

**CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS**  
**General Certificate of Education Advanced Subsidiary Level**

**THINKING SKILLS**

**8436/2**

PAPER 2 Critical Thinking

**MAY/JUNE SESSION 2002**

2 hours

Additional materials:  
Answer paper

**TIME** 2 hours

**INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**

Write your name, Centre number and candidate number in the spaces on the answer paper.

There are **3** questions on this paper. Answer **all** the questions.

Write your answers on the separate answer paper provided.

Start each question on a new answer sheet.

If you use more than one sheet of paper, fasten the sheets together.

**INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES**

The number of marks is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question.

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**This question paper consists of 4 printed pages.**



- 1 Study the following passage and complete the task that follows.

Ms Linda Hong was arrested on arrival at Changi Airport and charged with *causing a violent disturbance* on flight AZ 101 from Johannesburg. She in turn accused Karen Van Dyk, an employee of the airline and another member of the crew, of over-reacting and using unnecessary force. Linda Hong alleges that Karen first spilled coffee over her, and then mistook her (Linda's) behaviour for aggression.

Linda said in her statement to airport police: "They were hurrying to collect the meal trays, and the stewardess (Karen) was reaching over to get the tray of the man in the middle seat. His half finished coffee fell into my lap. I was understandably angry, and jumped up, possibly knocking some of the things on the trolley. I called the stewardess clumsy and she told me to calm down. I tried to push past her to go to the toilet and wash the stain off, but she blocked my way. She called for assistance and she and another crew member restrained me, wrenching my shoulder in the process."

Karen Van Dyk admitted that the coffee was spilled, but that Linda had knocked it off the tray herself. She claims: "Linda leapt to her feet shouting insults and threats at me. I asked her to sit down and apologised for the spilled coffee, even though it was not my fault, but she would not listen. I retreated to the other side of the trolley. She gave the trolley a violent push so that objects fell off it on to other passengers. I called for help and my colleague and I tried to get her to sit down as we were soon going to land. She lashed out at me and we had to hold her down until she was calm."

The passenger in the next seat said he did not see who knocked the coffee off the tray, but confirms that the staff did seem to be in a hurry. He stated that Linda was angry and that she stood up and muttered something to the stewardess. "Linda tried to push past her," he said, "but the trolley was blocking the aisle. There was a struggle and Linda was pushed back into her seat and held down until she became calmer."

Dr Sharma, who was sitting in the seat behind, saw Linda stand up. He said: "I couldn't hear what she was saying, but I could tell she was annoyed. I heard the stewardess say: 'Please sit down. It was just an accident. I'll get a cloth.' There was a scuffle and the stewardess called for help. A steward came and they pushed her into her seat. When the plane landed, the security guards came on board and took her off first."

Marian Deane, aged 74, sitting across the aisle and a row in front of Linda, reported trays and empty cups landing on her. She said: "Well, this woman (Linda Hong) went crazy and sent stuff flying everywhere. The stewardess, who'd been very nice to me, told her to calm down but she wouldn't. It was quite frightening really. The cabin staff were very brave. She could have been armed."

Other passengers who were questioned said that they had been aware of a scuffle, but had not seen or heard enough to make a statement. None reported trays or cups falling on them.

Ms Hong is 27, unmarried, and a teacher. She has no record of violent behaviour.

Assess the evidence for and against Karen Van Dyk's claim that Linda Hong caused a violent disturbance on the aeroplane. Consider the credibility of each of the witnesses and their statements in the light of other information and evidence. From the evidence decide how likely it is that Karen's version of events is accurate.

**[15 marks]**

**2** Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

In a democratic society, politicians need the approval of voters in order to win power at elections and governments need it to retain power. But if politicians base their policies and decisions solely on an understanding of voters' wishes, they are liable to act in short sighted and limited ways.

Individually, voters inevitably have a limited perspective on issues. They do not normally have the benefit of the findings of research or of expert advice. Voters may also have a biased view of issues. They may not want to pay higher taxes to fund socially worthwhile schemes, or they may have prejudices which narrow their judgement. Voters' views, therefore, are at best limited, and at worst selfish or intolerant.

Furthermore, voters' views change over time, sometimes with the result that a political decision which was originally unpopular becomes popular in time. This may be because the benefits of the decision have become clear, or because the feared consequences of the decision have failed to materialise. Take, for example, capital punishment. In countries which have abolished capital punishment, the decision was usually supported by only a minority of voters. Many people feared that without the deterrent effect of a death penalty the incidence of murder would increase. If politicians had been totally guided by voters' views, abolition of the death penalty would not have come about anywhere. In the event, abolition did not cause a rise in the murder rate. So many more voters would now be opposed to the re-introduction of the death penalty than opposed its abolition.

Politicians should see themselves, then, as opinion-leaders and not as opinion-led. They should form decisions based on research and discussion with experts; and when those decisions are unpopular they should seek to persuade the population of their rightness.

Against this it could be objected that voters are not interested in, or capable of understanding, the reasons for a particular decision. But the mass media have more than enough resources to explain and justify policies. If advertisers can be so successful at selling us products we don't need, there should be no problem in "selling" political decisions. Policy would then at least be made on the basis of reasoned judgement by politicians, rather than on an attempt to please uninformed voters by simply reflecting their views.

- (a) Summarise in your own words the main conclusion of the argument and one of the reasons given to support it. [2]
- (b) Identify two assumptions that the author appears to be making in connection with paragraph 2. [2]
- (c) Politicians disagree with each other over many issues. Do you think this fact strengthens or weakens the argument (or neither)? Give your reasons. [3]
- (d) How successfully does the author use the example of capital punishment to support the argument? [3]
- (e) In the last paragraph a comparison is made between selling goods and "selling" political decisions. Do you think this is a fair comparison and does it successfully contribute to the argument? [4]
- (f) Democracy is based on the principle of 'government by the people'. Does the argument fully support, or does it challenge, this principle? Give your reasons. [4]

- 3 Write a critical evaluation of the argument which is printed below. Your evaluation should show that you are clear about the structure of the argument by identifying the main conclusion and reasons given in support of it. You should point out the strengths and/or weaknesses in the argument and identify any assumptions the author makes. Present any further arguments that you consider relevant. (No credit will be given for simply paraphrasing the argument.)

[17 marks]

The choice facing working parents with young children is often harsh. They can either hand the children over to a child minder, or place them in a nursery for 10 hours a day, or give up work altogether and with it their income.

There is a growing belief in many countries that one or both parents should be able to return part-time to their original job following the birth of a child. An increasing number of mothers do so, but only because the companies they work for, mostly the larger ones, can accommodate that need. Fortunate though this is for some parents, big problems loom if part-time work becomes an automatic right for all new parents.

Firstly, most small firms rely on the dedication of a few full-time staff. They may be unable to be 'family-friendly', even if they wish to be. Finding and training temporary part-time staff to make up the hours may prove impossible. Secondly, there would be inevitable resentment from childless people who would see their colleagues working shorter hours. Thirdly there could be penalties, lost contracts and falling profits resulting from staff shortages or reduced working hours.

In our attempts to assist families, we should not lose sight of the need to keep businesses competitive and productive. Therefore, the way forward is to establish a 'harm test' under which a firm could plead special status and demand that an employee continues to work full time - whether they have recently become a parent or not - if they can claim that part-time working would hurt the business. That should be the deciding factor.