

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

(Examination to be held in December 2021 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 AT paper obtained in the CRE held in December 2013, Level 2 obtained in UE paper of the CRE in June 2014 and Grade C in Chinese Language and Culture of the HKALE in 2010; or a Pass in AT paper, Level 2 in UC paper of the CRE in October 2020 and Level 5 in English Language of the HKDSEE in 2017, 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 BLT result

Q14 : Is there any passing mark in the BLT?

A14 : For all civil service recruitment exercises advertised on or after **6 August 2021**, a pass result in the BLT is an entry requirement for civil service jobs requiring degree / professional qualifications. Only those candidates who have passed the BLT will be considered for appointment. Attaining a score at or above 53 out of the full mark of 100 (i.e. getting at least 8 out of 15 questions correct) will be deemed to have a pass result in the BLT. The BLT result will also constitute an appropriate weighting in a candidate's overall assessment.

Q15 : I have attained a pass result in BLT. Can I take the BLT again when the applications are called by the Civil Service Examinations Unit?

A15 : For candidates who have taken a BLT before, they will be deemed to have a pass result in BLT if they have attained a score at or above 53 out of the full mark of 100 (i.e. getting at least 8 out of 15 questions correct). A pass result of the BLT is of permanent validity and is acceptable for the purpose of applying for civil service jobs. Candidates may, if they wish so, take the BLT again when applications for the BLT are called by the Civil Service

About eligibility

- Q16 : Who can apply for the coming CRE and BLT?
- A16 : 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 2021-22 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 17)
- Q17 : I possess a professional qualification but not a degree. Can I apply to sit the CRE and BLT?
- A17 : 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 are a registered student of the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants (HKICPA) Qualification Programme, you may apply for sitting the CRE and BLT even if you do not possess a degree since the said qualification is accepted for applying for the Assistant Assessor 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 Assistant Social Work Officer post include both a professional qualification and a relevant degree.

Before submitting an application for the 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.

- Q18 : I am expected to get the bachelor's degree within 2022. Can I apply to sit the coming CRE and BLT?
- A18 : Persons who will have attained a degree in the 2021-22 academic year may apply to sit the coming CRE and BLT. Applicants who have questions about their attaining the degree qualification in 2021-22 academic year should first confirm with their tertiary institutions.

General

- Q19 : Where can I get past papers of the CRE / BLT for reference?
- A19 : The CRE and BLT papers are not published. Sample questions of the [CRE](#) and [BLT](#) papers are available on the CSB website.
- Q20 : What is the syllabus for the CRE?
- A20 : 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.

- Q21 : What is the content for the BLT?
- A21 : 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.
- Q22 : If I want to amend my personal particulars, what can I do?
- A22 : 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.
- Q23 : Will a fee be charged for the CRE / BLT?
- A23 : There is no application fee for the CRE and BLT.

About result notification and job application

- Q24 : When and how will I receive the results of the CRE and BLT?
- A24 : Result notifications will be sent **by post** to candidates within one month after the examination.
- Q25 : What should I do if I want to have a review on my CRE / BLT result(s)?
- A25 : Your request should be made in writing and 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 **within two weeks** from the date of the result notification. Late submissions will **NOT** be considered.
- Q26 : 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?
- A26 : 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.
- Q27 : Do I need to retain the letter of CRE results?
- A27 : 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.

- Q28 : Do I need to retain the letter of BLT result?
- A28 : 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 the trade test / recruitment examination / interview.
- Q29 : I have lost the letter of CRE / BLT results. Can I request another copy?
- A29 : 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.
- Q30 : Can I use the CRE results to apply for jobs outside the civil service?
- A30 : The CRE is a threshold examination for the appointment of civil service degree or professional posts. It is not a general academic qualification.

Precautionary measures at examination centres in response to the COVID-19

- Q31 : Will any precautionary measures be put in place in the coming examination to safeguard the health of candidates in response to the COVID-19?
- A31 : Precautionary measures will be taken to safeguard the health of candidates and invigilators including setting up of body temperature screening at the designated location of the examination centres, requiring all candidates and invigilators to wear masks and widening the seat spacing among candidates, etc.

For the examination **outside Hong Kong**, it may only be held subject to the regulations and prevailing measures in that particular city in the light of the development of the COVID-19. If the situation warrants, the examination may be **deferred or cancelled**. Updates on the examination arrangements will be announced on the Civil Service Bureau webpage at www.csb.gov.hk/eng/cre.html. Persons who wish to take the coming CRE and BLT outside Hong Kong should visit the said webpage regularly and refer to the relevant details on it.

Moreover, candidates are advised to observe requirements specified by the city for taking the examination, such as requirements on COVID-19 vaccination or testing and attending large scale events. Candidates may be required to demonstrate their health status on vaccination or testing as a condition of entry to the examination centres located at selected premises. Candidates are reminded to keep abreast of the latest updates on the requirements arising from COVID-19 imposed by the local governments of the cities concerned.

Regulations and prevailing measures as required by the local governments of the seven cities concerned arising from the COVID-19

- Q32 : If I have applied for sitting the coming CRE and BLT tentatively scheduled for 4 December 2021 in one of the seven cities concerned outside Hong Kong (i.e. Beijing, London, San Francisco, New York, Toronto, Vancouver and Sydney), are there any special arrangements arising from the COVID-19 that I have to take into consideration when taking the examination?
- A32 : In the light of the evolving situation regarding the COVID-19, the local governments of the seven cities outside Hong Kong may impose restrictions or promulgate regulations on certain groups of people to undergo compulsory quarantine/ self-isolation for a specified period of time, or impose requirements on COVID-19 vaccination or testing and attending large scale events, for example, candidates may be required to demonstrate their health status on vaccination or testing as a condition of entry to the examination centres located at selected premises. You are therefore reminded to keep abreast of the latest updates on the regulations and prevailing measures arising from the COVID-19 imposed by the local governments of the cities concerned. Candidates who fail to comply with the relevant requirements and/ or are undergoing compulsory quarantine/ self-isolation as required by the relevant local governments on the day of examination will not be allowed to enter the examination centre.