

Work cannot be produced to back up scores given - CXC official

MISSING SBAs

SOME SCHOOLS across the region have been unable to produce work that students purportedly did, which earned them scores in the Caribbean Examinations Council's (CXC) School Based Assessment (SBA).

Susan Giles, the senior assistant registrar for the Examinations, Administration and Security Division of the CXC, was speaking at the regional results announcement ceremony yesterday, when she disclosed that in 2014, the CXC has found over 120 cases where work cannot be shown for scores entered into the system.

"We are seeing some things that worry us.

"We are seeing some situations where candidates are either bringing the complete SBA in September or the completed SBA in April. Teachers

are saying no, we not accepting this because as everyone knows, the SBA is a process and the process must be seen," Giles explained.

"We are getting a lot of letters coming into us saying that 'we didn't see this process. We're not sure if this is the candidate's work' and they're asking us to take a look at it."

Although she stated that CXC would like this problem to be dealt with at a school level, Giles revealed that SBA audits have been introduced, where persons are dispersed into the countries that take part in the SBA process and an audit of the work is done.

"Now, if you have scores in our system, you must have work to show us. This year - very distressing situation - we did it in five territories and we have over 120 cases where they cannot produce the work to

back up the scores that are placed in the system. Just remember the scores are not placed there by the candidates," the senior assistant registrar said.

The five territories where audits were done are Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.

Giles stated that ongoing investigations are being done in relation to the matter.

Despite this, she noted that generally, schools have "stepped up to the plate" and excellent returns are being seen for SBAs.

The SBA is work that is done by a prospective candidate of the CSEC examination, over a period of time in school and administered in a number of subject areas. The SBA makes up a percentage of that candidate's final grade.



SUSAN GILES, senior assistant registrar for the Examinations Administration and Security Division

SVG records increased pass rate in CSEC 2014

THE MINISTRY of Education is celebrating a 71 per cent pass nationally for the 2014 CSEC examinations.

Minister of Education Girlyn Miguel stated, at the CXC regional results announcement ceremony yesterday, that this year's result was a two per cent increase on 2013's 69 per cent.

"I thank and congratulate the principals and teachers of the secondary schools for their work with the students and ...hope that the overall pass rate will continue to increase," Miguel said.

Despite the noticeable improvements, both in

specific subject areas and overall performance, the minister stated that attention must be paid to specific factors.

"While we are pleased to report that there is an increase this year in the performance of the majority of schools in the CSEC, we admit that we have to pay close attention to the quality of the passes and to the performance of our students on some of the most critical profiles such as comprehension, expression and application," she said.

In a detailed report of this year's performance, Miguel noted that the mathematics pass rate

jumped from 28.44 per cent in 2013 to 47.03 per cent in 2014.

"While this is dramatic and a cause for joy, we must be cautioned to measure this success against the backdrop of challenges which exist in the global arena where mathematical literacy is premium and indispensable in development," the minister said.

Additionally, the overall pass rate of English A increased to 61.54 per cent in 2014, in comparison to 58.92 in 2013.

Miguel pointed out that "this is a modest improvement upon which we must continue to build if we are

to compete meaningfully not with ourselves, but the rest of the world. While 71 per cent of the cohort was awarded passing grades at CSEC, it must be noted that only 41.7 per cent gained passes in five subjects including mathematics and English A."

In his presentation, Dr Charles Mayenga, the senior assistant registrar for the Examinations Development Production Division at CXC, revealed that St Vincent and the Grenadines had a better performance in 21 out of 32 subject areas when compared to the region.

Mayenga noted that the country had recorded 100



MINISTER of Education Girlyn Miguel

per cent passes in a large number of subjects and said that this is a cause for celebration. However, he also highlighted some areas where there needed to be improvement.

"As we celebrate, we also need to look at the subjects where we have not done very well," he said. "You need to put some effort, need to bring it to the same level as other particular subjects."

According to the senior assistant registrar, SVG recorded 73 per cent in English B for persons obtaining grades from Grade I to III. The region recorded 69 per cent.

While stating that English A was an essential



Dr Charles Mayenga

subject to students, Mayenga revealed that overall, this country obtained 56 per cent passes.

"We would like it to be higher than 56 [per cent]," he said.

Additionally, he observed that although there was a local and regional improvement as it related to mathematics, more work needed to be done, as the results were still below 50 per cent.

According to CXC officials, St Vincent and the Grenadines has been improving year after year in the number of candidates that sign up to sit the CSEC examinations. (BK)

TSSS student passes 10 subjects

SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD Cyrilena Roberts is "elated" at her success in passing 10 subjects in the CXC Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) examinations.

The student of the Thomas Saunders Secondary School gained five Grade I passes in Economics, Accounts, Principles of Business, Integrated Science and English A; four Grade II passes in Information Technology, Mathematics, Spanish and Social Studies; and a Grade III pass in Geography.

"I feel elated! I celebrated a lot," she said.

Although her celebrations were cut short after contracting the Chikungunya virus, it did not diminish her enthusiasm - which was evident from the beaming smile on her face when she spoke to SEARCHLIGHT.

Although she was somewhat disappointed by the grade she attained for Geography, Cyrilena believes that all the hard work and effort she put into studying has paid off.

The Lowmans Leeward resident said that in addition to doing past papers and accessing study guides on the Internet, she cut back on chatting with friends on social media and even deactivated her Facebook account.

"Days before the exams, I didn't sleep at all!"

Cyrilena will be attending the SVG Community College in the upcoming academic term, and plans to take business-related subjects, although she has not yet decided exactly which ones.



CYRILENA ROBERTS (right) and her father Cyril Evans

She also shared that she hopes to become an accountant, as she has a passion for working with numbers and money.

In the meantime, Cyrilena said that she has been enjoying the down time, relaxing on her own and spending time with her mother Cloreen Roberts.

Cyrilena's father, Cyril Evans, spoke of how proud he was of his daughter's achievement, and how he has always encouraged her to reach for excellence.

He said that even though he separated from his daughter's mother, he has always made the effort to be involved in her [Cyrilena's] life.

"Anything she wants, it's not too much for me to get it for her," he explained.

"I knew her ability growing up, so I make sure I worked on it."

Evans said that sometimes it annoys his daughter when he tells others of how well she is doing academically.

"It's not that I am boasting, I just proud of what she is doing," he said.

He also spoke of how timid she used to be when she first started secondary school, and how happy he is that she is now more confident.

Cyrilena is a past student of the Lowmans Leeward Anglican School.

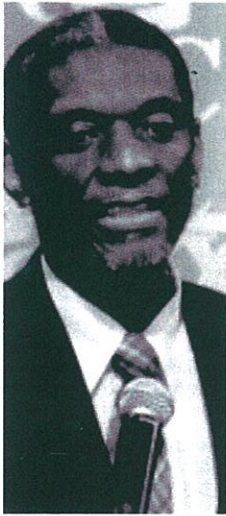
Number of persons sitting CXC suite of exams continues to decline

THE CARIBBEAN Examinations Council (CXC) will be investigating the reasons why there continues to be a decline in the number of persons sitting their suite of exams.

During the regional results announcement ceremony, which took place yesterday at the Peace Memorial Hall, members of the Council indicated that the number of candidates for exams, including Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC), Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations (CAPE) and Caribbean Certificate of Secondary Level Competence (CCSLC), continues to have a downward trend over the past years.

According to Susan Giles, senior assistant registrar for the Examinations Administration and Security division, there is an "eight per cent decline on the candidates and a five per cent decline on the subject entries" for CSEC.

"We are going to be investigating why, because we recognize that it may be something to do with the economic climate in the region, among other



ACTING REGISTRAR for CXC Glenroy Cumberbatch

things we know. We did a preliminary study among local registrars and we are seeing a number of different responses to this," Giles said.

"We are watching this very closely, because as you know, this is our flagship examination and we need to have this either steady or growing."

In his report, the acting registrar for CXC Glenroy



SUSAN GILES, senior assistant registrar for the Examinations Administration and Security Division

Cumberbatch revealed that the number of CSEC candidates peaked in 2011, when there were 150,000 candidates. With the steady decline, only about 140,000 candidates now sign up for CSEC.

However, the acting registrar revealed that despite

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CXC investigating decline in number of persons sitting exams

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the decrease in candidates, the number of subjects taken by any one candidate is increasing.

While the decline is being observed on a regional scale, a decrease in candidates for CAPE and CCSLC in St Vincent and the Grenadines has also been observed.

"There was a steady decline in the number of persons actually writing CAPE examinations down to 2014 as compared with the rest of the region, where it has continued to increase to almost 30,000



PRIME MINISTER Dr Ralph

candidates in 2014," Cumberbatch said, while noting that this country

peaked in the number of candidates in 2011.

"For the CCSLC, there is a general decline in the number of persons writing CCSLC. That decline is also shown in St Vincent and the Grenadines."

While delivering the feature address, Prime Minister Dr Ralph Gonsalves said a reason why our enrollment numbers may not be as high as in some other years is because some students now no longer go through the A level system but instead go into the Associate Degree programme. (BK)

Performance remains consistent in CAPE results 2014

OVERALL PERFORMANCE in CAPE remained consistent with 2013. Ninety per cent of entries achieved Grades I-V which are the acceptable grades, the same as in 2013. Performance remained the same on 16 Units, improved on 14 Units and declined on 16 Units.

Mathematics and Sciences

There were mixed performances in the Mathematics and Sciences cluster of subjects. Both Units of Applied Mathematics returned identical performance as last year – 89 per cent of entries achieved Grades I-V. In both Units of Applied Mathematics, 27 per cent of entries achieved Grade I.

For Pure Mathematics Unit 1, performance declined slightly, from 72 per cent in 2013 to 69 per cent this year, while for Pure Mathematics Unit 2, performance improved marginally from 82 per cent in 2013 to 85 per cent this year.

Both Units of Biology saw a dip in performance this year. Eighty-six per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades in Unit 1 this year, compared with 90 per cent in 2013. For Unit 2, 91 per cent of entries achieved Grades I-V, compared with 97 per cent in 2013.

Performance on both Units of Chemistry improved when compared with 2013. There was a slight improvement on Unit 1, with 85 per cent of entries achieving acceptable grades, compared with 84 per cent in 2013; while for Unit 2, there was a three per cent improvement in performance this year. Ninety-five per cent of entries achieved acceptable

grades, compared with 92 per cent in 2013. Both Units of Chemistry recorded a high percentage of Grade Is. Twenty-four per cent of entries achieved Grade I in Unit 1 and 39 per cent of entries achieved similar grades in Unit 2.

There was a three per cent improvement on performance in Physics Unit 2 this year – 95 per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades, compared with 92 per cent in 2013. Performance remained steady on Physics Unit 1 with 93 per cent of entries achieving similar grades in both years.

Humanities

Performance in the humanities cluster of subjects remained mostly steady when compared with performance last year. French Unit 1 saw a slight improvement, with 97 per cent achieving Grades I-V, compared with 96 per cent last year. For French Unit 2 there was a three per cent decline, from 99 per cent in 2013 to 96 per cent this year.

Both Units of Spanish performed almost identical in both years. In Spanish Unit 1, 92 per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades, compared with 93 in 2013. Similarly 92 per cent of entries for Unit 2 achieved acceptable grades this year, compared with 94 per cent in 2013.

Sociology Units 1 and 2 saw slight decline in performance; 85 per cent in Unit 1, compared with 86 per cent last year and 93 per cent in Unit 2 this year, compared with 95 per cent last year.

Law Unit 1, had a one per cent decline, from 85 per cent of acceptable grades

last year to 84 per cent this year; while for Law Unit 2, there was a one per cent improvement – 82 per cent this year, compared with 81 per cent last year.

Performance on Literatures in English for both Units in both 2013 and 2014 were identical. In both years 94 per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades for Unit 1 and 96 per cent achieved similar grades for Unit 2.

History Unit 1 recorded a slight improvement in performance when compared with 2013. Seventy-nine per cent of entries achieved Grades I-V this year, compared with 76 per cent in 2013. Unit 2 saw a decline of six per cent – 70 per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades, compared with 76 per cent in 2013.

Business

Performance in the business cluster of subjects remained fairly consistent with that of 2013 in most Units. Ninety-five per cent of entries for Accounting Unit 1 achieved acceptable grades, compared with 96 per cent in 2013. For Accounting Unit 2, 79 per cent achieved, compared with 82 per cent last year.

Management of Business Units 1 and 2 saw a one percentage point variation in the performance on both Units in the two years. Eighty-six per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades in Management of Business Unit 1, compared with 87 per cent in 2013; while for Unit 2, 97 per cent achieved acceptable grades this year, one per cent improvement over 2013.

Similarly for Economics Unit 1, there was a one per cent variation with 82 per cent of entries achieving

Grades I-V in 2014 and 83 per cent in 2013. For Economics Unit 2, there were 85 per cent of entries getting Grades I-V this year, compared with 88 per cent in 2013.

Technical and Vocational In the technical and vocational cluster of subjects, performance was consistent, with the exception of Geometrical and Mechanical Engineering Drawing Unit 1, which saw a marked decline in performance this year. Sixty-nine per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades, compared with 85 per cent last year. Seventy-nine per cent of entries for Geometrical and Mechanical Engineering Drawing Unit 2 achieved acceptable grades, compared with 83 per cent in 2013.

Both Units of Art and Design remained consistent, with 100 per cent of entries achieving acceptable grades in both Units in both years.

Food and Nutrition Unit 2 returned similar results, with 99 per cent of entries achieving acceptable grades. In Unit 2, 97 per cent achieved acceptable grades in 2014, compared with 99 per cent in 2013.

Seventy-four per cent of entries for Electrical and Electronic Technology Unit 1 achieved acceptable grades compared with 75 per cent in 2013; and for Unit 2, 79 per cent achieved acceptable grades compared with 83 per cent in 2013. No candidate achieved Grade I in this Unit.

Core Subjects

The two core subjects, Communication Studies, and Caribbean Studies continue to perform consistently with previous years. This year 96 per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades in Communication Studies, compared with 97 per cent in 2013, and for Caribbean Studies 93 per cent of entries achieved acceptable grades, com-

pared with 94 per cent in 2013.

Growth

The number of candidates entered for CAPE this year was 29,379, compared with 28,228 in 2013, an increase of 1,151 candidates.

Communication Studies continues to lead the subject entries with 15,625 entries this year compared with 14,926 last year. It is followed by Caribbean Studies with 11,941 entries this year, compared with 11,220 in 2013. Sociology Unit 1 with 5,996 entries, Biology Unit 1 with 5,681 and Chemistry Unit 1 with 5,447 entries round out the top five largest Unit entries.

Sixty-two per cent of the candidates were females and 38 per cent males.

Just over 42 per cent of the candidates were in the 18-year age group, while 33 per cent were over 19 years and 22 per cent were in the 17-year age group.