



DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL STUDIES

FINAL EXAMINATION

Student ID (in Figures) :

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Student ID (in Words) : _____

Course Code & Name : **MPU2232 Thinking Skills**
Trimester & Year : May – August 2019
Lecturer/Examiner : Nur Harizah Mohd Faiz
Duration : 2 Hours

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

1. This question paper consists of two (2) parts:
PART A (30 marks) : Argumentation
PART B (70 marks) : Problem Solving
2. Candidates are not allowed to bring any unauthorized materials except writing equipment into the Examination Hall. Electronic dictionaries are strictly prohibited.
3. This question paper must be submitted along with all used and/or unused rough papers and/or graph paper (if any). Candidates are NOT allowed to take any examination materials out of the examination hall.
4. Only ballpoint pens are allowed to be used in answering the questions, with the exception of multiple-choice questions, where 2B pencils are to be used.

WARNING: The University Examination Board (UEB) of BERJAYA University College regards cheating as a most serious offence and will not hesitate to mete out the appropriate punitive actions according to the severity of the offence committed, and in accordance with the clauses stipulated in the Students’ Handbook, up to and including expulsion from BERJAYA University College.

Total number of pages = 6 (including the cover page)

PART A: ARGUMENTATION (30 MARKS)

INSTRUCTION: There is only **ONE (1)** section in this part. Use the answer booklet.

Where do you stand on the following issue? Write a 300-word simple two-sided argument based on the prompt given below to convince me of your claim.

In one study in the U.S., an educational researcher set out to examine whether standardized testing for 7-8 year-olds was really necessary. In the state of Arizona, which has such mandatory tests, he asked the Arizona State Department of Instruction and district personnel why this was done, and was told that it was so they could learn which children needed help and which did not. He asked if they could get that information from teachers, but was told that such information would not be “objective,” that teacher ratings were “untrustworthy.”

He decided to personally test that theory by asking the teachers themselves. In a simple study, he asked teachers to rank the students in their classes in terms of how they would do on the state’s No Child Left Behind accountability test.

Of the 36 teachers that participated, reporting on nearly 1,000 students, the researcher found that the teachers’ ranking of their students’ performance showed a strong positive correlation with the students’ rank on the state test. In other words, teachers are quite capable of providing the authorities with information about who needs help and who does not in about 10 minutes.

What do you think about standardised examinations for school students? Are there any benefits? What are the challenges, risks or disadvantages?

Remember that critical or slow thinking includes: (i) being aware of your objectivity, (ii) adopting different perspectives, (iii) paying attention to details, (iv) identifying trends and patterns and (v) considering implications and distant consequences; to get the best results, repeat this process a few times, taking short breaks from time to time.

Think it through first: generate ideas, select points and decide on your line of reasoning. Take short breaks between the various stages.

Your argument should be structured into five sections, as follows:

- (1) claim (3 marks)
- (2) numbered reasons in support of the claim – a minimum of three (6 marks)
- (3) opposing/alternative claim (3 marks)
- (4) numbered reasons in support of the opposing/alternative claim – a minimum of three (6 marks)
- (5) refutations matching the reasons in support of the opposing/alternative claim (12 marks)

NOTE

Marks will be subtracted for (i) a word count considerably less or more than 300 (minus a maximum of 5 marks) and (ii) internal inconsistency, logical inconsistency, inappropriate use of extraneous material, fallacies, manipulative language and/or rhetorical ploys (minus a maximum of 10 marks)

END OF PART A

PART B : PROBLEM SOLVING (70 MARKS)

INSTRUCTION(S) : There is only **ONE (1)** section in this part. Use the answer booklet.

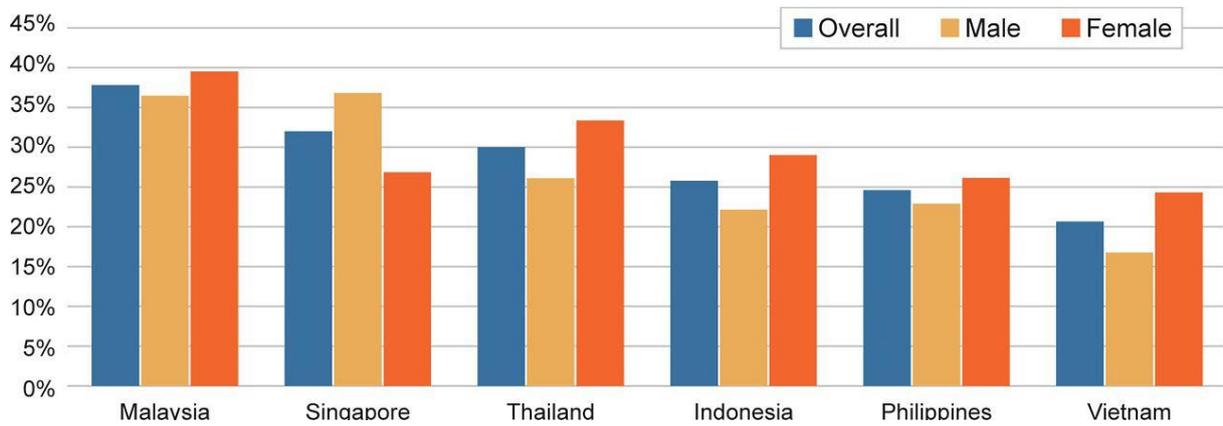
Identify and solve the problem, using the convergent and divergent thinking techniques that we practised in class.

Study the information (below and on the next few pages) carefully. What is it all about and how do the various parts connect? Pay attention to detail and identify trends and patterns. Then answer the sub-questions below.

- Identify and describe the problem from **THREE (3)** different perspectives [4 marks × 3 = 12 marks].
- Choose one of these three perspectives and solve the problem using one or more convergent thinking techniques. Give **THREE (3)** solutions [8 marks × 3 = 24 marks].
 - Which of these three solutions is the best one? [8 marks].
 - To answer the above question, compare the solutions in terms of what “best” means. Use **FOUR (4)** evaluative criteria, one of which is implications and distant consequences [3 marks × 4 = 12 marks].
- For any of the three perspectives you identified in **sub-question a** above, generate **ONE (1)** “near/out of the box” solution by using one or more divergent thinking techniques [8 marks].
- How does it compare to the “best” solution you identified in **sub-question c** above [6 marks]?



Figure 1: Percentage of overweight population with BMI ≥ 25 , adults



Source: The Economist Intelligence Unit, 2017

It's not fine to be fat. Celebrating obesity is irresponsible

Lizzie Cernik

No one should be bullied for their weight or food choices, but 'fat pride' promotes dangerous weight levels



▲ 'According to the NHS, we're in the grip of an obesity epidemic.' Photograph: Christopher Thomond for the Guardian



"Fat letters" in public schools: public health versus pride

Michael R Flaherty

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Recently, BMI screening in public schools has stirred sharp controversy with the emergence of letters sent home to parents indicating their child's BMI percentile and weight category. In Massachusetts, these letters have been deemed, "fat letters," and have appeared on late night comedy shows, newspapers, and televised news reports. Not only has screening come under harsh criticism, but the increasing prevalence of obesity in our nation's children has been challenged based on misinformed assumptions that BMI is an inaccurate measure of a child's body fat. Massachusetts representatives have submitted House Bill H.2024, which would ban that state's department of public health from collecting any data on height, weight, or calculating BMI in public school children.

END OF EXAMINATION PAPER