

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
CARIBBEAN SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE® EXAMINATION**

MAY/JUNE 2013

**ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT PREPARATION AND MANAGEMENT
GENERAL PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION**

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GENERAL COMMENTS

The General Proficiency Electronic Document Preparation and Management (EDPM) examination is offered in May/June each year. There was a candidate entry of approximately 12 600 and 86 per cent of the candidates earned Grades I–III. The mean score for the examination was 135 out of 250 marks.

This was the final examination based on the syllabus which was released in 2003 and first examined in 2005. The revised syllabus, released for teaching from September 2012, will be examined for the first time in May/June 2014.

DETAILED COMMENTS

Paper 01 – Structured Questions

Paper 01 consisted of ten compulsory short answer questions that tested the knowledge and application of important concepts and theoretical principles involved in document preparation and management. The performance of candidates on this paper showed an improvement compared with 2012. The paper was marked out of 50 and the mean mark was 25. The maximum score earned was 46 marks.

As in previous years, the performance on Paper 01 indicated that the candidates were not adequately prepared in the theory and principles of document preparation. Despite an increase in the mean score compared with the previous year, the performance on this paper continues to be unsatisfactory. The concepts which proved most challenging included a range of topics drawn from Module II such as keyboard shortcuts, maintaining an electronic filing system and manipulating the system to move and delete text.

Paper 01 is a theory paper covering all aspects of the syllabus. It is therefore mandatory that the theory in each module be taught in its entirety. Emphasis should be placed also on grammar, spelling, punctuation, sentence construction and the importance of reading and following instructions carefully.

Question 1

This question tested candidates' ability to

- identify the components of a simple computer system
- describe how a processor (central processing unit) works

The question was attempted by 97 per cent of the candidates, less than 1 per cent of whom earned the maximum available mark. The mean mark was 1.66 out of 6.

The performance of candidates on this question was unsatisfactory. In Part (a) most candidates were unable to correctly identify all the components shown.

In Part (b), the term 'processor' was misunderstood and the majority of the incorrect responses referred to the system unit that houses the motherboard, power supply and other hardware devices. Other responses simply described the processor as 'the brain of the computer that processes data'.

Solutions

- (a) (A) input devices (B) processor (C) memory (D) output devices
- (b) The central processing unit is the component that receives, interprets and carries out the basic instructions and manipulates the data to produce information.

Recommendations

Teachers should be guided by the terminology, content and specific objectives detailed in the syllabus to adequately prepare the students.

Question 2

This question tested candidates' ability to identify techniques used to move and delete files in an electronic filing system.

The question was attempted by 93 per cent of the candidates, 8 per cent of whom earned the maximum available mark. The mean mark was 1.04 out of 3.

The performance of candidates on this question was unsatisfactory. Candidates who provided incorrect responses misinterpreted the question and provided steps to move and delete text within a document instead of the techniques used with files.

Solutions

ANY of the following

- keyboard shortcuts
- use of pull down menu system
- use of pop-up (shortcut) menu system
- use of icons

Recommendations

Teachers are advised to ensure that students are able to distinguish among tasks (such as specific character, paragraph and page formatting tasks), the features of a tool that facilitate the completion of a task and techniques (ways of carrying out a particular task). As an activity, a table can be developed with Tasks, Features and Techniques as column headings.

Question 3

This question tested candidates' ability to

- identify justification formats
- select styles for paragraphing
- view the placement of text on a page

The question was attempted by 91 per cent of the candidates, 1 per cent of whom earned the maximum available mark. The mean mark was 1.63 out of 6.

The performance of candidates on this question was moderate. Most of the candidates were able to give correct responses to Part (a) but had difficulty stating more than one feature for Parts (b) and (c).

Solutions

- (a) Left alignment, right alignment, centre or fully justified
- (b) Blocked, indented or hanging
- (c) Print preview, zoom or print layout, document view

Recommendations

Teachers are advised to include the preparation of a variety of documents in their teaching activities and encourage the students to present these documents using different formats.

Question 4

This question tested candidates' knowledge of

- the production of memoranda in various styles
- transmitting information electronically.

The question was attempted by 97 per cent of the candidates, 42 per cent of whom earned the maximum available marks. The mean mark was 2.19 out of 3.

Part (a) was well done by most candidates who correctly identified the appropriate styles as indented or blocked.

Part (b) was fairly well done. Most candidates were able to suggest at least one way that the memorandum could be sent electronically.

Solutions

- (a) Indented or blocked
- (b) Facsimile, electronic mail attachment, Internet/intranet

Recommendations

Teachers should provide authentic tasks for students to prepare and disseminate electronically, ensuring that they are able to justify their choice of options. Critique of the choices made by others with supporting arguments based on facts will also help to develop the objectives examined by this question.

Question 5

This question tested candidates' knowledge of

- types of legal documents
- intellectual property laws.

The question was attempted by 96 per cent of the candidates, 5 per cent of whom earned the maximum available marks. The mean mark was 2.40 out of 6.

Part (a) was fairly well done. Most candidates were able to name at least two types of legal documents.

Part (b) was poorly done. Most of the responses given did not relate to the scenario given.

Solutions

- (a) Wills, leases, conveyance documents, agreements or contracts
- (b) (i) Intellectual property or copyright law; (ii) Moral and economic rights

Recommendations

Teachers should discuss legal documents, rights and laws using familiar experiences and artistes with whom the students are familiar as a means of generating interest and promoting a better understanding of these concepts.

Question 6

This question tested candidates' ability to identify elements of desirable habits and work attitudes. The question was attempted by 99 per cent of the candidates, 95 per cent of whom earned the maximum available marks. The mean mark was 2.94 out of 3.

The performance on this question was excellent.

In Part (a), candidates were able to correctly identify the pictures that represented the most appropriate attire for working in an office.

In Part (b), candidates were able to correctly identify the picture that represented the most acceptable work environment.

Solutions

- (a) II and III
- (b) III

Recommendations

Teachers should create scenarios and simulations in the classroom to demonstrate acceptable work environments. Additionally, the students could be encouraged to wear office attire on designated days.

Question 7

This question tested candidates' ability to

- use appropriate justification formats
- use correct spacing after punctuation marks
- prepare tabulations using spreadsheets
- complete forms according to specific instructions

The question was attempted by 99 per cent of the candidates, 2 per cent of whom earned the maximum available marks. The mean mark was 10.07 out of 15.

The question was quite well done with even the weaker candidates earning five or more marks.

Most candidates were able to correctly left align the addresses and the account number, right align the due date on same line as the account number, centre the headings and units and correctly place the dollar signs.

Most of the candidates who did not gain full marks neglected to correct all the spelling errors, use horizontal headings or centre the text in the last row.

The most common mistakes included the use of oblique headings instead of horizontal headings and failure to correct the spelling of “arears” to “arrears.”

Solutions

From: St Vincent Power Company
Company Road
Kingstown, St Vincent and the Grenadines

To: Mrs Margot Henry
2 Patten Place
Kingstown, St Vincent and the Grenadines

<u>Account # 6472189</u>		<u>Payment Due: 21-01-2013</u>
Units Used (kWh)	Billing Information	Total Due
2560	\$0.30 per kWh	\$768.00
	Previous Payment	\$572.00
	Arrears	\$225.00
	Current Total	\$768.00
	Total Payment Due	\$993.00

Thank you.

Recommendations

Students should be required to create and format documents which present information in a variety of layouts using combinations of text, tables and graphs.

Question 8

This question tested candidates’ knowledge of the functions performed by short-cut keys on the keyboard.

The question was attempted by 90 per cent of the candidates, 2 per cent of whom earned the maximum available marks. The mean mark was 0.88 out of 3.

The performance on the question was generally unsatisfactory as many candidates could not correctly identify the functions performed by the keys given.

Solutions

- (a) Ctrl X Cut
- (b) Ctrl V Paste
- (c) Ctrl ~ Show formulas in cells (in an electronic spreadsheet)

Recommendations

Teachers should encourage the use of keyboard shortcuts as a means of improving the efficiency with which students use the applications to produce documents.

Question 9

This question tested candidates' ability to identify various paper orientations.

The question was attempted by 92 per cent of the candidates, 29 per cent of whom earned the maximum available marks. The mean mark was 1.77 out of 3.

The question was generally well done. However, some candidates did not recognize the term 'orientation' and did not relate it to the layout of paper used in document production. The term was misinterpreted to mean an activity such as an orientation event at school or at a workplace.

Solutions

- (a) The position or direction in which the paper lies or how the paper is laid out for document production.
- (b) Landscape, portrait

Recommendations

Teachers are advised to be guided by the terminology, content and specific objectives detailed in the syllabus to adequately prepare the students.

Question 10

This question tested candidates' knowledge of file extensions.

The question was attempted by 87 per cent of the candidates, 27 per cent of whom earned the maximum available marks. The mean mark was 0.84 out of 2.

Part (a) was poorly done. Most candidates were unable to identify the extension for a file containing executable codes. However, there were improved responses to Part (b) as most candidates were able to identify a file extension for a file containing pictures.

Solutions

- (a) .exe
- (b) .gif , .jpg, .png, .bmp or .img

Recommendations

Teachers are encouraged to expose students to the file-naming conventions which should be applied when creating and saving files.

Paper 02 – Production Test

Paper 02 consisted of four compulsory questions that tested candidates' ability to apply a variety of production principles to prepare business letters, spreadsheets, creative displays, and to format documents and interpret manuscript signs.

The performance on Paper 02, the production paper, continues to be satisfactory, recording a very slight improvement over 2012. The paper was marked out of 100 and the mean mark was 42. The maximum score earned was 86 marks. The mean on the profile, Presentation and Use of Technology, whilst higher than the mean in 2011, was lower than the mean in 2012 and was the lowest of the three profile means. The challenges posed related to the interpretation of manuscript signs and generally understanding what the outcome of the tasks should be before attempting to answer the question.

Question 1

This question was designed to test candidates' ability to produce a two-page letter with a letterhead and table and then perform a mail merge. This question tested the candidates' ability to:

- (a) Create a datafile containing nine fields.
- (b) Create a letterhead with a logo.
- (c) Type a letter in blocked style.
- (d) Print a copy of the letter showing the merged fields.
- (e) Merge the datafile with the letter.
- (f) Print letters to two persons whose data appeared in the datafile.

The question was attempted by 99 per cent of candidates who wrote this paper. The mean mark was 13.93 out of 30. The maximum score obtained on this question was 29 marks.

Candidates performed well on the following areas:

- Correctly applying the rules governing blocked paragraphs
- Interpreting manuscript signs for insertions, new paragraphs and use of bullets
- Insertion of the table
- Paragraphing and hyphenation

The following were the areas of weak performance:

- Creation of a letterhead
- Non-inclusion of the enclosure line
- Representing time using a 24-hour clock
- Interpreting the manuscript instruction “trs”
- Incorrect usage of the en dash (–) and hyphen (-)
- Using the appropriate date format to match the letter style
- Use of correct and consistent spacing throughout the document
- Inserting merge fields in the letter and completing the mail merge

Recommendations

Teachers should create tasks that encompass the areas of weak performance noted above and administer these tasks in an effort to provide students with practice, thus improving the areas that are in need of development.

Question 2

This question tested candidates' ability to produce a spreadsheet and a memorandum and insert a portion of the spreadsheet into the memorandum. This question tested the candidates' ability to:

- Apply shading to specified text
- Use a main head and a sub-head
- Produce memoranda in various styles
- Prepare tabulations using a spreadsheet
- Integrate information to produce a document
- Use appropriate justification formats (centre and right alignment)

The question was attempted by 94 per cent of the candidates. The mean mark was 12 out of 26. Only one candidate earned the maximum available mark.

A small percentage of candidates did not use spreadsheet software to prepare the spreadsheet but created the document as a table using a word processor. Most candidates were able to use the formula feature of the spreadsheet to correctly compute the average mark.

Candidates performed well on the following areas:

- Typing the spreadsheet in landscape orientation
- Inserting the main head and sub-head as instructed
- Formatting cell data (labels and values) as instructed
- Inserting a formula to calculate the average
- Inserting text in the footer as instructed

The following were the areas of weak performance:

- Inserting text in the header of the spreadsheet as instructed
- Applying the 'Output' cell style to column headings of the spreadsheet as instructed
- Adhering to all the rules governing the selected memoranda style
- Integrating copy of the table in the spreadsheet
- Aligning spreadsheet table with the paragraphs in the memo
- Insertion of the missing data in the second paragraph of the memo.

Many candidates did not copy the table portion of the spreadsheet but opted to copy the entire spreadsheet. This adversely impacted the presentation of the memorandum, resulting in candidates not gaining some of the available marks.

Recommendations

Teachers should create document integration tasks that encompass the range of areas of weak performance noted above and administer these tasks repeatedly, taking care to provide useful feedback to students that will help them achieve mastery of the objectives being examined.

Question 3

This question tested candidates' ability to produce an organisation chart.

More specifically, the question required the candidates to:

- (a) Display the chart in landscape orientation
- (b) Produce headings and sub headings as specified
- (c) Create boxes with a stipulated width
- (d) Format text as stipulated

The question was attempted by 82 per cent of the candidates. The mean mark was 9.50 out of 20. Three candidates earned the maximum available mark.

The performance of candidates on this question was unsatisfactory. Whilst most candidates were able to produce an organisation chart in landscape orientation, the charts as presented were not presentation-ready as evidenced by mismatched boxes, inconsistent text formatting, spelling errors and incorrect hyphenation. Most candidates were able to gain full marks for the Accuracy and Speed profiles but scored poorly on the Presentation and Use of Technology profile.

Recommendations

Teachers should ensure that students get adequate practice in the creation of flowcharts and organisation charts, taking care to include special formatting instructions, including but not limited to:

- Inclusion of headings and sub-headings
- Text size
- Required box dimensions

Students should be encouraged to use the features provided by a word processor such as the templates in SmartArt to efficiently prepare charts.

Question 4

This question tested candidates' ability to create two identical invitations and print them on the same side of the paper. This question tested the candidates' ability to:

- Interpret manuscript signs
- Manipulate simple graphics
- Use different types of headings
- Apply appropriate formatting features to text

More specifically, the question required candidates to:

- (a) Set margins as specified
- (b) Insert a text box
- (c) Create two identical invitations using the information and layout provided
- (d) Insert an appropriate graphic in a specified location

The question was attempted by 71 per cent of the candidates. The mean mark was 12.11 out of 24. The maximum score obtained was 22 marks.

The performance of candidates on this question was satisfactory. Most candidates were able to apply the range of character formatting, such as font size, caps and embolding, as well as the paragraph

formatting features as instructed. However, the majority of the displays presented were not of a quality that might be deemed 'ready for presentation' and lacked creativity.

The following were the areas of weak performance:

- Setting margins to the stipulated sizes
- Placing a single line border around an inserted graphic
- Paragraphing

Recommendations

Teachers should ensure that students have the opportunity to create a wide range of displays, paying special attention to the presentation of the final document. Displays such as advertisements for job vacancies in local newspapers are a good starting point for this practice. Wedding invitations and other similar displays may also be used.

Paper 031 – School-Based Assessment

Overall, the work produced by students in the School-Based Assessment (SBA) was satisfactory. A wide range of assignments was presented for moderation including a few that were constructed by the teacher or teachers in the school, which closely followed the syllabus guidelines but went beyond mere repetition of assessment of the skills assessed in the exemplars. The mean score after moderation was 69 out of the maximum 100 points available. The maximum score earned was 100 marks.

In only a few cases did teachers submit all the components required for the moderation exercise — assignments, keys and mark schemes alongside the assignments scored by the teacher, accompanied by individual score sheets.

Most packages submitted for moderation had one or more of the required components missing. In addition, it was also evident that some of the work submitted was not the student's original work, since similar copies were submitted by more than one student.

Some candidates presented assignments and manuals that showed evidence of mastery of all three assessed profiles: Accuracy, Speed, and Presentation and Use of Technology. All assignments were properly labelled, neatly presented and free of all correctible errors. Similarly, the Reference Manual contained pieces that showcased the candidates' mastery of the subject matter.

The following were the areas of weak performance as it related to documents included in the portfolio:

- Inconsistent application of style rules governing the preparation of business, legal and committee documents
- Spelling and grammatical errors
- Displays that exhibited very little creativity

Recommendations

1. All assignments and mark schemes should be prepared consistent with the guidelines contained in the current syllabus (CXC 34/G/SYLL 12 pp. 19–30).
2. All teachers should ensure that they are familiar with the *Guidelines For Submitting School-Based Assessment For Electronic Document Preparation And Management (FORM EDPM-2)*, a copy of which may be downloaded from www.cxc.org.
3. Students should be given ample practice using the tools and features of the various software packages as mastery of these tools is necessary for the production of accurate, professional documents.
4. The *Record of Marks for School-Based Assessment (FORM EDPM-1)* and *Moderation of School-Based Assessment (FORM EDPM-3)* should be completed fully and accurately and submitted in accordance with the instructions provided in the Guidelines (FORM EDPM-2).

Paper 032 – Alternative to School-Based Assessment

Paper 032 tested candidates' ability to use a variety of production principles to prepare a six-column newsletter. The maximum mark possible was 100 and the mean mark on this paper was 42.59. The maximum score achieved was 67 marks.

The question tested candidates' ability to:

- (i) Produce various styles of documents
- (ii) Interpret and apply manuscript signs
- (iii) Manipulate the system to move and delete files
- (iv) Manipulate simple graphics for insertion into a document

More specifically, the question required the candidates to:

- (a) Format a two-page document as a six-column newsletter
- (b) Type the text provided
- (c) Insert a page border as specified
- (d) Insert WordArt and SmartArt
- (e) Format text as specified
- (f) Insert page numbers
- (g) Insert shapes
- (h) Insert a picture
- (i) Interpret and apply manuscript signs

The performance of the candidates on this question was unsatisfactory.

However, the following tasks were well done by most candidates:

- Centre the heading in specified font size
- Align body text as instructed
- Insertion of a ClipArt
- Display text and objects using specified line spacing
- Use bullets appropriately

A large percentage of candidates did not use a SmartArt object as instructed and some of the candidates who used a SmartArt object did so incorrectly. At least five candidates presented the instructions (such as “Type article in single line spacing”) as a part of the newsletter.

The following were the areas of weak performance:

- Layout document as a 6-column newsletter
- Insertion of a border around a specified column only
- Selecting an appropriate ClipArt
- Use of specified shape (rectangle with rounded corner)
- Interpretation and application of the instruction to emphasize a specific item of text
- Presenting a document that is free of spelling errors

Recommendations

Teachers should ensure that students have the opportunity to create a wide range of displays, paying special attention to the presentation of the final document. Newsletters produced by organisations such as service clubs, community groups and business entities can be used as materials for in-class activities geared at developing the skill required to produce effective and creative displays.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Teachers should ensure that they are using the current syllabus and should check CXC’s website (<http://www.cxc.org/>) occasionally for syllabus amendments.
2. Teachers should ensure that they have access to a wide range of computer-generated documents (including displays) for use as exemplars and for task-based practice. Some good sources of documents include:
 - (a) The career section of Sunday newspapers;
 - (b) Restaurant menus;
 - (c) Annual reports produced by companies such as financial institutions;
 - (d) Websites maintained by publishers of EDPM textbooks; and
 - (e) Other teachers.
3. Teachers should ensure that they teach the fundamentals of the software applications such as document creation, editing, formatting and dissemination — rather than simply teaching how to manipulate a named application. A good strategy is to expose students to a variety of current software applications.
4. The theoretical aspects of the syllabus are important and, as such, strategies should be employed that will ensure that adequate time and cognitive effort are expended on these aspects during the instructional process.
5. Teachers should ensure that adequate emphasis is placed on the development of the skills examined under Profile 3 (Presentation and Use of Technology) and that all documents produced are professionally completed.
6. In relation to examination preparation, students should be provided with adequate opportunities to develop test-taking skills. Teachers must emphasize to students the importance of reading and interpreting instructions before a question/task is attempted.
7. Students should practise keyboarding skills consistently to ensure that they attain, maintain and even exceed the minimum accuracy and speed threshold required by the syllabus.

8. This was the last examination based on the syllabus which was first examined in 2005; consequently, the new syllabus (CXC 34/G/SYLL) will be examined in May/June 2014. Teachers and candidates are encouraged to pay attention to the:
- (a) revised profiles;
 - (b) new modules;
 - (c) new objectives and content that will be examined; and
 - (d) revised guidelines for the conduct of the school-based assessment.