

CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

**REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE
ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION**

MAY/JUNE 2011

COMMUNICATION STUDIES

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GENERAL COMMENTS

Generally candidates performed well in the 2011 Communication Studies examination compared with 2010. The mean in 2011 for Papers 01A and Paper 031 was the same, noticeably better for Paper 01B and Paper 032, but slightly lower for Paper 02. In Papers 01A, 031 and 01B, over 90 per cent of the candidates achieved Grades I–V. Significantly more candidates achieved Grades I–II in Paper 01A and Paper 01B than in 2010.

Overall, the percentage of candidates achieving Grades I -V was approximately 94.

DETAILED COMMENTS

Paper 1A – Short Answers

Section A – Module 1

Module 1 consisted of Questions 1 and 2, which were based on the research process. The scenario given related to Communication Studies students at Vader High School who were researching the use of the Internet for educational purposes. The vast majority of candidates attempted both questions.

Question 1

This question was one of the five best done questions on the paper. There were 14 257 responses and the mean score was 5.43 out of 8.

Part (a) asked candidates to list two methods of data collection other than personal observation, that students might find suitable for collecting data for this research. Stronger candidates were able to do well on this question, scoring the two marks allocated. Weaker candidates, however, had difficulty identifying methods of data collection. Many opted to use general research terminology from the subject area such as ‘qualitative’ and ‘quantitative,’ which are not methods used to collect data. They sometimes confused *methods of data collection* with *sources of data*, giving answers such as ‘books’, ‘Internet’, and ‘television’ for the former. Some candidates described the method for collecting the data rather than naming the method, providing, for example, ‘face to face interaction’ instead of ‘interview’.

Another weakness noted was the tendency for some candidates to confuse the methods of collecting the data with how those methods could be administered, and so they supplied answers such as ‘face to face’ and ‘over the phone’ for methods of data collection.

Moreover, some candidates offered ‘observation’ as one of the methods of data collection, despite the fact that the question clearly stated that it would not be an acceptable answer in this section.

Teachers should insist that all candidates become familiar with the specialized vocabulary of Module 1, including the approved spellings.

Part (b) asked candidates to identify one strength and one weakness of both methods they had selected in Part (a). Most candidates were aware of the strengths and weaknesses associated with the methods of data collection they had chosen. However, this question again served to separate the stronger candidates from the weaker ones. The weaker candidates ignored the scenario given and seemed to be regurgitating the strengths and weaknesses from lists they had memorized, suggesting an inability to apply their knowledge appropriately to the scenario given.

In Part (c), candidates were asked to give one advantage and one disadvantage of the use of personal observation for collecting data for this type of research. Undoubtedly, it posed the most challenge to candidates. Some of the weaker candidates treated *observation* as if it was *interview*, while others thought that it meant simply looking and thus came up with answers such as “it was the easiest method as all the students needed to do was look for themselves”.

Question 2

There were 14 209 responses to this question and the mean score was 4.36 out of 7. The question was one of the better done ones.

Part (a) asked candidates to state three pieces of information they should seek in their research. Here again, lack of attention to the scenario separated the stronger candidates from the weaker ones. Candidates who followed the scenario were able to identify three pieces of information, while weaker candidates were content to give biographical information, which was not enough to earn them the maximum marks allocated for this question.

For part (b), candidates were required to name four sources, other than the student user, that could provide data on how the Internet could be used for educational purposes. For the most part, this question was well done. Most candidates could name four sources from which the data could be obtained and were able to secure the maximum three marks given. There were, however, indications of a lack of preparation on the part of some candidates, especially in respect to careful attention to the scenario. Responses were too general and so candidates lost marks. An example of a given general source is ‘researcher or researches’. Given the scenario, an acceptable answer would have been *researchers who have done research in the area or previous research on the issue*.

Teachers are reminded that, in order to ensure that students maximize their chances of scoring in this section, they should instruct them to give answers that are clear and expressed as sentences.

Section B – Module 2

This module consisted of Questions 3–6, which tested candidates’ ability to differentiate between the linguistic features of Creole and Standard English; explain why a person’s speech may be considered language, and suggest ways in which learning Standard English might be useful to a student (Question 3); explain why a teacher might consider a student’s use of linguistic shorthand in an email message to him to be disrespectful, explain why a teacher might want students to email their work to him, and identify three other electronic media that a teacher can use to communicate with his students (Question 4); explain why a person may choose to speak exclusively in Standard English and why another may choose not to do so, and provide contexts in which Standard English might be more appropriate than Creole and vice versa (Question 5); link a chunk of a person’s speech to its social

function in an exchange and list three other functions of language along with an appropriate illustration of each (Question 6).

Generally, candidates demonstrated familiarity with the content targeted and performed reasonably well on the module. However, teachers need to pay more attention to the exploration of the following areas: *linguistic features*, *register* and *dialectal variety*.

Question 3

This question came in three parts and was based on a dialogue on the teaching and learning of English between a student (Renaldo) and a teacher (Miss John).

There were 14 263 responses and the mean score was 4.22 out of 7. The question was one of the better done ones.

Part (a) asked candidates to identify three aspects of Renaldo's speech that are not good examples of 'good English'. Overall, it was answered fairly well by candidates who offered responses such as '*Phonology*–'*makin*' and '*yuh*' instead of '*making*' and '*you*.' However, some students offered general aspects such as '*syntax*' and '*phonology*' without any illustration while others extracted only one word from the scenario, for example '*makin*' and '*yuh*', which was not considered to be sufficiently identifying.

In Part (b), candidates were asked to give two reasons why Renaldo's speech might be considered a language. Those who did not achieve full marks did not pay enough attention to the scenario and so gave answers that did not reflect it. Examples of such responses are: '*maturational*' and '*dynamic*'. In addition, some candidates gave the functions of language as reasons, while others appeared to be unsure about what the characteristics of a language are. Some expected responses were: *it is systematic/has grammatical structure, it has a sound system, it is understood by another human being, and it is verbal*.

For Part (c), candidates were asked to suggest two ways in which learning Standard English might be useful to Renaldo one day. Most candidates got the full two marks for this.

Question 4

This question came in three parts and was based on an email exchange between a teacher (Mr Jack) and a student (George) in which the latter used Creole and non-Standard writing representations.

There were 14 270 responses and the mean score was 5.14 out of 8. The question was one of the better-done ones.

In Part (a), candidates were required to suggest two reasons why Mr Jack saw George's email as being disrespectful. Most candidates scored well on this question. They were able to identify credible reasons.

For Part (b), candidates were asked to give three reasons why Mr Jack might have asked his students to email their work to him. Many candidates scored well here also, but too many candidates were unable to come up with plausible reasons. Two implausible answers were 'spell check on the computer' and 'student doesn't have to search for teacher'. Correct answers included *enabling him to correspond easily with students, facilitating feedback and enabling easier legibility*.

Part (c) required candidates to suggest three other electronic means which Mr Jack could use to communicate with his students. While many candidates provided three good suggestions, many others did not directly address the question as asked, giving answers such as 'telephone', 'fax machine', 'fax', 'microphone', 'speaker' and 'flash drive'. Expected responses included text messages (via cell phone), blogs, and instant messages via an online chat programme.

Question 5

This question came in four parts and was based on a dialogue between two acquaintances – Henry, who had just come back home after studying abroad and was speaking in Standard English, and Fred, who had spent time abroad but was speaking Creole.

There were 14 253 responses and the mean score was 5.54 out of 8. The question was generally well done.

Part (a) asked candidates to give three possible reasons why Henry had chosen to speak exclusively in Standard English. Most candidates scored well on this question, citing reasons such as *wanting to reflect his education and status, wanting to impress Fred and looking down on Creole*.

Part (b) asked candidates to give three possible reasons why Fred had chosen not to speak exclusively in Standard English. Most candidates were able to highlight the reasons which include *him seeing it as a part of his identity and seeing Standard English as being restrictive in particular situations*.

In Part (c) candidates were asked to identify one specific context in which Standard English might be more appropriate than Creole. Most candidates scored well on this question, citing interviews for particular jobs, giving a feature address and conversing with a speaker who does not understand Creole.

For Part (d), candidates were required to identify one specific context in which Creole may be more appropriate than Standard English. Suitable responses included conversing with a friend or another Creole speaker or politicians campaigning and trying to identify with ordinary people. Most candidates scored well on this question as well.

Question 6

This question came in two parts and was based on a scenario in which a mother was expressing concern to her son (Sean) about his speaking in a non-Standard variety of English, different from the one he spoke when he was younger. Sean was explaining why he did so.

There were 13 890 responses and the mean score was 2.87 out of 7. The question was one of the two most challenging for candidates. Many candidates either did not attempt any of the parts or just failed to score a mark.

Part (a) asked candidates to identify one social function of language based on Sean's response. It is apparent that many candidates were not well prepared to answer this question. Expected responses included *to identify with a social group, to distance oneself from another social group, to exchange information* and *to persuade*.

In Part (b), candidates were required to list three functions of language, other than the social function, and to give one example of each. Too many candidates showed that they did not know the functions of language by either providing guesswork answers or not attempting the question at all. To help candidates improve their performance on this module, teachers are advised to:

- Devote more time to teaching the terminology of the subject.
- Give their students more hands-on practice in responding specifically to the demands of the module.
- Practise writing their own questions, using the objectives of the syllabus as a guide.
- Read the Communication Studies Subject Reports and share them with their students.

Section C – Module 3

Question 7

This question came in three parts and was based on a scenario in which a principal walked into a class of noisy first-year secondary school students, causing them to immediately fall silent.

There were 14 249 responses and the mean score was 4.85 out of 8.

Part (a) of the question asked the candidates to suggest three non-verbal cues from the principal that might have caused the students' reaction. Many candidates were able to identify non-verbal cues from the principal, but others provided vague and general responses. Appropriate responses included the *principal's stern look, folded arms, raised hand and status*.

In Part (b), candidates were asked to suggest three non-verbal behaviours the students could have exhibited on seeing the Principal enter the classroom. The question was generally well done. Suitable responses included a *'frozen' action, frightened facial expression, fidgeting and pretence at doing serious work*.

For Part (c), candidates were required to suggest two verbal cues the principal could have used if the class had not become silent. It was generally poorly done. Too many candidates misinterpreted the term 'verbal' and gave answers describing the tone or pitch of the principal's voice rather than stating some of the things he might have said. These included, among others, '*Stop talking!*', '*Be quiet!*' or '*You are too noisy!*'

Question 8

This question came in two parts and was based on a dialogue, between Lisa (a company manager) and her friend Marva, about an invitation to the maintenance workers to attend a luncheon, which hardly any of them attended.

There were 14 172 responses and the mean score was 4.24 out of 8. Many candidates scored in the 4–6 range on this question.

Part (a) asked candidates to suggest four factors that could account for the workers' non-attendance. It was fairly well done. Suitable responses included that the *language was not understood, the invitation was too formal or was overlooked because of the manner of notification or was not clear enough.*

For Part (b) candidates were required to state two other methods which Lisa could have used to attract a more positive response to the invitation and one reason why each method might have been successful. Most candidates were able to identify correct methods but had difficulty explaining the successful use of the methods given, proffering answers on how to improve the text and appearance of the invitation such as 'use of graphic imagery to enhance invitation', 'making it colourful', and 'changing how the invitation was worded' instead of suggesting how these methods could make the workers feel respected or important or could allow feedback.

Question 9

This question came in two parts and was based on a scenario in which the prefect body of a high school was permitted to launch a campaign at assembly to address the school's littering problem.

There were 13 918 responses and the mean score was 2.24 out of 6. This question was poorly done, with most of the scores ranging between 0 and 3.

In Part (a), candidates were asked to identify one part of the communication process the students might engage in during the planning stage of the campaign and to illustrate how they would do so. Most candidates merely listed any part or element in the communication process as a response, for example, 'encode' and 'message' rather than including the action taken to plan for the campaign, for example, *selecting a medium and encoding the message.* Where candidates were successful in naming the part or element, they usually did not get the illustration correct, tending instead to define the element.

Part (b) asked candidates to identify one barrier that could prevent the audience from effectively receiving the intended message and to illustrate how the barrier could be removed. Some candidates were able to identify barriers specific to the scenario but could not relate them to the scenario.

Illustrations given often took the form of explanations of the barrier rather than ways in which they might be removed. Illustrations such as using everyday language, using a positive, enthusiastic tone, controlling volume levels and including humour or music in the presentation.

Question 10

This question came in two parts and was based on the same scenario as Question 9.

There were 13 775 responses and the mean score was 3.54 out of 8. Many candidates' responses were not related to the given scenario.

Part (a) asked candidates to state four methods by which the prefects could arouse student interest in the campaign. The methods given by candidates were suited to campaigns generally, rather than specifically to the launch of the clean-up campaign. Suitable methods include *rap music, posters or art work, video presentations, slogans or jingles*.

In Part (b), candidates were required to explain how each of the methods identified in Part (a) could help the prefects convey their message effectively. Many candidates could not provide accurate explanations, focusing instead on how the methods would be attractive. Some candidates tried to explain the use of methods not given in Part (a) while others gave no response.

Paper 01B – Aural Comprehension

Question 1

This question asked candidates to listen to an extract and then to state the writer's main purpose in no more than 20 words.

There were 14 288 responses and the mean score was 1.28 out of 3. Question 1 proved to be the most challenging of the four questions. Many candidates could not satisfy three requirements of a good answer: a statement that read like a purpose statement and related to an earthquake or to devastatingly loud music; a generalization of the effects of the earthquake or music; and a verb (phrase) that captured the notion of vivid description.

Question 2

This question required students to state four details that were used to identify the main purpose. There were 14 276 responses and the mean score was 3.16 out of 4. It was the best done of the questions. Most candidates performed satisfactorily, giving details either to support the destructiveness of the earthquake or music. However, a few candidates seemed not to be clear on how to support the main purpose and as a result they offered vague or general responses as opposed to giving details. There were instances as well in which the details given bore no clear relation to the main purpose presented in the preceding response. Some candidates wrongly listed literary terms like 'mood', 'diction', 'tone' and 'setting' as details from the text.

Question 3

This question required students to identify in Part (a) two different emotions displayed by the characters in the passage and in Part (b) to provide evidence of the emotions selected.

There were 14 286 responses and the mean score was 2.58 out of 4; it was the second best done of the questions. The fact that the question required different emotions was critical, but was missed by many candidates, who identified the same emotion twice, for example, fear/panic, which resulted in them getting credit for only one of the answers.

In Part (b), the candidates performed satisfactorily; once they had identified the emotion correctly, they were able to adequately support their answer with the required evidence from the passage.

Question 4

The question came in two parts, with Part (a) asking candidates to state two different figures of speech used in the passage and Part (b) requiring them to comment on the effectiveness of one of the figures of speech given for Part (a).

There were 14 267 responses and the mean score was 2.09 out of 4. Many candidates got the answer for Part (a) correct, providing various figures of speech such as *personification* and *alliteration* though many others preferred to give textual examples of those figures of speech rather than the labels assignable to them (a practice which should be discouraged).

On the other hand, Part (b) proved more challenging. Many candidates were unable to adequately comment on the effectiveness of the figure of speech, choosing to give descriptive statements of its meanings or, worse, merely stating the textual example of the figure of speech and defining it rather than linking it to the author's intention or purpose.

Teachers are advised to provide extensive instruction to their students on how to comment on figures of speech and their effectiveness. In particular, they should focus on the need to both explain the actual figure of speech and show how it contributes, if at all, to achieving the author's purpose.

Recommendations

- Teachers need to encourage students to read more in order to build their working vocabulary.
- Students need extended practice in the construction of sentences.
- More time should be spent on teaching students how to differentiate 'purpose' sentences from 'main idea' sentences and, in the process, to select the right verb of purpose.
- Students should be taught how to use figurative language effectively as a means of helping them to better understand how and why writers use it.

- Students need to understand that for a figure of speech to be effective it has to contribute to the effectiveness of the writer's purpose; they also need to practise creating statements showing this link between figure of speech and purpose. Conversely, if there is no link, they should be able to evaluate a figure of speech as being ineffective on that account.
- Students should be taught how to distinguish between specific details and general or vague information, for example, between 'old man Jango's ancient house wobbled on skinny legs' (specific detail) and 'the way the old man's house was behaving' (vague information)
- Teachers need to do more work on the teaching of inference so as to reduce the incidence of obviously arbitrary guesswork which candidates engage in when interpreting the passage and, in particular, the writer's purpose.
- Teachers need to spend more time having their students distinguish between 'parts of speech' and 'figures of speech'.

Paper 02 – Essays

Section A – Module 1

Question 1

This question required candidates to write an essay of no more than 500 words on a passage on tsunamis adapted from the website <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/savageearth/tsunami/index.html>. They were to identify the writer's main point and purpose and comment, with specific reference to the passage, on three organizational strategies and three language techniques.

There were 14, 233 responses and the mean score was 10.66 out of 25. Candidates' overall performance was fair. Many responses suggested competence in identifying the writer's main point and purpose and also in providing the supporting pieces of evidence.

However, many candidates lost marks for weaknesses in the statement of the writer's main point and purpose. Some candidates lumped the two concepts together, as in, 'The writer's main point and purpose is to...', ignoring the called-for distinction. The main point was often expressed as a purpose statement, as in, 'The main point is to ...' and most candidates seemed to think that the only purpose verbs there are were 'show' and 'inform'.

A significant number of candidates were unable to identify appropriate organizational strategies and language techniques. Apart from a worrying number who simply summarized the extract in their essays, many were undone by the word 'organizational' and therefore offered that 'typography', 'paragraphing', 'commas', 'hyphens', 'use of sentences', 'introduction', and 'conclusion' were *ipso facto* organizational strategies. That many candidates also offered use of scientific-sounding data as a language technique but use of visual and auditory imagery as an organizational strategy indicated their confusion about the two concepts. Of concern was the overall weakness of candidates in linking the pieces of information to the writer's purpose or the effect on the audience.

For the writer's purpose, many candidates offered vague answers, like 'to show the cause and effect of...', and showed a clear need for more training in both discrimination between the notions 'specific' and 'general' and selection of more focused verbs of purpose. More generally, candidates need to more deeply study how different authors organize text to present messages and achieve particular purposes. They also need much more practice producing written commentary that is structured as a matter of course, along the lines of introduction, thematic development, coherence, cohesion, and conclusion.

Section B – Module 2

Question 2

This question came in three parts and required candidates to write an essay of not more than 500 words discussing (a) Eudora's social status and her attitude to language, (b) what Auntie Beatrice's attitude revealed about her perceived social 'superiority' and her attitude to language, and (c) the verbal and non-verbal conveyance of social tensions between the characters in a selected pair in an extract adapted from Merle Hodge's *Crick Crack Monkey*.

There were 14 215 responses and the mean score was 11.63 out of 25.

For Part (a), most candidates misunderstood the question and were unable to identify the character's social status or to locate the indicators of social status (her occupation, level of education, averting her eyes in deference to Auntie Beatrice etc.) in the passage. Many candidates pointed to Eudora's use of Creole and her refusal to speak 'proper English' as examples of her status without clarifying how these would apply. While many candidates observed that Eudora was proud of/comfortable with the Creole she spoke, many opined that she was ashamed of her language and believed it to be inferior to Standard English. It was obvious from the responses that candidates had learnt some terms by rote for example, *basilect*, *acrolect*, *mesolect* and were simply reproducing them – in most cases, inappropriately.

In responding to Part (b), many candidates stated that Auntie Beatrice perceived herself to be socially superior and had high status but, as in Part (a), far too many of them were unable to clearly state the indicators, for example, *she rebuked Eudora for using Creole*, *she used Standard English exclusively*, *and she despised the language of Grenadian people*, etc. Some candidates who showed knowledge of what was required had serious challenges expressing their ideas clearly and coherently in Standard English. Additionally, there were instances where candidates seemed to have misunderstood the roles of the characters in the extract and used the names Auntie Beatrice and Eudora interchangeably.

Part (c) was the most poorly done. While many candidates appeared to have understood the concept of tension/conflict and identified some of the behaviours that caused tension between Eudora and Auntie Beatrice and how these two characters reacted (Eudora using Creole deliberately to annoy Beatrice; Auntie Beatrice raising her voice and becoming hysterical when Carol mimicked Eudora and said 'frack'), they did not make distinctions between verbal and non-verbal conveyance of these tensions. Also, as in Part (a), terms candidates had memorized (*proxemics*, *paralinguistic*, etc.) were simply reproduced with no consideration for context. Many candidates discussed both pairs of characters but could only be awarded marks in relation to one pair, in keeping with what the question asked for.

With respect to organization, many candidates exhibited serious challenges in producing an essay with an introduction, well-developed body with paragraphs, and a conclusion. Consequently, at the macro level, most of the responses were structurally deficient while there was sparse and inconsistent use of transitional devices to achieve coherence between and within paragraphs. In some cases, where introductions and conclusions were attempted, they were ineffectively developed. Many candidates produced one extended paragraph while others produced discrete, unconnected responses to Parts (a), (b), and (c) of the question.

With regard to expression, many candidates showed that it was a struggle to (i) agree subjects with verbs, (ii) select the right tense, (iii) use tenses consistently, (iv) control complex syntax, (v) choose the right word, (vi) spell words correctly, (vii) punctuate correctly, and (viii) use the appropriate register/level of formality.

It was clear that composing an essay presented difficulty for numerous candidates. Teachers need to seek to hone both students' essay-writing knowledge and their essay-teaching skills. Emphasis should be placed on the structure of expository essays and on fundamental topics like (i) effectively introducing expository essays, (ii) expressing controlling ideas, (iii) stating the theme and constituent topics, (iv) illustrating a point, (v) ways of making a paragraph cohesive, (vi) making transitions from paragraph to paragraph, and (vii) effectively concluding expository essays.

Generally, candidates were awarded average scores. It was noted that several candidates did not attempt the question and that some who did so merely regurgitated and/or summarized the contents of the passage. A number of candidates dispensed with the requirements of the task and developed their own hypothetical situations, reflecting a misinterpretation of, or disengagement with the task.

In addition to essay-writing skills, candidates need to be guided in the application of the theoretical content of the module to authentic language/communication situations.

Section C – Module 3

Question 3

This question required that candidates read a scenario in which they are members of an Abstinence Club in a high school and have been asked to organize a campaign that would improve attendance at weekly meetings of the Club, and to write a proposal for an advertising campaign in an essay of approximately 500 words. Candidates were to include in the proposal (a) strategies they would use to attract students to club meetings and justification for these strategies, (b) language varieties and registers they considered appropriate, and (c) the information that they thought must be relayed during the campaign.

There were 14 163 responses and the mean score was 11.93 out of 25.

(a) Strategies and Justification

Most candidates demonstrated fair knowledge of the strategies proposed, but many failed to adequately discuss or justify their choices/decisions. A large number of candidates identified strategies that were neither appropriate nor applicable to the scenario given. Many of these

candidates did not show sufficient awareness of the context and hence could not properly defend the suitability of selected strategies in this connection.

(b) Language Varieties and Registers

Candidates performed poorly in this section of their responses, which indicated only cursory knowledge of varieties and registers. There was little application of this knowledge to fit the strategies employed in Part (a) of the question. Many candidates were content to provide only a general response indicating that they would use *all* the language varieties. This was also the case for registers. Many candidates were unable to correctly apply them to the strategies selected.

(c) Information to be Included in the Campaign

Many candidates misinterpreted this section of the question, providing instead information about abstinence and trivial or irrelevant information about the club such as time, place, and historical background.

Paper 031 – School-Based Assessment

Overall, there was improvement in the presentation of the portfolios this year. Most candidates selected themes that could be dealt with in a creative and imaginative manner. Although there were overworked themes like *Teenage Pregnancy*, these were fewer than in previous years. (A list of suggested topics is provided at the end of this section.)

The unnecessary use of profanity continued in too many literary pieces, and some candidates were of the mistaken view that abbreviations that are characteristic of text messaging were a replacement for Creole, and that use of Creole/Patois was acceptable in academic writing.

The Portfolio

Many candidates showed insight and creativity in the presentation of their theme of choice and there was less emphasis on the use of artwork to enhance the presentations.

The new syllabus requires candidates to pay special attention to the introduction and specific areas—theme and purpose, how the theme will be dealt with in the expository and reflective sections, as well as how the theme is related to them personally, academically and in their prospective field of work. Most were able to adequately comment on their future career but many did not clearly state the relationship to their academic and personal lives.

Another noteworthy recurring problem with the portfolios was the failure of many candidates to state a forum/context—for example, a magazine or dramatic production—in which they wished to share their information with their intended audience. In many instances, they treated context in the preface like the setting in which the incidents took place or, strangely, reasons why a particular genre was chosen to convey the message. Too many also provided an argumentative essay as a literary genre, which did not allow for analysis of the elements found in truer literary genres such stories, poems, monologues, plays, or even diaries.

Additionally, some candidates seemed unaware of changes to the Paper in the syllabus and included a rationale rather than a preface and therefore omitted information that would have improved their performance.

Too many schools seemed unaware of the new format and instead recorded the marks on the old moderation forms, which were no longer suitable. This required either adjustments on the forms themselves or entry of the marks on the new forms. It is suggested that schools acquire the appropriate forms in order to prevent a recurrence next year.

The Analytical Essay

Candidates, for the most part, were cognizant of the changes in the new syllabus and discussed two linguistic features. However, well-known general weaknesses in this area persisted. For example, many essays did not fully explain why the two features were used by the writers, and candidates gave definitions, rather than discussions supported by illustrations from the reflective piece presented.

Recommendations

- Teachers who are teaching the Communication Studies portfolio need to be aware of the changes in the syllabus. They must note the marking requirements, especially the criterion that half marks are *not* allowed. Teachers must use the updated form—which they can download—to enter marks.
- Teachers should also instruct their students in the use of appropriate formats for dialogue writing.
- Teachers should insist that their students carefully proofread their portfolios for Standard English grammar, punctuation, and spelling before final submission.
- With regard to medical topics, students should be encouraged to do their research carefully and provide accurate information.

List of suggested topics

1. The evolution of language in calypso music
2. The influence of foreign foods on Caribbean people
3. The psychological effects of acne on teenagers
4. The choosing of careers
5. Local vs foreign education
6. Flooding and its effects
7. Female role models
8. Fetishes
9. The expectation of teachers and its effects on teenagers

Paper 032 – Alternative to Internal Assessment

Although there was marked improvement in the performance of candidates on this year's paper compared with their performance in previous years, overall performance was still weak.

Section A – Module One

This question required candidates to (a) summarize in no more than 60 words the benefits of kissing in David E. Bratt's 2007 *Trinidad Guardian* article 'Nothing like kissing' and (b) write a point-form evaluation of the article discussing the reliability and validity of the author's arguments. The mean was 9.14 out of 20. Many candidates had great difficulty satisfying the demands of the question in all of its aspects—summarizing the benefits of kissing, evaluating the *reliability* of the arguments, the *validity* of the arguments, the strategies and devices as well identifying their effectiveness in a given discourse. This difficulty was compounded by severe weaknesses in expression and organization.

Section B – Module Two

This question required candidates to write an essay of no more than 300 words analysing the dialectal variation, attitudes to language, and communicative behaviours of an excerpt from Ninnie Seereeram's 'The New Teacher' in Neville and Undine Giuseppi's *Backfire*.

The mean was 9.89 out of 20. Many candidates were able to identify the required elements but were painfully challenged to discuss them in well-organized, well-written essays. The inability to compose was alarming.

Section C – Module Three

This question required candidates to write an essay in no more than 250 words discussing (a) the writer's central concerns, (b) the intended audience, (c) the writer's intention, and (d) three contexts in which it would be appropriate to deliver the text in respect of a passage adapted from 'Country in Great Danger' in Cecil Gray's *English for Life*.

The mean was 10.34 out of 20. It was the best done of the three questions on the paper but the performance of many candidates, as in the other two questions, left much to be desired in terms of expression and organization. In responding to Part (d), in particular, candidates did not quite understand that a 'context' refers to a communicative situation where pieces can be used, for example, newspaper article, a public rally, bulletins or an interview with a reporter.

Recommendations have been provided in the different sections of this report to help teachers improve their practice, and these should be associated with those given in the new syllabus. In particular, teachers are urged to expand their knowledge of the foci of the three modules by reading more intensively and extensively, devoting time for reflection on the new knowledge gained from such reading, and trying out new research-based methods of delivering their content.