External Assessment Report 2012   Higher Mandarin/Cantonese

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

Number of entries in 2012 74
On the whole, candidates' performance was good. Many candidates performed well in all aspects of the examination with some outstanding performances. Most candidates were clearly well prepared for the examination.

Candidate performance in Reading and advice to centres

- Some candidates wrote extensive responses to comprehension questions. There were several good examples of translation.
- The complexity of the language presented challenge to many candidates. Some demanding questions, such as Question 1 (a) and Question 2 (a), were misunderstood by some candidates.
- Responses sometimes lacked sufficient detail to gain the full mark, such as Question 1 (b): candidates had to mention both (reflective) **jacket** and **helmet** to gain the full mark
- Some candidates failed to demonstrate understanding of the 'easier' points by failing to recognise the details of the sentence. In Question 2 (b): missing the details '更'----'更轻巧,更舒适' lighter and **more** comfortable.
- Centres should continue with established good practice in preparing candidates for Comprehension questions, and should continue to highlight to candidates the difference between reading for comprehension and providing accurate translation.
- Candidates should be encouraged to read the entire passage rather than sentence by sentence, in order to gain full understanding of the whole passage.
- Candidates should be encouraged to pay particular attention to the articles and tenses used in translation.

Candidate performance in Listening and advice to centres

- The Listening was handled very well and with confidence. This is reflected in the marks achieved by candidates.

Candidate performance in Writing and advice to centres

- Candidates performed very well in both writing pieces with some outstanding short essays, in which learned language was successfully adapted to suit the context.
- In Directed Writing, many candidates fully engaged with the topic, but a number of candidates failed to address all bullet points as required, for which they were penalised.
- Centres should advise candidates to read each bullet point carefully, to ensure that they do not miss any of them out.
- Candidates should ensure that learned material is both relevant and appropriate
- It is important to advise candidates to use the dictionary to check accuracy, and **not** to create and invent new sentences.