



BUKIT BATOK SECONDARY SCHOOL
GCE 'N' Level Preliminary Examination
ACADEMIC YEAR 2019
Secondary 4 Normal Academic

HUMANITIES

Paper 1 Social Studies

2175 & 2176 / 01
19 Aug 2019
Monday
0745 -0930
1 hour 45 minutes

Additional Materials: Writing Paper

CANDIDATE
NAME

CLASS

INDEX
NUMBER

PARENT'S
SIGNATURE

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your name, index number and class on all the work you hand in.
Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the writing paper.
Do not use paper clips, glue or correction fluid.

Section A

Answer **all parts** of Question 1.

Section B

Answer **both parts** of Question 2.

Write all answers on the foolscap paper provided.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.
The number of marks is given in brackets [] at the end of each question or part question.

SECTION A (Source-Based Case Study)

Question 1 is **compulsory** for all candidates.

1 EXPLORING CITIZENSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Study the Background Information and the sources carefully, and then answer all the questions.

You may use any of the sources to help you answer the questions, in addition to those sources which you are told to use. In answering the questions, you should use the knowledge of the issue to help you interpret and evaluate the sources.

- a) Study Source A.

What can you learn from this source about the impact of POFMA on Singaporeans? Explain your answer. [5]

- b) Study Source B.

Why was this post published? Explain your answer. [6]

- c) Study Sources C and D.

How different are these two sources? Explain your answer. [7]

- d) Study Source E.

Does this source prove that the implementation of POFMA will benefit Singapore? Explain your answer. [7]

- e) How far do the sources in the case study show that the Singapore government is justified in implementing the POFMA Bill? Explain your answer. [10]

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Is the Singapore government justified in implementing the POFMA Bill?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Read this carefully. It may help you to answer some of the questions.

In May 2019, Singapore joined a growing list of countries that passed a law to deal with the growing problem of fake news. The Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation (POFMA) Bill was passed on 8 May following a two-day debate that ended past 10 pm.

Under POFMA, government ministers are given the power to order that a correction be published alongside content that is deemed to be false. A minister can also order that the content be removed, or ask for sites spreading such falsehoods to be blocked. While the government believes that this law is necessary to deal with falsehoods that can be spread online with incredible speed, critics have labelled the law as excessive and giving the government too much power. Is the Singapore government justified in implementing the POFMA Bill? Study the following sources to find out.

Source A: *An opinion piece published in the New York Times on 30 May 2019.*

Singapore's anti-fake news law could be used to require any Internet company to keep records of what users view. It even appears to leave room for the government to require encrypted messaging services like WhatsApp to identify who said what to whom, so that correction notices can be issued to those who have viewed "false" material. It is not far-fetched to think that the government could one day demand and abuse that information. The government could, for example, define individuals as threats or potential threats based on what they wrote and viewed. Even if that never happens, it's a chilling new level of surveillance online.

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Source B: A post made on The Alternative View on 7 May 2019. The Alternative View is a Facebook community page where individuals comment about socio-political issues in Singapore.



* operative word: refers to the most important word in a phrase or sentence.

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Source C: *An opinion piece published in the Straits Times, 26 May 2019.*

We know that fake news can kill. In India, fake messages about child kidnappers that spread over WhatsApp led to attacks on innocent people. This problem will only get worse. It will soon be possible to create videos that show a real person doing something he or she never did in real life. Thus, I support legislation that empowers the government to take swift action against viral fake news that can harm a multiracial Singapore. Some worry that POFMA will be used by future ministers to silence opposing voices. With Singaporeans becoming more assertive, I'm sure we won't hesitate to challenge unfair ministerial orders, especially since all that one needs to do is to fill in standard forms.

Source D: *A speech by Mr Low Thia Khiang, an opposition Member of Parliament, during the debate in parliament on the POFMA bill, 7 May 2019.*

This Bill gives the Minister the power to decide what are falsehoods and what punishments to mete out. A future government can thus selectively punish a few critics as an example to others, achieving a chilling effect. It is like a match where the Minister is both player and referee. During an election, how can we be sure that government officials will not do things that could benefit the ruling party? Although the people are allowed to appeal to the court against the Minister's actions, it is both time consuming and energy sapping. Engaging in a legal battle with the government is like hitting a stone with an egg.

Source E: *A report published in the Today newspaper on a speech in Parliament by Law and Home Affairs Minister, K Shanmugam, 7 May 2019*

Mr Shanmugam said that falsehoods that are spread in both mainstream and new media can cause "people's sense of reality to gradually become unhinged* from the facts". Under a skilled politician, even the most extreme lies "which we will normally dismiss could become believable and affect public life". Mr Shanmugam cited the example of a girl in Germany who made up a story about being assaulted by three Middle Eastern migrants. Such stories can make people angry. After going viral online, the story further evolved to become a fake news story about how the German police were covering up the crime. These irresponsible acts can damage democracy.

*unhinged: to become separated or detached.

Source A: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/30/opinion/hate-speech-law-singapore.html>

Source B:

https://www.facebook.com/TAVSingapore/posts/2348724201855565?comment_id=2348937308500921&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D

Source C: <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/pofma-too-powerful-or-not-enough>

Source D: <https://sprs.parl.gov.sg/search/sprs3topic?reportid=bill-365>

Source E: <https://www.todayonline.com/singapore/democracy-stake-fake-news-laws-will-support-infrastructure-fact-shanmugam>

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SECTION B (Structured-Response Question)

Question 2 is **compulsory** for all candidates.

2 LIVING IN A DIVERSE SOCIETY

Study the extracts carefully, and then answer the questions.

Extract 1

Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Heng Swee Keat at the recent International Conference on Cohesive Societies, recounted this experience, "After I recovered from a stroke three years ago, various religious leaders came up to me to tell me that they had prayed for me to get well. I was so touched. I am very glad that our religious leaders have been committed all these years to promoting racial and religious harmony. It is important for each and every one of us to do our part too."

Extract 2

According to a report published by a non-governmental organisation, Singapore is a great place for children to grow up with good access to high-quality education and medical care services, while also being one of the safest countries in the world.

Extract 3

Singapore is the world's most competitive economy in a yearly ranking of 63 economies released by Switzerland-based research group IMD World Competitiveness Centre. Having the ideal conditions to set up businesses, many international companies are flocking to Singapore.

- (a) Extract 1 shows the important role played by each and every Singaporean in promoting racial and religious harmony.

In your opinion, what do you think individuals can do to promote racial and religious harmony?
Explain your answer using **one** way. [7]

- (b) Extract 2 and 3 describe the safe environment and the economic opportunities which are available in Singapore.

Explain how socio-cultural environment and economic opportunities attract foreigners to Singapore. [8]

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