General Introduction to HSK

China's Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi, known as HSK or the Chinese Proficiency Test is a standardized test at the state level designed and developed by the HSK Center of Beijing Language and Culture University to assess the Chinese proficiency of non-native speakers (foreigners, overseas Chinese and students of Chinese national minorities). HSK consists of the basic Chinese proficiency test (HSK Basic), the elementary and intermediate Chinese proficiency test (HSK Elementary-Intermediate) and the advanced Chinese proficiency test (HSK Advanced). HSK is held regularly in China and other countries each year. Certificates of HSK will be issued to those who have secured the required scores.

The Chinese Ministry of Education has established China National Committee for Chinese Proficiency Test (HSK)(CNCCPT). The Committee is the supervisor of HSK and the issuer of the Chinese proficiency certificates. CNCCPT has an office called Office of China National Committee for Chinese Proficiency Test (HSK), which takes care of the HSK affairs together with the HSK Center of BLCU.

1. About Applicants of HSK
   HSK (Basic) applies to those learners with the basic Chinese proficiencies, namely, those who have taken 100 to 800 hours of regular modern Chinese learning (including those with the equivalent learning experiences). HSK (Elementary-Intermediate) is for those who are at the elementary and intermediate level in Chinese proficiency, i.e. those who have taken 400-2000 regular hours of modern Chinese courses (including those whose proficiency in Chinese is similar to that standard). The HSK (Advanced) is designed to measure the Chinese proficiency of those who are proficient in Chinese, i.e. who have taken 3000 regular hours or more modern Chinese learning (including those whose proficiency in Chinese is similar to that standard).

2. The functions of HSK Certificates
   (1) to certify that the holder has acquired the required Chinese Proficiency to enter a college or university as an undergraduate or graduate student.
   (2) to certify that the holder can be exempt from taking the Chinese language course depending on the level of certification.
   (3) as a basis for the employers to evaluate the Chinese proficiency of the job applicants.

3. HSK organizer and certificate issuer
   CNCCPT is the organizer of HSK.
   And the CNCCPT Office and the HSK Center of BLCU are both in charge of the HSK affairs.

4. Test Dates and Venues
   HSK is held regularly in Mainland China. It will be arranged in light of the actual local circumstances in other regions of the world. For details about the time schedule please enquire at the local test center.

5. Registration Procedures
   (1) Candidates shall bring two recent 30 x 40 mm photos without headwear when registering and present a photo-bearing identification, such as a passport or residence permit.
   (2) Candidates have to pay the fees for the test and registration. Fees for the test and registration are non-refundable. And postage is included in the fees. When a candidate cannot take the test in time due to some insurmountable reasons and notifies in advance the test center at which he registered before the test date, with the approval of the center (with the signature and stamp of the center), one test opportunity will be retained for the candidate and he or she will only pay the registration fee if he takes the next test in the future.
   (3) Candidates living where there are no local test centers may register by mail. Applications
must be sent to the test center by registered mail at least one week before the final registration
deadline and enclose a photocopy of an official piece of identification, a resume (including the Chinese
and English names, sex, nationality, date of birth), a detailed mail address and two recent 30 x 40
photos without head wear. Meanwhile fees for the test and registration shall be remitted to the
registration site by post. No telephone registration will be accepted. And the admission ticket will be
given to the candidate in person upon his or her arrival at the testing site.

(4) Candidates will be given the admission ticket and the HSK User Handbook. Candidates shall
take the exam according to the time and place specified on the admission ticket.

6. Preparation for HSK

As a standardized test of general language proficiency, HSK is not based on any particular textbook
or course of study. Therefore candidates may refer to any textbook in preparing for the test.
Nevertheless, it is important that all candidates read HSK Test Syllabus carefully, a guide for the pre-
test preparation. It contains an introduction to HSK, a sample HSK test paper and the key, HSK glossary
and a CD of the sample listening questions.

To be admitted to the test room, every examinee will be required to present his or her admission
ticket and a photo-bearing ID certificate (ID card, passport or a residence permit). No candidates will
be allowed to enter the test room without the afore-mentioned two evidences. The candidates whose
admission ticket is missing can only be admitted to the test room till the ticket is reissued (with
handling charges). Tape recorders, cameras, dictionaries, notebooks, textbooks and other unnecessary
objects mustn’t be taken into the room. Mobile phones and MP3 shall be switch off and put inside bags,
which shall be placed at an area designated by the invigilators.

Candidates arriving five minutes late (since the start of listening comprehension test) may be
admitted to the testing room and start the test right away. If examinees are 5 to 35 minutes late for
the test, they may not start until the next section begins and no extra test time is to be offset for the
late arrivals. Thirty-five minutes after the beginning of the exam, no candidates will be admitted to
the test room.

7. Things to note during the test

(1) Once in the test room, candidates shall put the admission ticket and the ID certificate on the
upper right corner of the desk for the inspection of invigilators. All the activities of the candidates are
subject to the instructions of the supervisor.

(2) Duration for HSK (Basic) is about 135 minutes; HSK (Elementary-Intermediate) about 145
minutes without break; and HSK (Advanced) about 180 minutes with a break after the written test. In
principle candidates shall not leave the test room during the course of the test. If so under some
exceptional circumstances, the candidate shall gain the permission from the supervisor.

(3) HSK has a strict control of the time limits for each section of the test and candidates shall
answer the corresponding test questions within a given time period and avoid jumping to the later
sections or turning back to the previous ones during the test.

(4) Candidates shall not take the test papers or answer sheets out of the room, or tear apart,
replace or copy the contents of the test.

(5) Candidates shall abide by the test instructions and rules and those who violate the rules will
be warned and not even allowed to continue the test by the organizer.

(6) Before answering the test questions, candidates shall fill in their names (Chinese and English),
the test paper code, nationality code, the test center code and the candidate’s number according to
the admission ticket. Candidates should also draw a bar like this [■] to indicate their sex. The test
paper code is on the upper right corner. The nationality code is a fixed number created by the test
center for each country and nationality for all HSK tests. For example, the code for Japan is 525,
France 610, etc. The candidate’s number is a serial number of registration. The test center code is the
number for the place where the test is held. For example, the admission ticket of a Japanese student
called Kimula Yuko is like this.

While filling in the information, candidates should write the numbers first in the blanks on the left
and then draw a bar on the corresponding numbers on the right like this [■].
(7) Answers should be made by drawing a bar like this: [□]. Please note that the bar should be drawn thick and bold to make sure that the card-reading machine can recognize the answers. The candidate should bear the consequences due to his or her failure in following the instructions about how to answer the questions.

8. The Issuing of HSK Certificates and Test Report Form
   The HSK certificate and test report form will be mailed to the HSK test centers by the organizer within two months after the test. Candidates may obtain certificates and test report forms either by collecting them in person at the test center or by mail from the test center.
   The retention period of the certificate and the test report form is 2 years. If the candidate does still not claim them after 2 years, the organizer will not keep them any longer.

9. Regulations on reissuing test report forms
   Candidates may come to the HSK Center of BLCU and can require a reissue of the test report form for the purpose of employment or application for study in a university within the valid period of the test result. There are handling and cost charges for it.

10. Period of Validity for HSK Certificates
    The HSK certificate has a permanent validity, whereas the accompanying test report will only be valid for two years (beginning from the date of the test session) as the certification for foreign students to enter a college or university in China.