

PCLL Conversion Examination
3rd July 2008
Examiner's Comments
Hong Kong Legal System

The examination consisted of three questions of which two were compulsory. The three questions addressed: the judiciary, the sources of Hong Kong law, and creation thereof, and lastly, legal aid. The examination was written on a closed book basis.

As with the January exam, the examiners prepared in advance of the examination a list of factors that were relevant to answering each question. Again, to answer the questions successfully, candidates needed to address not only those factors but to do so in a structured and relevant manner. Candidates should have also been able to express themselves in a clear and succinct manner. However in a few cases the standard of written English was disappointingly low. Lastly, in order to answer the questions satisfactorily, candidates should have been able to cite relevant sources of law and major commentators in each area.

The standard was variable with a few candidates submitting very good papers, a few failing outright to address the subject matter of the questions and the majority managing a passable response to the questions chosen. Some students did not complete both questions but answered one at unnecessary length, thus leaving themselves insufficient time to complete their second question adequately. As in previous exams a number of candidates wrote answers which failed to be relevant to the question selected. In some instances candidates addressed the relevant subject matter but failed to direct the material to the specific question asked, instead simply writing everything they knew in relation to the general topic of the question.

The examiners would reiterate their comments following the January exam that in preparing for the examination in this subject, candidates should focus on academic and judicial sources in preference to material gleaned from the popular press and to become familiar with this material in a manner more detailed than merely broad outline knowledge. Candidates should also aim to balance the descriptive content of their answers with analysis of the material in order to answer the particular question set.