

Common Recruitment Examination and Basic Law Test (Degree / Professional Grades) (CRE and BLT)

(Examination to be held in December 2016 outside Hong Kong)

Frequently Asked Questions

About CRE results

- Q1 : How are the CRE results classified?
- A1 : Candidates' results in the Use of English (UE) and Use of Chinese (UC) papers are classified as Level 2, Level 1 or Fail, with Level 2 being the highest. Results in the Aptitude Test (AT) paper are classified as Pass or Fail. For the CREs held from December 2006 onwards, Level 2 and Level 1 results of the two language papers and Pass result of the AT paper are of permanent validity.
- Q2 : What are the required levels of results in the two language papers for the application of different civil service posts at degree or professional level?
- A2 : In general, applicants for [civil service posts at degree or professional level](#) are required to obtain either Level 2 or Level 1 in the UE and UC papers of the CRE for meeting the language proficiency requirements of the post concerned. Such requirements will be stipulated by individual recruiting departments / grades in the relevant recruitment advertisements. Applicants with Level 2 in the UE and UC papers will be considered as meeting the general language proficiency requirements of all degree or professional grades.
- Q3 : If I intend to join the disciplined services grades, do I need to take the CRE?
- A3 : [Some disciplined services grades](#), such as Police Inspector, offer different entry pay points to candidates according to their academic qualifications. Degree holders without the requisite CRE results may apply for these posts but will not be eligible for obtaining the pay points for degree entry. Therefore, it is advisable for degree holders who wish to join these grades to take the CRE.
- Q4 : I have Level 2 or Level 1 in the UE and UC papers only. Is it a must for me to take the AT paper?
- A4 : [Certain civil service posts](#) at degree or professional level require Level 2 or Level 1 in the UE and UC papers only. If you wish to apply for [civil service posts that also require a Pass in the AT paper](#), you will need to take the AT paper.
- Q5 : Is it a must to take all three papers in the coming CRE if I have just failed one or two of the papers? Will you accept valid results in the three papers obtained from different CREs?

- A5 : Results are issued for individual papers. You may therefore choose to take only one or any combination of papers which you have failed to attain the requisite results of particular civil service posts. For the purpose of applying for civil service posts, results obtained from different CREs can be taken together as long as the results are all valid at the time of the job application. (Please also see Q&A 12)

About HKDSEE, HKALE, GCE A Level and IELTS results

- Q6 : I have obtained Level 5 or above in English Language and / or Chinese Language of the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSEE). Is it necessary for me to take the UE and / or UC paper(s) of the CRE?
- A6 : Level 5 or above in **English Language** of the **HKDSEE** is accepted as equivalent to Level 2 in the UE paper of the CRE. Level 5 or above in **Chinese Language** of the **HKDSEE** is accepted as equivalent to Level 2 in the UC paper of the CRE. If you have the above result(s), you need not, and will **NOT** be arranged, to take the UE and / or UC paper(s) of the CRE.
- Q7 : I achieved Level 4 in the said subject(s) of the HKDSEE. Does it mean that I have to take the UE and / or UC paper(s) of the CRE?
- A7 : Level 4 in **English Language** of the **HKDSEE** is accepted as equivalent to Level 1 in the UE paper of the CRE. Level 4 in **Chinese Language** of the **HKDSEE** is accepted as equivalent to Level 1 in the UC paper of the CRE. In general, applicants for civil service posts at degree or professional level are required to obtain either Level 2 or Level 1 in the UE and UC papers of the CRE for meeting the language proficiency requirements as stipulated by individual recruiting departments / grades. You may wish to refer to the [requirements of civil service post\(s\)](#) in which you are interested to decide whether you need to take the UE and / or UC paper(s) to obtain Level 2.
- Q8 : I have passed Use of English in the Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination (HKALE) (or English Language in the General Certificate of Education (Advanced Level) (GCE A Level)) and / or Chinese Language and Culture in the HKALE. Will I be exempted from the CRE?
- A8 : Grade C or above in **Use of English** of the **HKALE** or in **English Language** of the **GCE A Level** is accepted as equivalent to Level 2 in the UE paper of the CRE. Grade C or above in **Chinese Language and Culture** or **Chinese Language and Literature** of the **HKALE** is accepted as equivalent to Level 2 in the UC paper of the CRE. If you have the above result(s), you need not, and will **NOT** be arranged to, take the UE and / or UC paper(s).

Grade D in **Use of English** of the **HKALE** or in **English Language** of the **GCE A Level** is accepted as equivalent to Level 1 in the UE paper of the CRE. Grade D in **Chinese Language and Culture** or **Chinese Language and Literature** of the **HKALE** is accepted as equivalent to Level 1 in the UC paper of the CRE. If you have the above result(s), you may wish to take this into account in deciding whether you need to take the UE and / or UC paper(s) having regard to the [requirements of civil service post\(s\)](#) in which you are interested.

- Q9 : I have taken the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test. Will I be exempted from the CRE?

- A9 : An overall band score of 6.5 or above with no subtest score below band 6 obtained in the same sitting in the Academic Module of the IELTS within the 2-year validity period of the test is accepted as equivalent to Level 2 in the UE paper of the CRE. If you have the above results, and are certain that the relevant IELTS results will still be valid at the time of the job application, you may consider whether to take the UE paper of the CRE.
- Q10 : I have valid IELTS results as mentioned in A9. Can I still take the UE paper of the CRE?
- A10 : You can still take the UE paper of the CRE even though you have valid IELTS results.
- Q11 : Will you accept a combination of the IELTS results obtained from different sittings as an equivalent to the results of the UE paper of the CRE?
- A11 : No, we only accept IELTS results in the overall band and subtests obtained in the same sitting.
- Q12 : Will you accept a combination of results obtained from the CRE, HKDSEE, HKALE, GCE A Level and IELTS?
- A12 : For meeting the general language proficiency requirements of degree or professional grades, a combination of results obtained from the CRE, HKDSEE, HKALE, GCE A Level and IELTS will be accepted, provided that all the results are valid at the time of the job application. Relevant results obtained in different CRE / HKDSEE / HKALE / GCE A Level sittings will be accepted (e.g. a Pass in the AT paper obtained in the CRE held in December 2011, Level 2 obtained in the UE paper of the CRE in June 2012 and Grade C in Chinese Language and Culture of the HKALE in 2008; or a Pass in the AT paper, Level 2 in the UC paper of the CRE in October 2015 and Level 5 in English Language of the HKDSEE in 2012, etc.). As for IELTS, only results obtained in the same sitting will be accepted.
- Q13 : Apart from the results of the HKDSEE, HKALE, GCE A Level and IELTS, are there any public examination results being accepted as equivalent to CRE results?
- A13 : At present, only the relevant results of the HKDSEE, HKALE, GCE A Level and IELTS are accepted as equivalent to CRE results.

About eligibility

- Q14 : Who can apply for the coming CRE and BLT?
- A14 : Applicants for the coming CRE and BLT should be –
- holders of degree (not including Associate Degree); or
 - university students who will have attained a degree in the 2016-17 academic year; or
 - holders of a qualification meeting the entry requirements on professional qualifications for civil service degree or professional posts. (Only applicable to those who are not in the above categories) (Please also see Q&A 15)
- Q15 : I possess a professional qualification but not a degree. Can I apply to sit the CRE and BLT?

- A15 : Non-degree holders may only apply to sit the CRE and BLT if they are eligible to apply for any of the civil service degree or professional posts with the professional qualification they possess. For example, if you have a diploma in Landscape Architecture which is acceptable to the Hong Kong Institute of Landscape Architects (HKILA) as satisfying the academic requirements for admission into the HKILA Examination, you may apply for sitting the CRE and BLT even if you do not possess a degree since the said diploma qualification is accepted for applying for the Assistant Landscape Architect post. However, if you have registered as registered social worker under the Social Workers Registration Ordinance but do not possess a degree, you are NOT eligible for sitting the CRE and BLT since the entry requirements for the Social Worker post include both a professional qualification and a relevant degree.

Before submitting an application for the coming CRE and BLT, you are required to check from the [CSB website](#) and / or with the recruiting departments / grades concerned to confirm whether the qualification that you are holding is accepted for appointment to the relevant civil service degree / professional post(s). [The list of civil service degree or professional grades](#) is posted on the CSB website. You may also contact the Civil Service Examinations Unit by phone at (852) 2537 6429, by e-mail to csbcseu@csb.gov.hk, or by post to Room 718, 7/F, West Wing, Central Government Offices, 2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong to get the relevant details.

- Q16 : I am expected to get the bachelor's degree within 2017. Can I apply to sit the coming CRE and BLT?
- A16 : Persons who will have attained a degree in the 2016-17 academic year may apply to sit the coming CRE and BLT. Applicants who have questions about their attaining the degree qualification in 2016-17 academic year should first confirm with their respective tertiary institutions.

About the application procedure

- Q17 : Do I need to submit the application form in person to the Civil Service Examinations Unit (CSEU)?
- A17 : No. You can apply through the on-line application system before 5:00 p.m. on 7 October 2016 (Hong Kong time), or send the application form by post to the Civil Service Examinations Unit at Room 718, 7/F, West Wing, Central Government Offices, 2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong (date of postmark on or before 7 October 2016). To avoid unsuccessful delivery of mail items, please ensure that the address on the envelope is clear and correct, and sufficient postage has been paid. Mail items bearing insufficient postage will not be delivered to the CSEU and will be returned to the sender or disposed of by the Hongkong Post, where appropriate. An applicant will bear any consequences arising from not paying sufficient postage.

Alternatively, you may submit your application by hand to the application collection box located at the Staff Entrance, 2/F, East Wing, Central Government Offices, 2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong. [Note: The collection box is available from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. (only until 5:00 p.m. on 7 October 2016), Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays.]

- Q18 : Can I submit the application form by fax or e-mail?
- A18 : No. Applications submitted by fax or e-mail will **NOT** be processed.
- Q19 : I shall sit the coming CRE and / or BLT in Hong Kong in October this year. Can I now apply to sit the examination outside Hong Kong?
- A19 : No. Interested persons can only sit the examination either in Hong Kong **OR** in one of the cities outside Hong Kong. Persons sitting the examination in Hong Kong in October this year are **NOT** allowed to apply for sitting the examination outside Hong Kong.
- Q20 : I have applied for sitting the coming CRE and BLT in Hong Kong in October this year. If I change my mind and would like to take the examination in December outside Hong Kong, what should I do?
- A20 : You are required to submit a written request to the CSEU **before 5:00 p.m. (Hong Kong time) on 7 October 2016** (i.e. the deadline for the application for sitting the examination outside Hong Kong). Any request made after the said deadline will **NOT** be considered.
- Q21 : I would like to apply for sitting the CRE. Can I also apply to take the BLT paper?
- A21 : Yes. Applicants may choose to take any of the CRE papers and / or the BLT paper in the coming examination.
- Q22 : I already possess the requisite CRE results. Can I choose to take the BLT paper only?
- A22 : Yes. Applicants may apply to take the BLT paper only in the coming examination.

About the on-line application system

- Q23 : What are the system requirements for the on-line application system?
- A23 : The on-line application system was tested for the following combinations of operating systems and browsers –

Browsers	Operating Systems					
	Windows Vista	Windows 7	Windows 8.1	Windows 10	Mac OS X	Linux
Microsoft Internet Explorer 9	Yes	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Microsoft Internet Explorer 10	Not Applicable	Yes	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Microsoft Internet Explorer 11	Not Applicable	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Microsoft Edge	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Yes	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Mozilla Firefox 3 – 48	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Safari 4 – 9	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Yes	Not Applicable
Google Chrome 10 – 52	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

For users of Firefox 3.6.2 or earlier versions:

The on-line application system makes use of server certificates issued by Hongkong Post for protecting data during network transmission. Firefox 3.6.2 or earlier versions do not have the Root Certification Authority (CA) Certificates of Hongkong Post by default. You have to configure the browser of your computer to recognise the certificates issued by Hongkong Post. The Root CA Certificates of Hongkong Post are already included by default starting from Firefox 3.6.3. (Please also see Q&A24)

Q24 : Warning message “Website Certified by an Unknown Authority” or “Secure Connection Failed” popped up on the Firefox browser of my computer when I used the on-line application system. What should I do?

A24 : This system makes use of server certificates issued by the Hongkong Post for protecting your data during network transmission, but Firefox 3.6.2 or earlier versions do not have the Root CA Certificates of Hongkong Post by default. You should follow the steps below to download and install the [Hongkong Post Root CA Certificates](#):

1. Click on the link for “Hongkong Post Root CA1” as highlighted below.
2. a) For Internet Explorer users:
Click “Open”, “Install Certificate” and then click “Next” two times to install the Hongkong Post root certificate.
b) For Firefox users:
Tick the checkbox “Trust this CA to identify websites” and click “OK”.
3. Click on the link for “Hongkong Post e-Cert CA 1 - 10” as highlighted below and repeat step 2.

The screenshot shows the Hongkong Post e-Cert website. The header includes the logo and the tagline "The solution for e-Security". The left sidebar contains a navigation menu with links like "About Us", "Product & Services", "e-Cert", "Certification Practice Statement", "e-Cert Related Products / Services", "Download", "Frequently Asked Questions on e-Cert", "News", and "About PKI". The main content area is titled "Hongkong Post CA Root Certificate" and contains a paragraph explaining the digital signature process. Below this, there are two lists of certificates: "Hongkong Post Root CA 1" (with sub-items "Hongkong Post e-Cert CA 1 - 10", "Hongkong Post e-Cert CA 1 - 14", and "Hongkong Post e-Cert CA 1 - 15") and "Hongkong Post Root CA 2" (with sub-item "Hongkong Post e-Cert CA 2 - 15"). There are also links for "Apply for e-Cert", "Usage of e-Cert", and "e-Cert User Guide".

Annotations on the screenshot include:

- A red box around the "Download the 'Hongkong Post Root CA 1' certificate" link, with a red arrow pointing to it from a "Click here" label.
- A red box around the "Download the 'Hongkong Post e-Cert CA 1 - 10' certificate" link, with a red arrow pointing to it from a "Click here" label.

Below the main content, there are logos for CERTIZEN, Hongkong Post, W3C, and WAI-AA WCAG 2.0.

CRE in connection with the application for the post(s) of Administrative Officer (AO), Executive Officer II (EOII), Assistant Labour Officer II (ALOI), Assistant Trade Officer II (ATOII) and / or Transport Officer II (TOII)

Q25: It is noted that the open recruitment for the posts of AO, EOII, ALOII, ATOII and TOII has started in September 2016. If I apply for the said post(s), will I be arranged to sit the CRE and BLT?

A25 : Applicants for the AO, EOII, ALOII, ATOII and / or TOII post(s) will **NOT** automatically be arranged to sit the coming CRE and BLT. Persons interested in applying for these post(s) but do not possess the requisite CRE and / or BLT results **MUST make a separate application for the coming CRE and BLT now if they want to sit the examination outside Hong Kong.**

(Note: The application period for the CRE and BLT to be held in Hong Kong in October 2016 was closed on 18 August 2016.)

Q26 : I intend to apply for / have applied for the AO, EOII, ALOII, ATOII and / or TOII post(s) and will choose / have chosen to take the Joint Administrative Officer / Executive Officer / Labour Officer / Trade Officer / Transport Officer Recruitment Examination (JRE) in Hong Kong. As I do not have the requisite CRE / BLT results, can I now apply to take the relevant CRE and / or BLT paper(s) in Hong Kong?

A26 : No. The application period for the coming CRE and BLT to be held in Hong Kong was closed on 18 August 2016. Nevertheless, applications for the examination to be held outside Hong Kong in December are invited from 24 September to 7 October 2016. Applicants who wish to sit the CRE and BLT in one of the cities outside Hong Kong **MUST** choose to sit the JRE in the same city if they would like to apply for the above post(s).

General

Q27 : Where can I get past papers of the CRE / BLT for reference?

A27 : The CRE and BLT papers are not published. Sample questions of the [CRE](#) and [BLT](#) papers are available on the CSB website.

Q28 : What is the syllabus for the CRE?

A28 : There is no prescribed syllabus for the CRE. The UE and UC papers assess candidates' language proficiency whereas the AT paper assesses their reasoning abilities. The [examination format](#) and [sample questions](#) can be found on the CSB website.

Q29 : What is the content for the BLT?

A29 : The scope of the BLT will be based on the text of the BL (which includes all its annexes, attachments and appendices). Relevant reference materials can be found in the [Basic Law website](#). The [examination format](#) and [sample questions](#) can be found on the CSB website.

Q30 : If I want to amend my personal particulars, what can I do?

- A30 : If you want to amend your personal particulars, such as your name, identity document number and correspondence address, etc, you may write to Senior Executive Officer (Examinations)2 of the Civil Service Examinations Unit at Room 718, 7/F, West Wing, Central Government Offices, 2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong or by e-mail to : csbcseu@csb.gov.hk, giving your name in English and HKID / Passport No.
- Q31 : Will a fee be charged for the CRE / BLT?
- A31 : There is no application fee for the CRE and BLT.

About result notification and job application

- Q32 : When and how will I receive the results of the CRE and BLT?
- A32 : Result notifications will be sent **by post** to candidates within one month after the examination.
- Q33 : What should I do if I want to have a review on my CRE / BLT result(s)?
- A33 : Your request should be made in writing and sent by post / by hand to the Civil Service Examinations Unit at Room 718, 7/F, West Wing, Central Government Offices, 2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong, or by e-mail to : csbcseu@csb.gov.hk **within two weeks** from the date of the result notification. Late submissions will **NOT** be considered.
- Q34 : If I obtain Level 2 or Level 1 in the UE and UC papers and a Pass in the AT paper of the CRE, will I be qualified for applying for civil service posts? When and how can I apply for these posts?
- A34 : Individual recruiting departments / grades will stipulate in the relevant recruitment advertisements their CRE requirements. As the CRE is held independently of the recruitment process for any civil service post, you should apply to the recruiting departments / grades direct in response to [recruitment advertisements](#) published in newspapers and on the CSB website. Vetting of academic and / or professional qualifications will be carried out by the recruiting departments / grades which may also conduct separate examinations / interviews in addition to the CRE.
- Q35 : Do I need to retain the letter of CRE results?
- A35 : You must retain the letter, which is a proof of your attainment in obtaining the requisite CRE results when you apply for civil service posts at degree or professional level.
- Q36 : Do I need to retain the letter of BLT result?
- A36 : You must retain the letter of BLT result. It is a proof of your BLT result and you are required to present this letter to the recruiting departments / grades when attending recruitment interview.
- Q37 : I have lost the letter of CRE / BLT results. Can I request another copy?
- A37 : You may make a request in writing which may be sent by post to the Civil Service

Examinations Unit at Room 718, 7/F, West Wing, Central Government Offices, 2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong, or by e-mail to : csbcseu@csb.gov.hk.

Q38 : Can I use the CRE results to apply for jobs outside the civil service?

A38 : The CRE is a threshold examination for the appointment of civil service degree or professional posts. It is not a general academic qualification.