

Skill notes: Differentiating between relevant and irrelevant information

Introduction

In the *Listening* exam, students are given a list of items and have to decide which ones are relevant as they listen to the recording.

For example, in the 2015 HKDSE Paper 3A, students were asked to choose one out of five companies as a sponsor, based on the descriptions of each company provided in the question paper as well as the three criteria presented by the speakers. Each criterion helps students to eliminate one or two options, and the remaining option should fulfil all of the given criteria. This skill note (Intermediate Level on **DSE i-Learner**) will introduce various skill points to demonstrate how to make use of the criteria presented.

In **Differentiating between Relevant and Irrelevant Information (Advanced Level – available on DSE i-Learner)**, you will become familiar with another question type which requires you to pick two or three options from a list.

Past paper questions

This type of question is first seen in the 2015 HKDSE exam, but it was fairly common in the HKALE exam.

Question type I	2011 HKALE (Q. 6)
	2008 HKALE (Q. 6)
	2003 HKALE (Q. 9)
Question type II	2017 HKDSE (Q. 6–7)
	2015 HKDSE (Q. 28–31)
	2011 HKALE (Q. 3)

The following pages illustrate each question type with examples.

Related skill domain on DSE i-Learner

- Differentiating between relevant and irrelevant information (Advanced Level)



Question types

Question type I

The following type of question was common in the HKDSE exam. Speakers would **go through each item one by one**, and either explicitly or implicitly state whether the item was relevant.

Instruction and sample question

Samuel, an S.5 student, is having a meeting with Ms Lee, the teacher in charge of a student exchange programme that offers students the opportunity to attend a two-month English course in London.

Which of the following are covered by the fees? (Tick the correct boxes)	
accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/>
textbooks	<input type="checkbox"/>
in-country travel	<input type="checkbox"/>
medical services	<input type="checkbox"/>

Tapescript

Samuel:	Apart from the accommodation, what else will the fees cover?
Ms Lee:	Hmm... the course materials you need for class, such as textbooks.
Samuel:	I see. What if I want to take a short trip to Cambridge?
Ms Lee:	You'll have to pay for that kind of in-country travel yourself, I'm afraid.
Samuel:	OK. We need to buy our own medical insurance, too, right?
Ms Lee:	Yes, and that's very important. It covers the cost of any medical service you might need.

This question type differs from that in **Listening for Speaker's Preferences**, because one of the speakers decides (or a group of speakers decide together) what information or which option is relevant. In **Listening for Speaker's Preferences**, the speaker states his / her preference relating to an item – that is, whether or not they like / prefer that item.