

HONG KONG EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY
HONG KONG DIPLOMA OF SECONDARY EDUCATION EXAMINATION 2015

LIBERAL STUDIES PAPER 2

11:15 am – 12:30 pm (1¼ hours)
This paper must be answered in English

- (1) This paper consists of three questions. Answer **ONE** question only.
- (2) Write your answers in the Answer Book provided.
- (3) Candidates are reminded that this subject emphasises the ability to present and support points of view in a clear, concise and logical manner, rather than the ability to recall facts.

Extended response questions

Answer *one* question only.

1. Consider the following sources:

Source A: An extract from a newspaper commentary dated 7 February 2014

The Hong Kong Journalists Association conducted a survey in 2012 and found that 86.9% of journalists thought that press freedom had declined. Besides, according to a report by a famous international organisation, Reporters Without Borders, the world ranking of Hong Kong's press freedom fell from 18 in 2002 to 58 in 2013.

Research by Harvard University showed that the more press freedom a society has, less corruption, more efficient administration, higher political stability, greater compliance with the rule of law and a higher level of economic development are found in the society.

Source B: Adapted from a newspaper commentary dated 25 February 2014

Besides the three powers: executive, legislature and judiciary, the media is usually considered to be the 'fourth power' which monitors the other three. The media exercises its power and rights via press freedom and freedom of expression. Some messages and ideas are spread by the media positively, some negatively. The modern media is a transmitter of messages and cannot evade its responsibility. Press freedom is not absolute. Countries may restrict press freedom by law.

- (a) What factors do you think might influence press freedom in Hong Kong? Explain your answer. (8 marks)
- (b) 'A high degree of press freedom would enhance the effectiveness of governance by the Hong Kong government.' To what extent do you agree with this view? Explain your answer. (12 marks)

2. Consider the following sources:

Source A: An extract from a newspaper commentary dated 28 November 2012

A Labour Department report concludes that legislation on standard working hours* would have a big financial impact, adding between HK\$8 billion and HK\$55.2 billion a year to labour costs. An important matter has been neglected however: how the lives of Hong Kong people would be affected by legislation on standard working hours.

Employees need a life outside work to devote to family, recreation and rest. That is not to play down the concerns of employers. Seven of the biggest business chambers have warned that such a law would harm Hong Kong's economic growth. The Labour Department report also suggests that the law would weaken the ability of companies to ride out difficult times.

Standard working hours is essential to the improvement of the quality of life of Hong Kong people. Consensus among employers, employees and interest groups has to be the basis for decisions.

* Standard working hours refers to the number of hours that employees need to work on a day or in a week. Work beyond the standard working hours should be compensated by overtime pay at a rate stated in the law, or by compensatory rest period, or both.

Source B: An extract from a newspaper commentary dated 2 August 2014

Employees looking forward to legislation on shorter working hours will probably feel disappointed. The Hong Kong government has appointed a Standard Working Hours Committee with employer and employee representatives. However, a six-month public consultation has apparently failed to bridge the divide between employers and employees.

- (a) What would you consider to be the barriers to achieving consensus among major stakeholders on the issue of standard working hours in Hong Kong? Explain your answer. (8 marks)
- (b) Source A claims that "standard working hours is essential to the improvement of the quality of life of Hong Kong people". To what extent do you agree with this claim? Explain your answer. (12 marks)

3. Consider the following source:

Adapted from a commentary dated 21 September 2012

Movies, TV dramas and music from Hollywood and Japan have been extending their influences around the world for decades. In recent years, the entertainment industries of Korea and Bollywood in India have been flourishing as well.

This 'Korean Wave' has done remarkably well in terms of spreading Korean entertainment far beyond South Korea's shores. While there can be no question that the 'Korean Wave' has generally been an economic boom for South Korea, some have even put forth the idea that maybe the steady spread of Korean entertainment across the globe can positively influence people's impressions of South Korea and the Korean people.

A U.S. professor in political science wrote, "soft power places faith in culture, policies, and institutions to win 'the battle for hearts and minds'." Unsurprisingly, the 'Korean Wave' has been oft-cited as South Korea's strongest form of soft power.

- (a) Explain the effects that the entertainment industry, as a global culture, may have on its audiences. (8 marks)
- (b) 'Soft power is the most effective way for governments to increase their influence in the world.' Do you agree with this view? Explain your answer. (12 marks)

END OF PAPER

Sources of materials used in this paper will be acknowledged in the *Examination Report and Question Papers* published by the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority at a later stage.