

## Markers' report by kwok

### Q8

#### **Is capital punishment an effective deterrent?**

Candidates who attempted this question have the tendency to miss talking about “deterrence” in their essays.

A few candidates were mistaken about the term “capital punishment” and it is almost impossible to award a passing mark if the essay is really talking about corporal punishment. Thankfully, no one talked about “corporate punishment”.

Candidates exhibited a tendency to misalign the relationship between the crime rate of a country and the country’s use of capital punishment. The tenuous link can be revealed if the candidates consider how petty theft will not be decreased if the penalty of that crime is not capital. This leads to hastily concluding that capital punishment does reduce crime rate—any crime—in the country that believes in it.

Some essays argue that “capital punishment is an effective deterrence because it is cheap, compared to life imprisonment”. To this the readers ask: does low cost mean effectiveness?

Quite a few scripts also argued that capital punishment puts the fear in murderers and in a bid to survive, they will kill more people to avoid being caught. To this the readers ask: how successful are such criminals in killing everyone from their first victim to the last guy at the police post?

Although some credit goes to essays which talk about a strong police force, there is a need to note the difference between deterrence and addressing/arresting the problem.

Deterrence is to education as discouraging is to enlightening. Some essays talk about educating the public about crimes and punishments and it should be clear why such paragraphs are NAQ.

A few scripts displayed good use of vocabulary (eg: “capital punishment should be abrogated...”) but do not mask a dearth of knowledge on the issue and the lack of relevance with flowery language.

One key language issue to note is the spelling of names. Yong Vui Kong (from Malaysia) ≠ Von ≠ Thon Van Kuang.