

The Hong Kong Student Association for Legal Studies Essay Competition

Rules & Regulations

1. Organiser

This essay competition is organised by The Hong Kong Student Association for Legal Studies (“HKSALS”).

2. Competition Theme and Questions

The theme of the competition is Freedom of Marriage.

Participants may submit an essay addressing either one or both of the following questions:

- Region-specific Question: Has Iranian Sharia progressed over time and evolved regarding women’s marital rights?
- Global-thematic Question: How should states balance LGBTQ+ marriage rights with claims of religious and cultural freedom?

3. Eligibility

The competition is open strictly to secondary school students currently studying at a secondary school in Hong Kong.

By submitting an entry, each participant confirms that they satisfy the eligibility requirement at the time of submission. HKSALS reserves the right to request reasonable proof of student status where necessary.

4. Submission Requirements

- Each essay must contain a minimum of 800 words and a maximum of 1500 words.
- Participants may submit one essay for either question, or two separate essays if they wish to answer both questions.
- Each essay must clearly indicate which competition question it answers.
- Essays must be written in English unless otherwise specified by HKSALS.
- Essays must be the participant’s own original work.

5. Originality and Academic Integrity

- Plagiarism, fabrication, ghostwriting, or any other form of academic dishonesty is strictly prohibited.
- All sources, quotations, and referenced materials must be properly acknowledged in a consistent citation style.
- Essays generated wholly or substantially by artificial intelligence tools, or submitted under another person’s name, are not permitted under any circumstances.
- Essays that have referenced artificial intelligence tools, or have, in any ways, used artificial intelligence, must clearly state such references within the essay.

- If any breach of academic integrity is discovered before or after judging, HKSALS may disqualify the entry and withdraw any award or recognition.

6. Formatting Expectations

Participants should ensure that their submissions are clear, readable, and professionally presented.

The following formatting standards are recommended unless HKSALS announces otherwise:

- A clear essay title.
- The selected competition question stated at the top of the submission.
- Standard readable font and spacing.
- Page numbers where appropriate.
- Consistent citation and referencing throughout.

7. Submission Procedure

- Entries must be submitted by the method designated by HKSALS in the official competition announcement or follow-up instructions.
- Each participant is responsible for ensuring that the submission is complete, legible, and received before the deadline.
- Late submissions may be rejected at HKSALS's discretion.
- Once submitted, entries may not be amended or replaced after the deadline unless expressly permitted by HKSALS.
- HKSALS reserves the right to revise administrative dates where reasonably necessary. Any changes shall be announced through official channels.

8. Judging

- Entries will be assessed by any judging panel appointed by HKSALS.
- Judging may take into account factors such as legal reasoning, depth of analysis, structure, originality, clarity, use of evidence, and responsiveness to the chosen prompt.
- The decision of the judges and HKSALS in all matters relating to scoring, ranking, prizes, shortlist selection, and interpretation of the rules shall be final.

9. Anonymity and Fairness

Where practicable, HKSALS may anonymise submissions before forwarding them to judges in order to support fairness and impartiality.

Participants should avoid including unnecessary identifying material in the main body of the essay if anonymous review is required.

10. Copyright and Permission to Publish

- Participants retain authorship of their work.

- By submitting an entry, participants grant HKSALS a non-exclusive permission to review, store, reproduce, publish, excerpt, promote, or display the submission for competition administration, results announcements, publicity, editorial, website, social media, or archival purposes.
- If HKSALS publishes a full or partial submission, reasonable authorship credit shall be given to the participant unless anonymity is requested or required.
- Participants are responsible for ensuring that their work does not infringe the copyright or other rights of any third party.

11. Privacy and Personal Data

- Personal information submitted to HKSALS shall be used for the purposes of administering the competition, verifying eligibility, contacting participants, coordinating judging, and announcing results.
- HKSALS shall take reasonable care in handling participant information and shall not disclose personal data beyond what is reasonably necessary for the administration and promotion of the competition.
- If photographs, names, school names, or interview extracts are to be published in connection with prizes or publicity, HKSALS may seek further consent where appropriate.

12. Disqualification

HKSALS reserves the right to disqualify any participant or submission where there is reason to believe that:

- the participant is ineligible;
- the submission breaches the word limit requirements;
- the essay is plagiarised, dishonest, defamatory, unlawful, or otherwise inappropriate;
- the participant has submitted work that is not their own;
- the submission materially breaches these Rules and Regulations.

13. Awards and Recognition

Any prizes, certificates, commendations, shortlist placements, or publication opportunities shall be determined and announced by HKSALS.

HKSALS reserves the right not to award a prize in any category if, in the opinion of the judges, no entry meets the expected standard.

14. Interpretation and Final Authority

These Rules and Regulations are to be read together with any official competition announcement, submission form, privacy notice, or supplementary instructions issued by HKSALS.

In the event of ambiguity, dispute, or unforeseen circumstances, HKSALS shall retain final authority in the interpretation, application, and enforcement of these Rules and Regulations.