

Guidance Notes for Candidates of Common Recruitment Examination (CRE) to be held in September 2025

Important Points

- (1) In case unforeseeable changes to the examination arrangements are required, announcement will be made on the Civil Service Bureau (CSB) webpage at <http://www.csb.gov.hk/eng/cre.html>.
- (2) Starting and finishing times of examination: please refer to the e-mail issued by the Civil Service Examinations Unit (CSEU) to individual candidates about the examination details (the notification e-mail).
- (3) If you do not receive the notification e-mail by **15 September 2025**, you should immediately contact the CSEU by phone at (852) 2537 6429 or by e-mail to csbcseu@csb.gov.hk.
- (4) You **MUST arrive at the examination centre punctually and take the examination on the date, and at the time and place specified in the notification e-mail.** Any requests for change of examination date / time / venue will **NOT** be considered.
- (5) Format and sample questions of the CRE are available on the CSB webpage.
- (6) You should study carefully the information in these Guidance Notes. If you violate the rules set out in these Guidance Notes, you are **LIABLE TO A PENALTY**, e.g. written warning, mark penalty, result downgrading, disqualification from examination, voiding of examination results, etc. Candidates are also required to provide explanations on a form after the examination.

Before the Examination

- (7) You should check your body temperature before leaving for the examination centre. If you have a fever or respiratory tract infection symptoms, such as coughing, shortness of breath, or sneezing, you are strongly advised **NOT** to attend the examination.
- (8) You could wear mask(s) at the examination centre as needed. If you have respiratory tract infection symptoms, you should wear a surgical mask to prevent the spread of infection. Invigilators will ask you to remove your mask temporarily for verification of your identity.
- (9) You should familiarise yourself with the transport route to be taken to the examination centre and arrive at the examination centre punctually according to the arrival time stated in the notification e-mail. You should allow more time for your trip to the examination centre and pay attention to the latest traffic news on radio and television before departing for the examination centre.
- (10) You **MUST** bring to the examination centre :
 - (a) your identity document, i.e. Hong Kong Identity Card (HKID) (or Passport if Passport Number is reported in the application form) for identity verification. Candidates who fail to produce such proof of identity may not be allowed to take the examination. The British National (Overseas) passport cannot be used as any form of proof of identity in Hong Kong; and
 - (b) your own stationery, i.e. HB pencils, erasers, rulers and calculators (see paragraph (11) below). Stationery will not be provided at the centre.
- (11) Use of calculators and rulers is permitted only for the Aptitude Test paper of the CRE. Calculators should be cordless, without printing, graphic / word-display facilities or dictionary functions and silent in operation. Electronic devices with functions / applications other than those of a calculator are **NOT** permitted.

- (12) A **seat number** is assigned to you. To facilitate your locating the seat arranged for you, you **MUST** bring this seat number with you to the examination centre and should check against the seating plan which will be posted at the centre. Failure to bring your seat number may lead to delay in your admission to the centre. The time lost in the examination will **NOT** be compensated.
- (13) You **MUST bring your own watch** to time the examination as not all examination centres will have a clock. Complaints about having no clock or not being able to view the clock in the examination centre will **NOT** be entertained. Watches with functions / applications other than those of timekeeping (e.g. smart watch) are **NOT** permitted. Please note that you are **NOT** allowed to use your mobile phones throughout the examination for any purposes, including timekeeping.
- (14) You may bring an overcoat to the examination centre if necessary.

Attending the Examination in the Examination Centre

- (15) You are **NOT** allowed to take photographs, make audio recordings or video recordings in the examination centre before/during/after the examination, and/or display/playback such photographs/audio recordings/video recordings in any form and/or in any venue, including but not limited to electronically or publicly. Otherwise, you will be given **a penalty**, e.g. written warning, mark penalty, result downgrading, disqualification from examination, voiding of examination results, etc.
- (16) Smoking, eating or drinking is **NOT** allowed in the examination centre. If you need to drink water during the examination, you should seek permission from an invigilator.
- (17) After the start of a paper, you are **NOT** allowed to leave the examination centre until the end of the paper. If you need to leave early for special reasons, you are required to seek permission from the Presiding Invigilator and provide a written explanation. You are not allowed to return to the examination centre for the paper after you have left.
- (18) Only necessary and permitted stationery can be put on the desk. All other personal belongings, including mobile phones and other electronic devices* **MUST** be put under your chair. Mobile phones must **NOT** be covered by anything and can be clearly seen by the invigilators. You must **NOT** put any unauthorised articles (including mobile phones and other electronic devices*) on / in your desk, on your body or in your pockets throughout the examination. You are therefore advised to bring only the necessary and permitted stationery to the examination centre. You are also advised to bring with you a small bag to store your personal belongings. The CSEU assumes no responsibility for any loss of or damage to your personal belongings.
- (19) Mobile phones, other electronic devices*, and articles that can emit sound **MUST** be switched off throughout the examination. You are solely responsible for ensuring that no sound (including alarm) is emitted from your mobile phone even though your phone is power off.
- (20) If you need to go to the toilet during the examination, you should seek permission from an invigilator. An invigilator will accompany you and you must **NOT** carry any mobile phones, other electronic devices*, question book, answer sheet or paper to the toilet. The invigilator will record your seat

* Electronic devices include tablets, PDAs, multimedia players, electronic dictionaries, databank watches, smart watches, wireless earphones or other wearable technologies with communication or data storage function, etc.

number and the time taken for going to the toilet. You will **NOT** be given any extra time to make up for the time lost.

- (21) You must **NOT** turn over the pages of the question book (including after the examination) or start working until you are instructed to do so.
- (22) You must **NOT** leave your answer sheet in such a position that other candidates can see your answers.
- (23) You must **NOT** copy any questions on any paper, personal belongings or parts of your body.
- (24) You **MUST** mark the answers with HB pencils on the multiple-choice answer sheets provided. Answers written in the question book will **NOT** be marked.
- (25) You must **NOT** disturb, speak or give signals to other candidates during the examination. Otherwise, you will be given a **penalty**, e.g. written warning, mark penalty, result downgrading, disqualification from examination, voiding of examination results, etc.
- (26) When the announcement: **“Time is up”** is made, you **MUST** stop working and put down all your stationery immediately. You are not allowed to work on your answer sheet including using an eraser or other stationery after the “Time is up” announcement. If you are still working on your answer sheet, or holding your stationery, you will be given a **penalty**, e.g. written warning, mark penalty, result downgrading, disqualification from examination, voiding of examination results, etc. If you discover after the “Time is up” announcement that you have not filled in your seat number or the number of your identity document, you should wait until an invigilator comes near and **ask for permission** to fill in the relevant information.
- (27) You should listen very carefully and follow the instructions given by the Presiding Invigilator. If you violate the instructions given by the Presiding Invigilator or the rules set out in these Guidance Notes, or act dishonestly in any way during the examination, you are **LIABLE TO A PENALTY**, e.g. written warning, mark penalty, result downgrading, disqualification from examination, voiding of examination results, etc. You will also be required to provide explanations on a form after the examination.
- (28) If you have serious sneezing or persistent coughing, you may be arranged to sit at the reserved seats of the examination centre in order to minimise disturbance to other candidates. You are required to follow the instructions of the invigilators. The time lost in the examination will **NOT** be compensated.
- (29) At the end of the examination, invigilators will collect candidates’ question books and answer sheets. You **MUST** remain seated until you are asked to pack your personal belongings and leave by the Presiding Invigilator.
- (30) You are **strictly forbidden** to take away any question book, answer sheet or paper, whether used or unused, out of the examination centre.

Proper Ways of Filling in Multiple-choice Answer Sheets

- (31) The answer sheets will be processed by a computer. Failure to follow the instructions below may result in your answer sheet being rejected by the computer with **NO MARK** given to you.
- (32) Before going to the questions, you have to write down the following particulars on the answer sheet as instructed by the Presiding Invigilator :

- (a) Passport No. : Put down your HKID Number (or Passport Number if it is reported in the application form). Please also fill in the appropriate frame under each digit of the HKID Number.
OR HKID No.
 護照號碼 或
 香港身份證號碼
- (b) Seat No. : Enter your 7-digit seat number and fill in the appropriate frame under each digit. Your seat number for the examination is shown in the notification e-mail.
 座位編號

An example of the instructions in paragraphs 32 (a) to (b) is given below:

The left example shows a grid for HKID/Passport Number and Seat Number. The grid has 10 rows and 10 columns. The first row contains the letters A through J. The second row contains the letters K through S. The third row contains the letters T through Z. The fourth row contains the letters A through S. The fifth row contains the letters T through Z. The sixth row contains the letters A through S. The seventh row contains the letters T through Z. The eighth row contains the letters A through S. The ninth row contains the letters T through Z. The tenth row contains the letters A through S. The grid is filled with the letters A through S, T through Z, and the letters A through S, T through Z, and the letters A through S, T through Z. The right example shows a grid for the 7-digit seat number. The grid has 10 rows and 7 columns. The first row contains the digits 0 through 9. The second row contains the digits 0 through 9. The third row contains the digits 0 through 9. The fourth row contains the digits 0 through 9. The fifth row contains the digits 0 through 9. The sixth row contains the digits 0 through 9. The seventh row contains the digits 0 through 9. The eighth row contains the digits 0 through 9. The ninth row contains the digits 0 through 9. The tenth row contains the digits 0 through 9. The grid is filled with the digits 0 through 9, and the digits 0 through 9, and the digits 0 through 9, and the digits 0 through 9, and the digits 0 through 9, and the digits 0 through 9, and the digits 0 through 9, and the digits 0 through 9, and the digits 0 through 9, and the digits 0 through 9.

- (33) You **MUST** use an **HB pencil to mark your answers**. Fill in the answer boxes in the same way as the example shown above. Erase wrong answers thoroughly with a clean eraser and do not fold the answer sheet.
- (34) You will score **NO** mark for marking two or more answers to the same question.
- (35) As you fill in an answer, check to see that you are answering the right question. Any requests for amending the answers after the “Time is up” announcement will **NOT** be entertained.

Examination Results

- (36) The examination results in the form of electronic result certificate will be issued within one month after the examination. The CSEU will send an e-mail to you through eproofcseu@csb.gov.hk with the download link of electronic result certificate. Please refer to the [CSB website](#) for details. The pass results of the CRE are acceptable for the purpose of applying for civil service jobs. Any appeals against the examination results should be made by e-mail to csbcseu@csb.gov.hk **within two weeks from the issuance date of the electronic result certificate**. Late submissions will **NOT** be entertained. If you have obtained Level 2 in the Use of English and Use of Chinese papers or a Pass in the Aptitude Test paper, the review request of the concerned paper(s) will **NOT** be considered.

Examination Arrangement under Bad Weather

- (37) As a general rule, the examination will be held as scheduled when the Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 3 or below, and / or “Amber” or “Red” Rainstorm Warning Signal is issued. It may be postponed when a Pre-No. 8 Special Announcement or Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 8 or higher, or “Black” Rainstorm Warning Signal is issued, or “extreme conditions” announcement by the Government is in force.

- (38) In the event of bad weather on the examination day, before you leave for the examination centre, you should visit the CSB webpage at <http://www.csb.gov.hk/eng/cre.html>, and pay attention to the radio / television broadcast for the latest examination arrangements.

Others

- (39) Parking facilities will not be provided for candidates at the examination venues.
- (40) You should not, without permission, enter the offices, classrooms or any area in the examination venue not open to candidates.
- (41) The CRE is held independently of the recruitment process for any civil service post. Persons who wish to apply for civil service posts should apply to the recruiting departments / grades direct. The acquisition of the requisite CRE results does not imply that a candidate has fully met the entry requirements of any civil service post at degree or professional level. Vetting of academic and / or professional qualifications will be carried out by the recruiting departments / grades which may also conduct separate examinations / interviews.
- (42) If you do not meet the eligibility requirements as stipulated in the Application Form / Notes for Applicants for the CRE (September 2025), you will be liable to disqualification from examination and / or voiding of examination results.

Civil Service Examinations Unit
Civil Service Bureau
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government
September 2025