

**CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL**

**REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE  
SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION**

**JUNE 2006**

**ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT PREPARATION AND MANAGEMENT**

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## **ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT PREPARATION AND MANAGEMENT**

### **GENERAL PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION**

**JUNE 2006**

#### **GENERAL COMMENTS**

This is the second year that the CSEC examination in Electronic Document Preparation and Management has been offered at the General Proficiency. The subject was well received with four thousand one hundred and eighty-two (4182) candidates registered as opposed to one thousand nine hundred and ninety-one (1991) candidates registered in 2005. The examination consisted of three papers: Paper 01 – Structured Questions; Paper 02 – Production test; and Paper 3/1 – the School Based Assessment (SBA).

A satisfactory number of the stated objectives represented all the Units in the syllabus in this examination. The responses from the candidates indicated that they were knowledgeable about most of the objectives tested.

The overall performance was very good. There were, however, some excellent responses, especially in Paper 02.

#### **Paper 01 – Structured Questions**

In this paper the knowledge and application of important facts, concepts, and theoretical principles involved in document production and management were tested. Candidates' performance on this paper was good with 77.62 per cent of them achieving Grades I – III.

#### **Paper 02 – Production Test**

This paper consisted of four compulsory production questions based on Units III – VIII of the Syllabus. In this examination the candidates were required to produce four types of documents.

The performance of candidates on Paper 02 was excellent, with 97.23 per cent obtaining Grades I – III.

#### **Paper 03 – Schools Based Assessment**

The School Based Assessment of the examination consisted of four parts:

- Assignment 1 – These assignments were prepared, administered and marked by the teacher(s) in the respective schools.
- Assignments 2 and 3 – The teachers were given exemplars and they had to design similar projects – the assignments were prepared, administered and marked by the teacher.
- Assignment 4 – A guideline was given in the syllabus, the teachers marked the final assignment.

The performance of the candidates on Paper 3 was excellent, with 91.67 per cent obtaining Grades I – III.

## DETAILED COMMENTS

### General Proficiency

#### Paper 01

Generally, candidates' weaknesses were seen in spelling, grammar and sentence construction. Many candidates were unable to read, interpret and follow basic instructions correctly. Other candidates demonstrated their knowledge but were unable to give clear and concise explanations.

#### Question 1

This question was designed to test candidates' ability to:

1. define the Operating System Software
2. identify common operating systems
3. identify Icons on the Desktop

The overall performance on this question was fair. Many of the candidates could not distinguish between operating-system programme and application programme; desktop, toolbar and taskbar. However, the majority of candidates gained full marks in naming icons on the Desktop.

#### Question 2

This question was intended to test candidates' ability to explain the purpose of a scanner and to describe ways of caring for the computer.

The overall performance on this question was not good. Many candidates could not effectively express themselves. They were unaware of how to care for the keyboard and 'covers' were referred to as 'plastic bags,' 'plastics.'

#### Question 3

This question tested candidates' knowledge of:

1. special keys
2. how to protect the integrity of computer files

Candidates' performance on this question was fair. For the first section of the question, many candidates explained the use of the special keys instead of giving the abbreviations. For the second section, some candidates interpreted the question wrongly and gave responses such as 'copyright law/plagiarism' and 'intellectual property.'

#### Question 4

This question was designed to test candidates' ability to proofread documents and correct errors.

Of the 98 per cent of candidates who did this question, 70 per cent did very well and 4 per cent gained full marks. Candidates had challenges identifying and correcting the errors especially alignment, and spelling.

### Question 5

This question tested candidates' ability to identify types, sizes and layout of paper. Many candidates had problems distinguishing 'paper size' from 'paper orientation.' Measurements given for paper size were incorrect in some cases.

### Question 6

This question was intended to test candidates' ability to distinguish between communication devices and communication media.

Seventy-five per cent of the candidates had a clear understanding of electronic communication media while 25 per cent were not familiar with the term.

Eighty-five per cent of the candidates were not familiar with the term 'modem' while 15 per cent indicated that they were knowledgeable about it.

### Question 7

This question tested candidates' ability to describe the steps in creating an electronic document folder.

Answers given indicated that the candidates used the word 'file' and 'folder' interchangeably and that they were confused with the steps. Twenty-five percent of the responses were excellent, 10 per cent were poor, and a significant number of candidates did not respond. Sixty per cent of the candidates were confused with the steps while 5 per cent did not seem to understand the question.

### Question 8

This question tested candidates'

1. ability to identify types of forms
2. knowledge of how to create forms on the computer.

Most candidates did not score full marks on this question. Their performance indicated a significant weakness in ordering the steps sequentially for inserting 'text boxes' on a form. A number of the candidates did not identify specific forms that can be created on the computer but gave answers such as 'letters, reports' which are incorrect.

### Question 9

This question was designed to test candidates'

1. knowledge of the concept of plagiarism
2. ability to list guidelines to avoid plagiarism

Performance on the first part of this question indicated that seventy per cent of the answers were correct; 30 per cent of the candidates were unfamiliar with the term 'plagiarism': ten per cent did not answer the question, while 20 per cent had the incorrect answer. Most candidates spelt 'plagiarism' incorrectly.

In the second part of this question, most of the candidates had an idea of what they wanted to say but were not specific in their responses.

### Question 10

This question tested candidates' awareness of

1. acceptable work standards
2. desirable habits and work attitudes.

The majority of candidates did not answer the first part of this question correctly. Most candidates could not differentiate between 'acceptable work standards' and 'desirable habits and work attitudes.' A number of candidates did not attempt the question at all.

### **Recommendations to Teachers**

1. Teachers should attempt to cover the entire syllabus but give specific attention to those areas which prove difficult for students.
2. Teachers should ensure that all students have access to important parts of the syllabus.
3. Teachers should teach the theory before the students do the practical.
4. Information Technology teachers should become familiar with keyboarding and word processing principles.
5. Teachers should give students more opportunities to distinguish between forms and other documents.
6. Tests on theory of the syllabus should be given at regular intervals so that students may become better at expressing themselves more effectively. **Also students will fully understand that the subject is examined both in theory and in practical.**
7. Teachers should place more emphasis on Module IX (Planning and Organization).
8. Teachers should administer spelling tests/quizzes, relevant to Electronic Document Preparation and Management, at regular intervals to improve spelling performance.

### **Paper 02**

Most questions were attempted. Generally, candidates' weaknesses were seen in the Accuracy and Presentation Profiles and strengths were seen in Speed. In some cases, the typing rules and principles for layout and presentation of production documents were not followed. Many candidates were unable to read, interpret and follow basic instructions. Some had difficulty interpreting basic proof-reader's symbols. There were also indications that candidates may have been exposed to Information Technology and not the principles of Word Processing/Typewriting. Accuracy is a main weakness as candidates failed to utilize basic features on the computer to correct this problem.

Assessment proved difficult in the following cases:

1. Two different tasks printed on the same page.
2. Identical scripts submitted by a number of candidates from the same school.

3. Candidates reproduced other candidates' assignment as their own even with the registration number.
4. Selection of appropriate font, border and Word Art.
5. Usage of stationery – inability to prepare documents on one page appropriately or as instructed.
6. Margins set outside the printable margins.

### Question 1

The intention of this question was to test candidates' ability to produce a letter:

1. with enumerated inset
2. with hanging paragraphs
3. interpreting and applying manuscript signs
4. preparing and printing an envelope

All candidates attempted this question. The performance of some candidates did not indicate a thorough knowledge of formatting, hanging paragraphs, inset and enumerations, margin settings, number of spaces between paragraphs and other sections of letter, positioning of complimentary close and signatory and designation, and types of headings.

### Question 2

This question was designed to test candidates' ability to produce a chairman's agenda:

1. typing different types of headings
2. interpreting and applying manuscript signs

This question was attempted by most candidates. The performance of candidates indicated that some candidates did not know the reasons for a wide right-hand margin in a Chairman's Agenda. In many instances, the Agenda placement was incorrect. In most cases, candidates were not clear on spacing after punctuation marks. The typing of words incorrectly was frequently identified indicating that candidates are not accustomed to using the Spelling Check feature on the Menu Bar.

### Question 3

This question tested candidates' ability to prepare an invoice from manuscripts, interpret and apply manuscript signs, use different types of headings (oblique), and type figures.

The majority of candidates attempted this question. In most cases candidates used the asterisk as a multiplication sign. Figures were also not properly aligned. Many candidates did not seem to be familiar with proof-readers' marks as most of them either typed back the text as given or did not make the necessary corrections.

Candidates' performance also indicated weakness in the use of 'Excel' for oblique headings.

#### Question 4

This question tested the candidates' ability to format documents; manipulate simple graphics for insertion into documents; and to use keyboard techniques to produce effective and creative displays.

Many students failed to follow all instructions to complete this task. In most cases candidates' design was impressive but some candidates used inappropriate 'Clip Art' in their designs.

Candidates showed difficulty in distinguishing between graphics and Word Art, in manipulating graphics for correct insertion into document, inserting borders, and interpreting proofreaders' marks. Some candidates experienced challenges in producing an effective, creative display, and attractive layout of the document.

### **PAPER 03 – SCHOOL-BASED ASSESSMENT**

There was clear indication that some candidates worked together on the reference manuals as they submitted the same samples with same errors. They also collaborated to a great extent in completing the assignments; same errors were detected but they used a different Word Art, font size, and lines in the case of tabular work.

Power Point presentations were too detailed and not properly formatted.

There were discrepancies in interpretation between Assignments 2 and 3 mainly in sending via email and the use of Power Point.

There were many variations to the assignments done by candidates and the mark schemes submitted by schools. A number of schools did not submit assignment questions, keys or mark schemes. In some cases, neither assignments nor reference manuals were graded.

In some cases, candidates did not submit the required reference for Assignment 2. There was a minority of candidates who did not submit assignments.

The majority of candidates gained maximum points on all three profiles (Accuracy, Speed, Presentation & Use of Technology). However, there were a few cases where candidates showed weaknesses in Speed and Presentation & Use of Technology.

#### **Assignment 1**

This assignment was executed by the teacher; most of the candidates seemed to have an understanding of keyboarding based on what was submitted.

#### **Assignments 2 and 3**

This assignment was designed, supervised and marked by the teacher. Some schools produced excellent projects, while some were not up to the expected standard. Some territories developed 2 projects that the whole country did, that seemed to work better.

#### **Assignment 4**

The Reference Manual – this project was done very well by most of the candidates. The standard on some of the Manuals was exceptional.

### **Recommendations to Teachers**

1. Teachers **must submit** School Based Assignments in presentation folder packaged with **assignment instructions, keys and mark schemes**. Loose leaf format is not acceptable.
2. Teachers should liaise with other schools; it is acceptable for two schools in one area to do the same projects.
3. In order to preserve the integrity of Assignment One it is suggested that there be exchange assessment by teachers.
4. Students need more practice time especially in the formatting of tables, types of headings in tables (vertical, oblique) in order for them to develop the required skills.

### **FINAL COMMENTS**

The majority of candidates attempted all ten questions in Paper 01 and all four questions in Paper 02. Candidates performed significantly well on some questions while others performed poorly on some questions. For Paper 01, where questions were related to Information Technology, candidates experienced some challenges in answering the questions. Candidates' performance indicated a general weakness in questions related to Information Technology.

Overall, Electronic Document Preparation and Management appears to be taught by Information Technology teachers without Word Processing/Typewriting background. The rudiments of Typewriting are essential for improved performance. Teachers with training in Typewriting together with IT training should be assigned to Electronic Document Preparation and Management. IT training alone is not sufficient.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. An exchange of teachers between schools is recommended during assessment times. This will provide more objectivity for production work.
2. There needs to be a forum in which all teachers from all territories meet for standardization in terms of the syllabus. It is evident that consistency is lacking regarding the contents of the syllabus; the assessment process becomes unfair to students when one mark scheme is used for all candidates.
3. It is recommended that teachers teach the theory of Typewriting and Information Technology before the practical is done. This should improve candidates' performance in the subject.

### **Overall recommendations to Teachers**

1. Teachers must give careful attention to production principles ensuring that candidates apply them frequently.
2. Give students more manuscript assignments with proofreaders' marks.
3. Incorporate different types of headings in assignments.
4. Expose students to more practice in alignment of figures.

5. Expose students to more practice in formatting of all documents particularly letters and tables.
6. Encourage students to use features of Menu Bar and Toolbar more frequently.
7. Expose students to examination techniques. (In many instances candidates typed back instructions that were given to them to complete the particular task.)
8. Conduct mock examinations that would help to prepare students for the final examination.
9. Give students more integrative practice to select and insert graphics into documents.
10. Give students more practice in typing forms with text boxes.
11. Encourage students to utilize the 'Print Preview' in every class.
12. Students need to be encouraged to use 'Page set up' in every class.
13. Students need to be encouraged to use 'Spell Check' for every task.
14. Students need clearer instructions and practice on spacing after punctuation marks.
15. Teachers must supervise printing of exercises to prevent students from printing their entire pages for their classmates.