Section A (Source Based Case Study)

Question 1 is **compulsory** for all candidates.

1   **Living in a Diverse Society**

Study the Background Information and the sources carefully, and then answer all the questions.

You may use any of the sources to help you answer the questions, in addition to those sources you are told to use. In answering the questions you should use your knowledge of the topic to help you interpret and evaluate the sources.

(a)   Study Source A.

Why do you think this poster was produced? Explain your answer.   [5]

(b)   Study Sources B and C.

Do you think the actor in Source B would agree with the response of the movie producers in Source C? Explain your answer.   [7]

(c)   Study Source D.

How useful is Source D as evidence about workplace discrimination in Singapore? Explain your answer.   [6]

(d)   Study Sources E and F.

After reading Source E, are you surprised by Source F? Explain your answer.   [7]

(e)   'More needs to be done to tackle the problem of discrimination in schools and at work.'

Using the sources in this case study, explain how far you would agree with this statement.   [10]

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How serious is the issue of racial discrimination in society?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Read this carefully. It may help you to answer some of the questions.

Race relations have always been a sensitive issue in societies with a multi-racial make-up. Countries with a population made up of citizens and residents from many different races and ethnicities, such as Singapore, often finds itself subject to debates regarding the issue of discrimination towards the minority races.

Racial and ethnic discrimination can take place in different segments of the society, whether at work or in school. These discrimination can surface in the forms of racial stereotypes, prejudice and misconceptions of one's ethnicity and culture. When not handled well, it has led to ethnic conflicts such as the 1964 race riots in Singapore.

Recent incidents regarding possible racial discrimination in Singapore have led to debates between netizens, some of whom insist that the alleged discrimination is not really an issue of race while others have insisted that actions need to be taken to address the perceived discrimination.

Study the following sources to find out how serious the issue of racial discrimination in society is.

Source A: *A poster put up by university students in a campaign concerning ethnic stereotypes.*
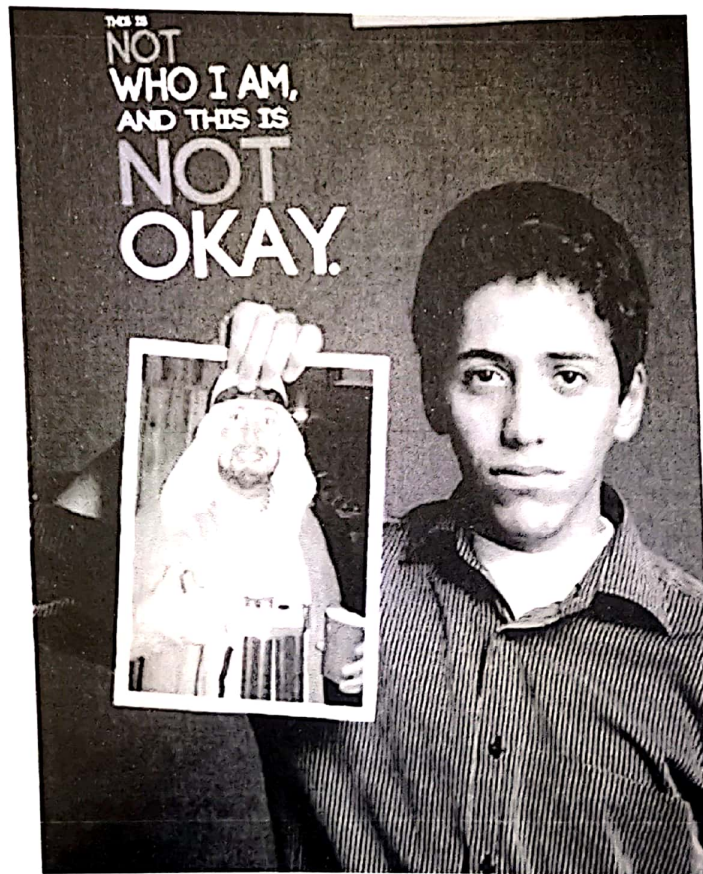
Source B: *Account by an Indian Singaporean actor who auditioned for the role of an Indian soldier in a local movie, which was posted on his social media account on 27 May 2017.*

I just finished my audition for 'Ah Boys to Men 4', and this is what happened. After completing one full take of the audition script, playing a soldier with a Singaporean accent who spoke in Singlish, I was asked by the casting director to make it 'a full blown Indian man'.

Now, I get it, casting directors give directions to see if actors can follow them, but really, asking me to be more Indian even after I performed the scene in a completely Singaporean way and talked as most Singaporeans would? I said "but not all Indians in Singapore speak with a thick Indian accent" And she just responded with "but that's what we want. And make it funny".

So I was told to portray a caricature of my race. I was reduced to my accent, because that's what made it funny. That's what they wanted for the film. Diversity in Singaporean film, I guess comes down to playing stereotypes so the majority race can find it amusing. And also it seemed as though I was just not 'Indian' enough.

Source C: *Statement by the production company for the movie 'Ah Boys to Men 4', in response to accusation of racist stereotyping during its audition for actors, posted on 30 May 2017.*

We refer to the media queries about a recent incident during the audition of 'Ah Boys To Men 4' and would like to make the following clarification. Mr Shrey Bhargava attended the audition on 27 May for the role of an Indian soldier. During the audition, Mr Shrey was asked to try out different ways of presenting the role including that of someone who speaks with an Indian accent.

It is not uncommon during auditions that casting directors decide to test the versatility of actors by asking them to perform in a wide range of roles and characters, not necessarily always according to the script. This process sometimes produces performances that inspire directors with new ideas. Knowledge of the actors' versatility can also help the directors in the casting for future productions. Actors attending such auditions therefore may not be able to draw accurate conclusions with respect to the portrayals of the roles concerned.

The scripts of the movie are still being worked on by the team. With his vast experience in making movies that are enjoyed by many Singaporeans of all races, director Jack Neo is acutely aware of race sensitivity and will be sensitive and careful when dealing with such a matter. It is our aim to make the movie as enjoyable and popular as the previous movies among Singaporeans.

Source D: *Excerpt from an answer given by Minister of State for Manpower in Parliament to a question on whether any government survey has been conducted on the perceptions of discrimination in hiring practices, published in Feb 2020.*

The Government does not tolerate any form of workplace discrimination. In a 2018 survey commissioned by the Ministry of Manpower (MOM), over 80% of job seekers did not feel that their gender, marital status, number of children, race, religion or nationality was an impediment when finding work. The majority of employees also felt that they were fairly treated in their organisation, in terms of their employment terms and benefits, training, career development, and performance evaluation.

MOM relies on other indicators for evidence of workplace discrimination. A good indicator is the number of complaints, which decreased from about 580 in 2015 to about 200 in 2018 and constitutes less than 1% of all complaints received. Discriminatory job advertisements have become rare.

Source E: *Reaction of a university researcher to the sale of a children's book which depicts a school bully with dark skin tone and curly hair, posted online on 22 July 2020.*

To Singaporeans who think nothing of a racialised depiction of a school bully in a children's book targeted at readers aged 7 to 9, we are really not overstating how such content may negatively shape Chinese perception of the ethnic other in our diverse society. It is arguably worse than how Chinese parents in the past would scare children into behaving by saying the Indian policeman would catch them.

At least the policeman is a figure of authority. This "dark-skinned" bully according to the story is apparently a rascal or maverick that has no respect even for the teachers. Towards the end of the story, the Chinese boy has to learn the art of self-defence in order to fight back, but before emerging victorious as a hero in his fight against Mao Mao, a teacher stops the fight and takes them to the staff room. The story ends there without any reconciliation.

Source F: *Comment by a Indian Singaporean on reading the news about the children's book which depicts a school bully in the book with dark skin tone and curly hair, posted on a news website on 20 July 2020.*

If I had a Tamil story book, where the bully character was Chinese and is described as "yellow skinned with a flat nose or tiny eyes", is that ok? And if members of the Chinese community started complaining and I said "Don't be sensitive la", would that be ok?

I actually have not come across a Tamil storybook that has a Chinese child shown as the bully or in any other negative light. If anyone has, please enlighten me. No one is complaining about the Indian boy being the bully in the book. It is how the boy is described that is the problem. Not all Indians are dark skinned. Not all Indians have oily curly hair. Bullies come in ALL races and skin shades. Why couldn't the author have the bully be Chinese as well? Since it's a Chinese book. Is the author implying that only Indian children are bullies? That only Indian children are loud and don't listen to the teachers and cause trouble?

Section B (Structured-Response Question)

Question 2 is **compulsory** for all candidates.

2 **Exploring Citizenship and Governance**

Study the extracts carefully, and then answer the questions.

Extract 1

Members of the public are being asked for their views ahead of Budget 2020. Individuals, households and businesses are welcome to provide feedback. The Government wants to find out how else Singaporeans can play a part in enhancing the Republic's security, what businesses need in order to compete better, and what barriers workers and employers face and how these can be tackled. It also wants to know how existing schemes to encourage families to offer mutual care and support can be improved, and wants the public to suggest how the Government can further encourage and support older workers. Finally, the Government is also seeking the views of Singaporeans on longer-term issues on how it can form stronger partnerships to address future opportunities and challenges facing Singapore.

Extract 2

Poster on the one of the reasons Singapore's successful economy.
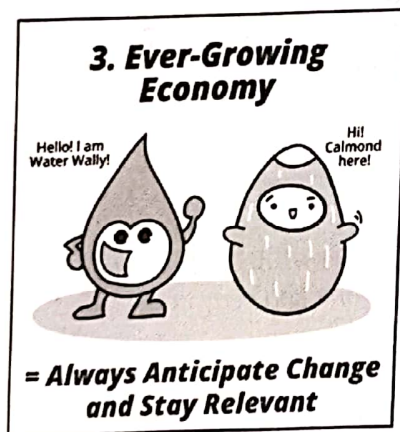
Extract 3

Education Minister Ong Ye Kung acknowledged that meritocracy is not a perfect system but will remain a key principle in Singapore. He pointed out the need to broaden the definition of merit, which currently is too narrowly focused on academic achievement. "Even those who are against meritocracy struggle to come up with a better system," Mr Ong said. "The impetus is on us - not just the Government, but all of us - to overcome the limitations of meritocracy, and fight against the hardening of social classes," he added.

(a) Extract 1 highlights the importance of the Singapore government seeking feedback from citizens when making decisions.

In your opinion, how can the Singapore government go about getting feedback from its citizens effectively? Explain your answer with reference to **two** ways. [7]

(b) Extracts 2 and 3 reflect the principles adopted by the Singapore government when crafting policies.

Do you think that the principle of anticipating change is more important than the principle of meritocracy in ensuring Singapore's continued success? Explain your answer. [8]