

**C A R I B B E A N   E X A M I N A T I O N S   C O U N C I L**

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

**MAY/JUNE 2007**

**HOME ECONOMICS: MANAGEMENT**

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**GENERAL PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION**  
**MAY/JUNE 2007**  
**GENERAL COMMENTS**

The Caribbean Examinations Council administered its twenty-sixth examination of the Caribbean Secondary Examination Certificate of Home Economics: Management in May 2007. The General proficiency included three components: Paper 01, the Multiple Choice paper, Paper 02, the Structured Essay paper and Paper 03, the School Based-Assessment component.

**Paper 01 – Multiple Choice**

This paper consisted of sixty items, thirty of which tested the candidates' knowledge, and thirty tested their use of knowledge. Candidates' performance was satisfactory.

The mean mark was 36 out of a possible maximum of 60. The marks ranged from 0 to 54.

**Paper 02 – Structured Essay Questions**

This paper consisted of two parts, Part A and Part B. Part A comprised three compulsory questions while Part B comprised four questions from which candidates were required to choose two. Candidates were required to answer a total of five questions. Each question was awarded a total of sixteen marks, 6 marks for the knowledge profile and 10 marks for the use of knowledge profile. The mean mark was 37 out of a maximum possible mark of 80 and the marks obtained ranged from 0 to 69.

**Paper 03 – School Based-Assessment**

This paper consisted of three practical assignments set by the teachers. The first and third assignments were assessed by the teachers. The second practical assignment was assessed jointly by the teacher and an external examiner.

The mean mark on Paper 03 (SBA) was 47, out of a maximum of 60, with marks ranging from 0 to 60.

**Detailed Comments on Essay Questions – Paper 02**

**Question 1**

This was a compulsory question which focused on work and work ethics. Overall, the responses were fair. Part (a) of the question required candidates to state three ways in which graduating students of secondary schools may prepare for the world of work. Candidates misinterpreted the expressions "graduating students" and "prepare for work" and made reference to their schools' requirements or criteria for graduation and general rules for applying for a job. Examples of responses given in this section were: "obeying school rules and having proper values and attitudes." Examples of expected responses are: "obtain the relevant qualifications; attend career seminars; explore all media; and, seek attachments in areas of interest".

Part (b) required candidates to list three important qualities that an employee should possess for successful performance in the workplace. Responses were unsatisfactory as most candidates gave either guidelines for work or stated questions such as, "You must not show disrespect; Are you reliable? How committed are you?" Most of the candidates who attempted to list qualities stated them vaguely, for example, "a positive work attitude" and "good work ethics". Many candidates repeated the same responses that they stated for part (a) in part (b). Few candidates cited expected qualities such as - efficiency, understanding, and willingness to learn.

Part (c) presented a scenario of a young apprentice who had poor work habits, was frequently late, showed no regard for challenges faced by co-workers and was absent on important days during his attachment at a garment industry.

Part (c) (i) required candidates to outline three problems that might arise at the workplace as a result of the employee's work ethics. Most candidates repeated information from the scenario itself and lost valuable marks. For example some candidates wrote: "he showed no regard for challenges faced by co-workers;" "he is absent on important days;" and "he's frequently late for work". In other responses candidates focused on the consequences that the young apprentice would face instead of focusing on the problems that the industry would face, such as, production would be affected.

For part (c) (ii) candidates were required to suggest four actions that the employee could take to "improve his frequent late arrival at work." More than half of the candidates scored almost full marks in this section as they responded appropriately, for example:

- Do some preparation overnight;
- Set alarm clock;
- Wake up early;
- Leave home early.

Other candidates gave incorrect responses which were popular. These include:

- To lime or party less
- Popular diet and exercise
- Get plenty rest

Overall, candidates were able to score a range of marks.

## Question 2

This was a compulsory question that tested candidates' knowledge of accidents in the home. Part (a) tested candidates' ability to name one different type of accident that was likely to occur in each of the following areas of the home: the kitchen, bedroom and garden. Part (b) of the question required candidates to state one major cause of accidents in each of the areas listed above. Overall, parts (a) and (b) were fairly well done.

Part (a), in particular, was generally well done although a few candidates confused types of accidents with causes of accidents. Candidates were required to name accidents in part (a) and state the causes of accidents in part (b). A small group of candidates gave one general cause like 'carelessness', 'ignorance' or 'negligence' for accidents in the three areas. Some common errors were listing safety precautions instead of causes of accidents and vague or incomplete responses such as:

- Using sharp machete will cut you;
- Lamps beside beds;
- Hot oil causes accidents.

Part (c) focused on safety precautions during flooding in a community. The scenario stated, "Stagnant water has accumulated in your community after one week of prolonged flooding." Part (i) required candidates to suggest six different safety precautions that must be taken by their family during the flood to avoid contracting diseases. This part was attempted by most of the candidates, but some of their responses suggested that they misinterpreted the question and therefore gave general safety precautions for floods without paying attention to the key phrase 'to avoid contracting disease'. Candidates gave responses such as:

- Secure all documents in plastic bags;
- Use sand bags at door;

- Buy tin foods;
- Batten up windows and doors;
- Ensure that you have a flashlight.

A few candidates mentioned precautions that the community should take rather than the family. Some candidates used the words ‘detergents’, ‘repellant’ and ‘disinfectant’ interchangeably. In addition, some candidates wrote ‘preserve’ water instead of ‘purify’ water. In some instances candidates concentrated only on precautionary measures relating to water, for example:

- Don’t bath in the water;
- Don’t drink the water;
- Boil the water;
- Don’t play in the water;
- Purify the water;
- Put bleach in the water.

Candidates were expected to include responses such as: Avoid the use of fallen fruits and vegetables from gardens/farms; use good insect repellant; take anti-infection medication; dispose of waste sensibly and carefully.

Part (c) (ii) required candidates to outline four important safety precautions that must be taken after the waters have receded. This part was generally well done by most candidates who recognized and repeated some of the relevant responses given in (c) (i), for example, ‘boil drinking water’, ‘keep children inside’. A few candidates did not seem to understand the term ‘receded’ and therefore continued to write about flood waters. In general, responses to part (c) (ii) were better than to part (c) (i).

### Question 3

Question 3 was a compulsory question which focused on Money Management. This question was attempted by the majority of candidates. Parts (a) (i) and (ii) tested candidates’ knowledge of the expression, “Money serves as a medium of exchange”. Part (a) (i) was very well done except in a few cases where candidates gave situations instead of explanations of money being used as a medium of exchange. Some candidates did not answer this part.

Part (a) (ii) asked the candidates to describe two situations in which money served as a medium of exchange. This part was fairly well answered by the majority of candidates. A few candidates vaguely repeated the phrases ‘exchange of goods and services’ or ‘pay for goods and services’ as the description of the situation. Generally, the candidates understood what was required.

Part (b) asked for two reasons for preparing a budget. Most of the candidates understood this part of the question and answered it fairly well. Some candidates gave two reasons as required, but in some cases the second reason was similar in meaning to the first. The common misconceptions held by candidates included the idea that a budget is prepared to ‘see where the family has overspent’ and to ‘see how much income/money the family has’ and these responses did not capture the reasons for preparing a budget.

In part (c) candidates were given a scenario depicting circumstances of a family, from which two monthly budgets were presented to be analyzed. Part (c) (i) asked candidates to identify the important family goal that was not catered for in either of the two budgets. Although the goal was outlined in the scenario, many candidates answered incorrectly. Part (c) (ii) asked candidates to identify the budget that was more suitable for the needs of this family and to give three reasons to support their answer. The majority of candidates were able to identify ‘Budget B’ as the correct response but some were unable to give rational reasons to support their answer.

Part (c) (iii) asked candidates to suggest two changes that could be made to the budget selected in (ii) in order to achieve all the family's goals. This part was satisfactorily done by many candidates who gave two correct responses. For some candidates both responses given were incorrect.

This question was fairly well done with many students gaining marks from 14 to 16.

#### Question 4

Question 4 tested candidates' knowledge of the family and while it was a popular optional question, it was poorly done by most candidates. Parts (a) and (b) required candidates to study a picture and answer questions on the different stages of the family life cycle as was illustrated in the picture. For part (a) few candidates gave the correct responses for the two stages illustrated in the picture. The correct responses were "expanding" and "contracting" stages but many candidates gave responses such as old age; young age; and, grandpa visiting young couple, beginning and extended family. Many candidates focused on the activities in the picture rather than the stages in the family life cycle, so they gave responses such as "grandparent hugging child", and "grandfather happy to see parents and marriage."

Most of the candidates gave correct responses for part (b) (i) such as childbearing and retirement. For part (b) (ii) candidates responded poorly as they again gave features of the family instead of the demands. Expected demands included: "financial resources, companionship and health care."

Part (c) tested candidates' understanding of the benefits and limitations of having one child. This part was fairly well done as the majority of candidates were able to give satisfactory responses. For example: "more attention given to the child, more time available for relaxation." However, a popular incorrect response was that the family can save more money. In terms of limitations, some of the responses were, "not having a sibling to play with and less support and help." A popular incorrect response was, "parents will spoil the child."

Part (d) tested students' understanding of the economic effects on the community of having one child. The responses were either meaningless or irrelevant. For example: "parents did not communicate with community members, parents were able to give the community old clothes." Only a few candidates managed to give good responses such as "under populated community, more resources available to the community." Examples of expected responses are: "there could be a shrinking workforce; there may be a decrease in skills; more resources may be available to the community."

#### Question 5

This question was optional. Part (a) tested candidates' knowledge of the qualities that a family must possess in order to provide for the basic needs of its members. In most cases, functions of the family were given instead of qualities, for example: procreation, socialization, conferring status. Planning a budget was also a popular response. Some of the responses expected were:

- Initiative
- Good management skills
- Determination
- Commitment
- Ability to work hard.

Part (b) required candidates to describe two physical conditions associated with the elderly. This part was generally well answered except for the few who gave social and mental conditions instead of physical conditions.

Part (c) asked candidates to outline two ways of resolving conflicts in the family and it was generally well answered. Correct responses were: a family council meeting or a meeting with a professional. A few responses were based on the causes rather than the resolution of conflict occurring within the Jack's family, for example, the lack of communication and uneven distribution of chores within the family.

A scenario on two families sharing responsibilities for caring for an elderly grandmother was presented in part (d). For (d) (i) candidates were required to outline two responsibilities of the families in caring for their grandmother. Most of the candidates answered correctly. Part (d) (ii) tested candidates' use of their knowledge of the allocation of time in carrying out different tasks among family members. Candidates scored most of their marks in this section. A few candidates did not pay attention to the times each family was available as given in the scenario. Most of the candidates ignored the requirement in the question for four periods and gave several short time periods.

#### Question 6

Question 6 was the least popular optional question. Candidates were required to answer two sections of the question (a) and (b), based on the responsibilities of the host and hostess and the rules of etiquette for social functions. Most of the candidates gave correct responses and were able to gain most of the marks for part (a) and (b). Some candidates transposed the responses in part (a) and (b) and gave part (a) answers for part (b). Candidates were asked to (a) state three responsibilities of guests at a social function and (b) outline three rules of etiquette that should be observed at the dining table. Most of them listed the three responsibilities namely, to be courteous, to be punctual and to be appropriately dressed. For rules of etiquette some candidates formulated their own rules, for example, "do not belch, and do not put your foot on the chair".

For part (c), candidates were asked to state two important rules that must be observed when designing the floral arrangement for a 21<sup>st</sup> birthday dinner party. The correct responses included, "appropriateness, correct size and unhindered height to allow for conversation." Only a few candidates managed to gain full marks in this section.

For part (d) candidates were given a case to study and were asked to (i) outline three responsibilities to the guests that were not fulfilled by the hostess and (ii) outline one responsibility to the guests that was not fulfilled by the catering staff.

Candidates' responses for this part were most disappointing because candidates failed to link answers with the questions asked. They ignored the phrase "that were not fulfilled" and proceeded to offer recommendations, as to what the hostess should do and what the guests should do. Candidates should have recognized the word "failure" in the case given. For example, for the hostess, there was the "failure to mingle with guests and the failure to introduce guests." For the catering staff: "failure to serve every guest; failure to be polite; failure to be courteous." Many candidates were unable to distinguish between the host or hostess and the guests.

#### Question 7

Question 7 was a popular optional choice but not many candidates scored maximum marks. Candidates were asked to define two of the following terms in part (a), credit, impulse buying, and layaway plan. The definition for the term 'credit' was answered correctly by most of the candidates but many candidates confused the term 'layaway' with 'credit'. The terms 'layaway' and 'impulse buying' were not completely understood as some key words or phrases were omitted from candidates' responses.

Part (b) asked candidates to list two features of an effective advertisement for which many candidates scored maximum marks. Other candidates gave techniques used by advertisers rather than features. Responses given for part (c) showed that the majority of the candidates had difficulty interpreting this section dealing with the two-bedroom house with all conveniences, for sale. Candidates were required to write three specific factors that the couple must consider before making the decision to purchase the house. For this segment candidates answered as if the house were selected and arrangements were being made to purchase the house. The other part of the section asked candidates to suggest four important questions that the couple may ask the realtor, apart from the considerations stated in the previous part (c) (i) in order to arrive at a decision. For many candidates similar answers were given for part (c) (i) and (ii) and they also gave responses for questions only the couple could answer, for example, "Is the house suitable for my income or for my family?" Overall this question was poorly answered by many candidates.

### **Paper 03 – School-Based Assessment**

The School-Based Assessment comprised three practical assignments and the second practical assignment, worth 20 marks, was assessed by the teacher and an external examiner. Teachers were required to write assignments using the guidelines for setting and marking that were developed and issued by CXC.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Paper 02**

- Candidates displayed weakness in interpreting terms such as: qualities; effective; characteristics; responsibilities; fulfilled; considerations; features; economic effects; and, benefits and limitations. Candidates must therefore be provided with opportunities for sharpening their understanding of these terms.
- There is need for emphasis on subject matter and the provision of practical learning experiences in all areas of the syllabus, especially in “Disaster Preparedness”, “Entertainment” and “The relationship between family and the community”.
- Candidates must be able to use their knowledge creatively in new situations. They should be given those simulated experiences in classroom settings.
- Candidates need to be guided in organizing and presenting responses in an orderly manner.

#### **School-Based Assessment**

- Teachers need to ensure that candidates get practice in planning and executing the practical.
- There is need for a variety of new and creative assignments, as very often, the same SBA Assignments are used every year.
- Candidates must apply the elements of design when preparing floral arrangements.
- The amount of food served must be in correct proportion to the number of persons being catered for.
- Dishes used for serving food items and containers for displaying and presenting other final products must be appropriate.
- Candidates must learn to manage time and available space judiciously.
- Candidates’ final products seemed to vary from their plans. Plans must determine what is to be done during the actual practical session and the final product must be reflective of the plan.
- More creative and imaginative displays should be encouraged.
- Attention must be paid to economy of fuel, water and other materials (resources).
- Candidates must apply principles for performing specific tasks such as observing rules for cleaning.