opening paragraph is printed on the Question-Answer Book. Such guidance is unheard of in this part of the examination. The ease with which candidates may obtain ‘Coherence and Organisation’ marks is also illustrated by the instructional email, which names three sections for the speech and enables candidates to structure their speech accordingly. A point of contention concerns the customer survey results (page 8): some may copy the entire source indiscriminately, without understanding that the 2% figure is not worth mentioning in the section on the ‘lasting appeal of neon lights’. As mentioned in Task 8, candidates must be reminded to always bear the purpose of writing in mind whilst utilizing statistics.

HKDSE Paper 3 Statistics (2012–2022)

Mark Distribution

Year	Part A					Part B1				Part B2			
	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Total	Task 5	Task 6	Task 7	Total	Task 8	Task 9	Task 10	Total
2012	13	13	14	13	53	12	18	18	48	18	18	18	54
2013	14	13	15	16	58	18	18	18	54	18	18	18	54
2014	12	15	15	18	60	18	18	18	54	18	18	18	54
2015	17	14	16	11	58	18	18	18	54	18	18	18	54
2016	15	16	16	11	58	18	18	18	54	18	18	18	54
2017	13	13	15	13	54	17	19	17	53	22	18	13	53
2018	13	13	13	12	51	14	18	20	52	22	13	17	52
2019	14	13	13	13	53	16	19	18	53	18	17	18	53
2020	16	13	13	10	52	18	18	17	53	18	18	17	53
2021	16	15	12	13	56	17	18	18	53	16	19	18	53
2022	13	12	14	13	52	18	18	17	53	18	17	18	53
Average	14.2	13.6	14.2	13	55	16.7	18.2	17.9	52.8	18.5	17.5	17.4	53.4

Task Completion Marks & Content Points (Part B)

Year	Part B1						Part B2					
	Task 5		Task 6		Task 7		Task 8		Task 9		Task 10	
	TC	CPs	TC	CPs	TC	CPs	TC	CPs	TC	CPs	TC	CPs
2012	14	14	9	12	9	15	9	15	9	13	9	14
2013	16	16	9	9	9	18	9	13	9	9	9	13
2014	14	14	9	9	9	10	9	15	9	11	9	10
2015	16	16	9	10	9	12	9	12	9	11	9	13
2016	16	16	9	9	9	10	9	9	9	11	9	12
2017	13	13	10	10	8	8	13	13	9	9	7	7
2018	12	12	9	9	11	11	13	13	7	7	8	8
2019	14	14	10	10	9	9	9	9	8	8	9	9
2020	9	9	9	9	14	14	9	9	9	9	8	8
2021	15	15	9	9	9	9	7	7	10	10	9	9
2022	9	9	9	9	14	14	9	9	8	8	9	9

Word Limit (Part B)

Year	Part B1				Part B2			
	Task 5	Task 6	Task 7	Total	Task 8	Task 9	Task 10	Total
2012	—	120	150	270	150	200	200	550
2013	—	120	150	270	150	120	200	470
2014	—	120	150	270	150	150	200	500
2015	—	120	150	270	120	180	200	500
2016	—	120	150	270	120	150	200	470
2017	—	120	120	240	220	150	100	470
2018	—	120	150	270	220	120	150	490
2019	—	150	100	250	180	120	200	500
2020	100	150	—	250	150	150	200	500
2021	—	120	150	270	120	180	150	450
2022	100	120	—	220	150	170	180	500

Data File Items & Word Count (Part B)

Year	Part B1		Part B2	
	Data File Items	Word Count	Data File Items	Word Count
2012	7	1,070	8	1,768
2013	9	1,254	10	1,866
2014	9	1,517	13	1,902
2015	11	1,440	10	2,087
2016	9	1,256	10	2,009
2017	9	1,396	11	2,310
2018	7	1,224	8	1,787
2019	10	1,139	8	1,941
2020	10	1,433	10	1,901
2021	9	1,342	9	2,078
2022	8	1,228	11	1,902
Average	8.9	1,300	9.8	1,959