CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL
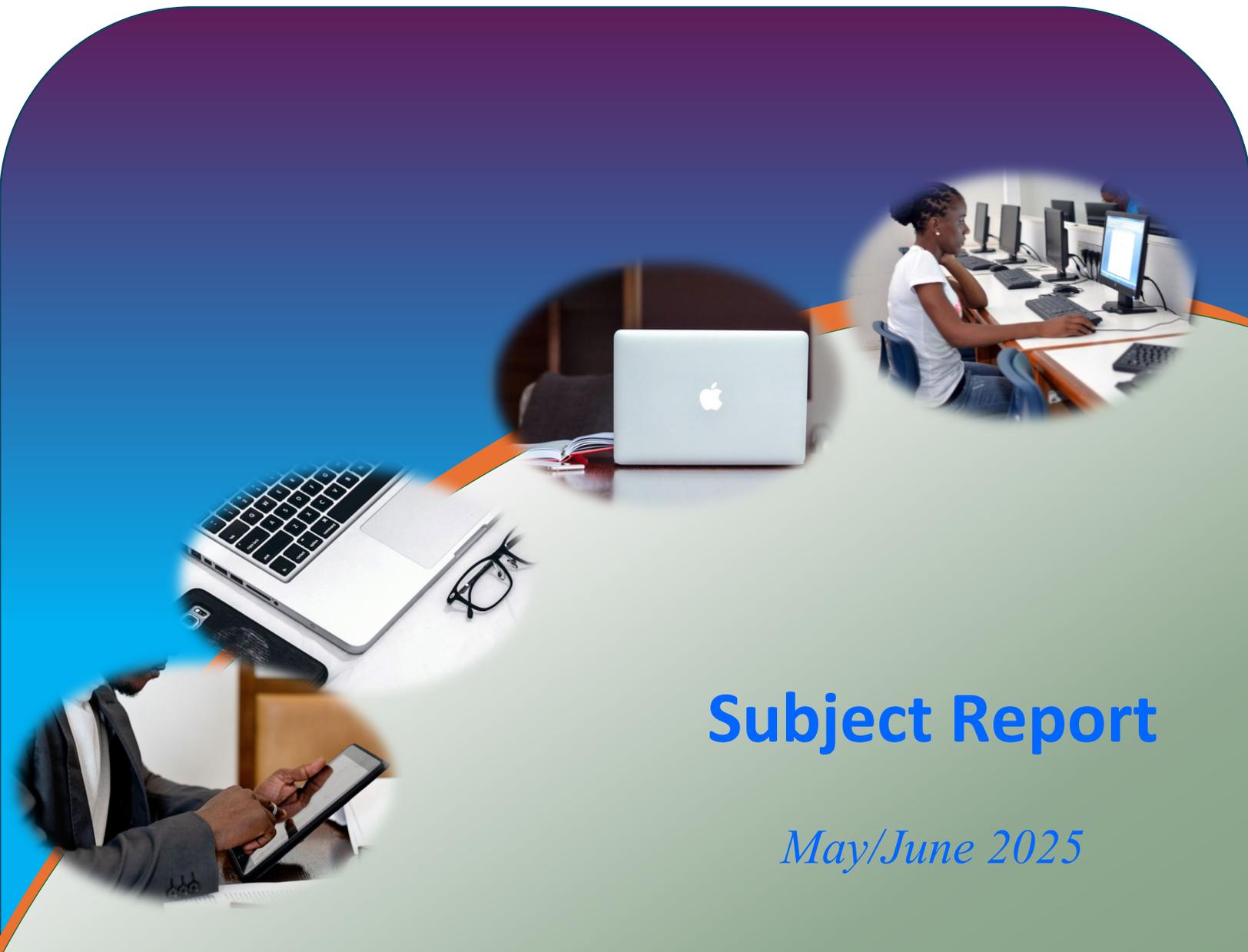
CSEC® ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT PREPARATION AND MANAGEMENT

Subject Report

May/June 2025

CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE
CARIBBEAN SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE®
EXAMINATION

MAY/JUNE 2025

ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT PREPARATION AND MANAGEMENT
GENERAL PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

This guide was compiled using candidates' responses to the May/June 2025 CSEC Electronic Document Preparation Management (EDPM) examination.

The examination consisted of the following papers.
- Paper 01 — Multiple Choice (Theory)
- Paper 02 — Production Test
- Paper 031 — School-Based Assessment
- Paper 032 — Alternative to School-Based Assessment (Private Candidates)

In 2025, 81.18 per cent of candidates achieved acceptable grades (Grades I–III). This represented a decline in the overall performance of candidates when compared to 84.8 per cent in 2024 and 86.7 per cent in 2023.

Candidates' performance on Paper 01 and Paper 02 improved when compared with 2024. However, there was a five percent decline in candidates' performance on the School-Based Assessment when compared to the unmoderated scores in 2024. On the other hand, there was a three percent increase over the moderated scores in 2023. On Paper 032, there was a decline candidates' performance when compared with 2024 and 2023. Overall, candidates' performance across the three profiles also decreased when compared with 2024 and 2023.

PAPER 01 — MULTIPLE CHOICE (THEORY)

Paper 01 tests all aspects of the syllabus. It consists of 60 multiple choice items designed to test candidates' knowledge and application of key concepts and theoretical principles in document preparation and management. It is essential that this section of the syllabus is taught in its entirety. This paper was marked out of 50 and the mean score was 32.15. The highest score achieved was 50. Candidates' performance improved slightly when compared with 2024 when the mean score was 30.72 and the maximum score was 47.50.

PAPER 02 — PRODUCTION TEST

This paper consists of four compulsory questions. Candidates' performance on Paper 02 remained satisfactory and was consistent with 2024 when the mean score was 25.29. In 2025, the paper was marked out of 100. The mean score was 26.26 and the maximum score 78.

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Question 1 — Speed Test

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This question assessed candidates' typing speed and accuracy. Candidates were required to type a given document at a speed of 35 words per minute, making few to no errors while doing so. All candidates attempted this question. It was marked out of ten. The highest score achieved was ten; however, the mean score was 1.15. Fewer than one per cent of candidates earned full marks.

Stronger candidates demonstrated the ability to type at the required speed and produce error-free, mailable work; these candidates were awarded full marks. Weaker candidates failed to type at the required speed and did not complete the assignment. The following are some of the errors made by candidates.

- Typographical or spelling errors (misspelling the word Qatar in the passage title and typing WHPO instead of WHO)
- Omission of punctuation marks (missing the apostrophe in the word Organization's)
- Incorrect capitalization (using an uppercase 'w' at the beginning of the word world)
- Omission of formatting features (text was not justified)
- Omission of text (omitting the word for in the first line)
- Insertion of text not in the original passage
- Incorrect line spacing throughout the document

Candidates performed well in the following areas.
- Most candidates applied correct paragraphing.
- Some candidates used appropriate spacing between paragraphs.
- Most candidates demonstrated awareness of the required font style and size.

Candidates exhibited the following areas of weakness.
- Inability to type at the required speed per minute and demonstrate accuracy — Most candidates failed to type further than the second paragraph, hence, they could not be awarded the maximum score.
- Inability to format the document correctly, specifically setting margins, line spacing, correct justification, font style and size — Candidates failed to justify the passage. They used the default left alignment in its place.

- Using the incorrect spacing before and after the punctuation marks — Although most candidates demonstrated the ability to include punctuation marks at the appropriate places, most of them failed to use the correct spacing before and after.
- Using inconsistent spacing between words and lines — Line spacing errors were more common.
- Inability to use uppercase letters and capitalize correctly — This was evident throughout the marking process.
- Spelling incorrectly — Most candidates typed the name 'Al-seeri'.
- Omission of required text — Some candidates omitted the passage title. This formed part of the full document to attain the 35 wpm, and the omission of this text meant the candidate could not be awarded the maximum score.
- Insertion of unnecessary text — A few candidates added headings such as (copy test) even though a title for the passage was provided. This insertion meant the candidate could not be awarded the maximum score.

Recommendations

To improve overall performance, teachers are encouraged to do the following.
- Encourage students to demonstrate correct keyboarding techniques.
- Engage students in regular typing drills to help improve accuracy and speed. This may include timed practice sessions at the beginning of each session where possible.
- Implement a system of rewards or privileges for students who are always improving with typing speed and/or accuracy.
- Emphasize correct formatting techniques and encourage students to set format before entering text.
- Promote the use of online resources, such as typing tutor programs, to enhance speed and accuracy.
- Reinforce proper keyboarding techniques to reduce spelling errors and inclusion or omission of texts.
- Provide passages, such as newspaper articles or document excerpts or exacts, for students to reproduce, ensuring that they include all the required formatting features.

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Question 2 — Preparing a Semi-Blocked Letter and Garbage Collection Schedule

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This question tested candidates' ability to follow instructions in order to prepare standard business documents. Candidates were required to design a letterhead, prepare a letter in the semi-blocked style, create a table and insert the table into the letter using suitable software. All candidates attempted this question. The mean score was 12.67 out of 33 and the highest score achieved was 32. Fewer than one per cent of candidates earned the maximum marks.

Candidates' performance was generally satisfactory. Most candidates prepared the letter and the accompanying garbage collection schedule. However, many candidates experienced challenges in applying the design and formatting principles, particularly in creating the letterhead with an appropriate logo, inserting the footer, and displaying the document in the semi-blocked style.

Overall, the presentation of the documents did not meet the standards required for producing mailable work.

Letter

In Part (a) (i), candidates were asked to produce the required documents by following all instructions provided. Many candidates experienced challenges following instructions under exam conditions. While most candidates prepared the letter, the final product often did not meet mailability standards.

For Part (a) (ii), candidates were required to create a suitable letterhead with an appropriate logo and footer, using the information provided in the sample and to use A4 or letter-sized paper. Most candidates demonstrated the ability to create a letterhead. However, in many instances, the logo did not correspond to the organization's name. Several candidates encountered difficulties with formatting the logo and letterhead, particularly with spacing within the header. Similar challenges were observed in formatting the footer information correctly.

In Part (a) (iii), candidates were required to use the letterhead created to type the letter in the semi-blocked style, using full punctuation and single line spacing. The letterhead was expected to have 1" (2.54 cm) margins all around. Candidates experienced difficulty formatting the document in the semi-blocked style and encountered significant challenges with laying out the document and inserting the table into the letter. Interpretation and correct application of the printer's correction signs was another area of weakness identified during the marking process.

In Part (a) (iv), candidates were required to type the body of the letter using Calibri 11 pt. Most candidates understood how to apply the correct font style and size.

For Part (a) (v), candidates were required to save the file as a document named Letter. Generally, they demonstrated the ability to do so as instructed.

Candidates demonstrated strengths in several areas, as shown by their ability to
- create letterheads in the header of the document
- insert images in the letterhead
- display aspects of the letter according to the semi-blocked style
- insert the table as specified into the letter
- insert information as specified by printer correction signs (serves, with attached lids).

However, several weaknesses were observed, including candidates' inability to
- apply correct line spacing after the letterhead and throughout the letter
- insert the footer information in the footer of the document as instructed
- insert the date as instructed (dd/mm/yyyy or mm/dd/yyyy)
- interpret the printer's correction marks and signs. Many candidates struggled to apply the following signs and/or abbreviations correctly: #, sept, ea, PRO and AB/typist initial
- format the letter according to the semi-blocked style consistently (right align date, center subject line, blocked paragraphs, center or right alignment of the signatory block)
- insert the table only as instructed
- type the letter on a single sheet.

Recommendations

To strengthen students' skills in document preparation, teachers are encouraged to do the following.

- Conduct more timed activities to provide students with opportunities to test their keyboarding mastery. Additionally, they should focus on the mailability of scripts by comparing and contrasting unedited and edited documents, highlighting the factors that make a document suitable for professional use.
- Provide samples of letterheads from the world of work and engage students in discussions about the observable features of letterheads and footers. To reinforce these concepts, teachers can organize competitions focused on creating letterheads and footers, helping students build the skills needed to display these elements accurately within a document.
- Display posters showing different styles of letters and encourage students to sketch these styles in their notebooks. Document layout should be included as part of formative assessments, with marks assigned for the correct application of letter styles. Additionally, teachers can design activities that require students to differentiate between letter styles to deepen their understanding of the concept. Peer-to-peer teaching opportunities should also be incorporated, allowing students to learn collaboratively and reinforce classroom instruction.

Schedule

In Part (b) (i), candidates were required to produce a garbage collection schedule using the most appropriate software. Most candidates demonstrated the ability to select and use Microsoft Word or Excel as instructed.

In Part (b) (ii), candidates were required to make all adjustments to the document as specified. However, many of them experienced challenges formatting the document according to the given instructions.

In Part (b) (iii), candidates were required to apply margins of 0.5" (1.27 cm) all around. Most candidates successfully applied the required margins.

In Part (b) (iv), candidates were required to save the file as Schedule and they generally demonstrated the ability to do so as instructed.

Candidates demonstrated strengths in several areas, including the ability to
- utilize appropriate software to produce the document (Microsoft Word or Microsoft Excel)
- apply headings to a document
- correctly split cells within a table
- select appropriate margin.

However, candidates experienced challenges in the following areas.
- Apply editing and formatting principles to create a mailable document including formatting the main heading, subheading and column headings, and correctly aligning information according to instructions.
- Interpreting printer's correction marks and abbreviations. For example, trs, stet, spell out.

Recommendations

To strengthen students' ability to interpret and apply instructions, teachers are encouraged to do the following.
- Provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding of instructions through student led lessons or peer to peer learning. These activities help students explore strategies for interpreting instructions and maximizing document preparation.
- Offer students opportunities to prepare different types of documents to broaden their skills within the teaching and learning environment.
- Create formative assessments that focus on formatting principles to reinforce key concepts and ensure mastery.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

To strengthen students' document preparation skills, teachers are encouraged to
- provide clear instructions about the tasks and their purpose and benefits as it relates to the world of work
- encourage students to explain their understanding of task requirements to deepen conceptual understanding
- demonstrate the process of editing and formatting business documents using collaborative platforms.
- provide feedback on common mistakes that may occur during document preparation
- reinforce learning objectives throughout instruction by using varied formative assessment strategies
- prepare and display sample mock-ups to reinforce learning
- encourage self-assessment before submitting assignments.

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Question 3 — Preparing Agreement and Questionnaire

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This question assessed candidates' ability to follow procedures to create specialized documents, namely an Agreement and a Questionnaire, using appropriate software applications such as Microsoft Word. All candidates attempted this question. The mean score was 4.03 out of 26 and the highest score achieved was 21. Fewer than one per cent of candidates earned the maximum marks.

Candidates' performance was generally fair. Most of them attempted to produce at least one of the two required documents. A few candidates successfully completed both the Agreement and the Questionnaire. The Questionnaire posed notable challenges, particularly in setting the page size to A5 and formatting the content into two columns separated by a line. The creation of checkboxes was especially problematic, as some candidates attempted to draw up to 26 checkboxes manually.

In contrast, candidates demonstrated improved proficiency in preparing the Agreement; however an area of weakness was many candidates omitting the brace for the signatories. Accuracy and speed continue to be areas of concern, as most candidates scored 0 out of 10 on this component.

Agreement

In Part (a) (i), candidates were asked to produce the required documents by following all instructions provided. While most candidates produced the document, many of them did not fully adhere to the instructions. This indicated that they gave limited attention to the details and the task requirements.

In Part (a) (ii), candidates were required to type the document in Times New Roman, using 12 pt font except where instructed otherwise. Most candidates applied the standard font style and size but failed to make the specified font size changes where required.

In Part (a) (iii), candidates were required to use legal-size paper with margins of 1.5" on the left and 0.5" on the right. Many candidates did not apply these settings and so this indicated that such candidates failed to follow layout requirements.

In Part (a) (iv), candidates were required to apply double-line spacing with justified text or justify the spaces before the right margin with unspaced hyphens. This formatting was inconsistently applied.

In Part (a) (v), candidates were required to save the file as Agreement. Some candidates did not save the file using the specified name. This pointed to a lack of adherence to naming conventions.

Candidates demonstrated strengths in several areas, including their ability to
- type the Agreement in Microsoft Word

- insert dot leaders to accommodate signatures for the authorized officers and their witnesses
- interpret manuscript signs such as run on and omit, though move text was handled with less consistency.

However, candidates experienced challenges in the following areas.
- Retaining abbreviations, with some of them typing the word retain in headings and subheadings
- Expanding abbreviations such as converting *ea.* to each, and writing currency amounts in full, for example writing words with the corresponding figures in brackets such as one thousand dollars ($1000)
- Applying the required 3pt letter spacing to the word AGREEMENT
- Consistently applying the correct date format required for legal documents
- Applying correct spacing between words, lines, headings, subheadings and paragraphs, resulting in a disorganized layout
- Selecting the appropriate paper size and setting margins according to specifications
- Including the required brace for signatories
- Consistently aligning line endings, which affected the professional appearance of the document
- Paying attention to printer's correction marks, leading to inconsistencies and omissions of formatting features

Recommendations

To strengthen students' document preparation skills, teachers are encouraged to do the following.

- Give students regular practice with multi-step tasks and use model answers to reinforce completing all parts of the task.
- Emphasize the importance of reading and applying all formatting details, encouraging students to double-check their work against instructions before submission.
- Reinforce the application of layout specifications and guide students to use the print preview feature to verify paper size and margin settings before submission.
- Provide clear instruction and practice on both line spacing and text justification options, ensuring students understand how to use each method correctly.
- Stress the importance of correct file naming as part of task completion and provide structured opportunities to practice this skill during document preparation.

Questionnaire

In Part (b) (i), candidates were asked to prepare a questionnaire using A5 paper and follow all instructions provided. Many candidates did not use A5 paper and omitted key elements of the instructions. This indicated that such candidates did not pay sufficient attention to layout and task requirements.

In Part (b) (ii), candidates were required to type in single line spacing and insert a page border. Some candidates did not use single line spacing or they neglected to include the required page border. This showed that they did not exercise precision when applying the formatting instructions.

In Part (b) (iii), candidates were required to use columns and insert a column separator line. Several candidates did not use columns correctly and failed to insert the separator line. This suggested that candidates had limited familiarity with layout tools.

In Part (b) (iv), candidates were required to type in Times New Roman, 12 pt. Many candidates failed to use the correct font type or size, as they disregarded fundamental presentation standards.

In Part (b) (v), candidates were required to apply margins of 0.5" (1.27 cm) on the top, bottom, and left, and 0.4" (1.02 cm) on the right. Many candidates did not apply these settings, which indicated that they exercised limited accuracy in following detailed layout instructions.

In Part (b) (vi), candidates were required to save the file as Questionnaire. Some candidates did not use the specified name.

Candidates demonstrated strengths in several areas, as shown by their ability to
- use suitable software such as Microsoft Word or Publisher to complete the questionnaire
- include a page border. Most candidates selected most selecting simple, appropriate styles that enhanced the document's readability and professional appearance.

However, several weaknesses were observed, including candidates' inability to
- amend the page layout to A5 paper as required
- locate the appropriate option or tool to find and insert the tick (√) symbol
- set a two-column page layout and format them
- apply column breaks correctly (In some instances, headings were confined to one column rather than across the page.)
- align checkboxes and their associated responses directly below the respective questions
- use digital tools to insert checkboxes, as many resorted to drawing them manually, which was time-consuming and compromised the document's visual quality
- insert a footer; in most cases, the text was typed but not placed within the footer section of the document.

Recommendations

To strengthen students' ability to prepare questionnaires accurately, teachers are encouraged to do the following.

- Train students to set the correct paper size as the initial step when preparing documents and provide regular practice in applying layout requirements before proceeding with other instructions.
- Offer focused practice on key formatting tools such as line spacing and page borders to improve students' accuracy and confidence.
- Incorporate step-by-step instruction and hands-on activities focused on column formatting and inserting separator lines, ensuring students can confidently apply these layout features in examination settings.
- Prioritize consistent practice in applying font selection and size settings, highlighting how small formatting choices affect readability and overall presentation quality.
- Provide focused exercises on setting custom margins, guiding students to check and adjust precise measurements before completing layout-based tasks.
- Emphasize the importance of accurate file naming and include routine practice in saving documents with specific names as part of assignment preparation.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

To strengthen students' document preparation and formatting skills, teachers are encouraged to do the following.

- Embed presentation-focused objectives into all document creation tasks (e.g., demonstrating the ability to create mailable documents). Lessons should assess not only document preparation skills but also layout, alignment, spacing, and overall visual appeal to ensure mailability.
- Model formatting principles in teaching materials and live demonstrations. Showing students what a well-presented business document looks like helps set clear expectations in the teaching and learning environment.
- Incorporate activities that provide step-by-step guided practice in editing and formatting principles. This approach establishes a framework for seamless document preparation and builds familiarity and confidence in using software application tools.
- Provide on-going feedback on document layout and components that affect mailability, such as alignment, line spacing, use of borders, and correct interpretation of printer's correction signs or marks (e.g., footers, checkboxes). A checklist can be utilized to help students identify gaps in formatting or document layout.

- Utilize checklists and rubrics to encourage students to review their own work or provide constructive feedback to peers. This practice develops critical awareness of document preparation standards and promotes accountability in the learning environment.

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Question 4 — Preparing a Newsletter

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This question assessed candidates' ability to prepare and design a newsletter using appropriate software. The mean score was 2.50 out of 30 and the highest score achieved was 26. Fewer than one per cent of candidates earned the maximum marks.

Generally, candidates' performance was poor. Most candidates did not attempt this question. Candidates experienced challenges formatting the letter and with their accuracy and speed in preparing the newsletter correctly. However, there was some evidence of average performance in areas such as using design templates and inserting the flowchart within the document.

In Part (i), candidates were required to prepare the newsletter using legal-size paper and follow all instructions provided. Many candidates experienced challenges selecting and using the correct paper size.

In Part (ii), candidates were asked to use Times New Roman, 12 pt font except where otherwise indicated. Several candidates encountered difficulties with font selection, particularly in applying the specified size for column one. Most of them relied on the default font settings instead of making the required adjustments.

In Part (iii), candidates were required to use the template as a guide and include a line separator. Many candidates had problems with template usage, and some attempted to create the template from scratch, which significantly impacted the time needed to complete the activity. In several cases, candidates utilized Microsoft Word to create only a three-column layout on one page, while the second page was not formatted appropriately.

In Part (iv), candidates were required to apply margins of 1" (2.54 cm) all around and insert a double-line page border. Margin setup was a common area of difficulty.

In Part (v), candidates were required to save the file as Newsletter, and most candidates demonstrated the ability to do as instructed.

Candidates demonstrated strengths in several areas, including their ability to
- prepare the newsletter using a design theme or template
- insert three columns
- apply bullets and numbering where indicated
- use WordArt effectively.

However, candidates experienced challenges in the following areas.
- Utilizing appropriate graphics relevant to the question

- Interpreting manuscript signs and abbreviations accurately.
- Applying formatting principles consistently (line separators, text boxes, page numbers, images and callout shapes).
- Demonstrating the fundamentals of speed and accuracy development in the completion of the question.
- Producing a mailable document from typescript.

Recommendations

To strengthen students' ability to design newsletters and apply advanced formatting principles, teachers are encouraged to do the following.

- Provide exercises that allow students to amend templates and use layout features available on the Microsoft Office ribbon. Incorporate step-by-step video tutorials to help students grasp these concepts effectively.
- Offer activities that utilize different font types and share a rubric or checklist outlining expectations for formatting accuracy, alignment, grammar and layout consistency to guide student performance.
- Provide customizable templates and guide students in personalizing them while consistently applying formatting and editing principles. Teachers should also offer sample newsletters or short tutorials on using Microsoft Word templates.
- Organize peer review sessions to provide constructive feedback and facilitate group discussions on presentation techniques. Modify activities to include team-based roles such as, an editor, a designer and a writer to enhance collaboration and real-world communication skills.

General Recommendations

To strengthen students' speed, accuracy, and document preparation skills, teachers should

- Engage students in timed activities to reinforce speed and accuracy development.
- Use step-by-step video tutorials to help students understand key concepts effectively.
- Utilize templates in Microsoft Word or Microsoft Publisher to create advanced display documents.
- Incorporate peer tutoring and group discussions to support the development of mailable documents.

PAPER 031 — SCHOOL-BASED ASSESSMENT (SBA)

The School-Based Assessment (SBA) consists of a portfolio and three assignments developed by the teacher. The portfolio, introduced with the new syllabus, replaced the Reference Manual. Approximately 3923 samples were moderated.

Most students did not take the time to correct inaccuracies or formatting errors in each document, even though opportunities for revision were available. Descriptions of components were not included in documents (either in the header or footer) and some documents added to the portfolio were not specified in the syllabus. Pages were often not numbered to match the table of contents and in several cases, the table of contents lacked page numbers entirely.

Teachers and students must pay attention to the mailability of the work included in the portfolio. Documents frequently contained one or more of the following.
- Typographical errors
- Spelling errors
- Grammatical errors
- Errors in content

Recommendations

Teachers and students should follow the guidelines for portfolio preparation as stipulated in the syllabus. Teachers are encouraged to collaborate with colleagues from other schools if unsure about the correct formatting for various portfolio documents.

Assignment 1

Most students completed the documents provided but many submissions contained errors such as
- incorrect character spacing after punctuation
- inadequate or incorrect line spacing between paragraphs and headings
- margins not applied correctly for the first page and continuation pages
- paragraphing rules not reflective of the required style for main and subheadings (Blocked or Indented)
- incorrect formatting of headings (e.g., all caps, initial caps, or underscores)
- continuation pages not correctly reflecting page numbers.

Recommendations

Teachers should conduct in-class activities that emphasize the rules for completing documents accurately. Students should be given opportunities to correct errors by redoing documents to ensure they are error-free. Teachers should place special emphasis on punctuation marks and their associated spacing and provide instruction on using formatting tools to reset line spacing effectively.

Assignment 2

Many students submitted unformatted information sourced from the internet. Common issues included,
- incorrect line spacing before and after shoulder headings
- bibliographies incorrectly formatted (not in APA style)
- absence of in-text citations
- screenshots of web pages instead of proper email attachments
- unsuitable presentation of work, such as spreadsheets, flyers, invitations, menus, and programs.

Recommendations

Teachers should provide in-class instructions for preparing Assignment 2. Key points should include strategies for conducting internet-based research and the importance of giving credit to external sources through in-text citations and properly formatted bibliographies. Students should also be taught how to use formatting tools to edit information copied from the internet. Additionally, teachers should emphasize the correct presentation of research to ensure professional and mailable documents.

Assignment 3

Most of the students had inappropriate font size for the content. Some had too much or extremely little information on a single slide (multiple paragraphs are placed on one slide or one or two lines), improper use of design elements (alignment/layout of text box), improper use of background (colour scheme and graphic combine with the text did not allow for legibility). Most of the students had inadequate slides with content-based information. The slides had table of content, acknowledgement, instruction questions/objectives, graphics only and four to eight slides of competent discussion of the topic. Slides also had inconsistency in paragraphing (blocked/intended),

Recommendations

Teachers should emphasize the purpose of a PowerPoint presentation (to present main points/ideas), appropriate font (reader friendly), appropriate design elements/background (colour and text box

alignment — not too dark and not too wide so that the content falls off the page or is too close to the edge). Have students practise PowerPoint presentations to present an in-class topic.

The following are general observations from the moderation exercise. Candidates' performance improved when compared with 2024. However, the assignments were not always adequate in length or content to assess the required areas. There remain opportunities for improvement. For example, in Assignment 2, there was little evidence of research or the sending of the email, yet full marks were sometimes awarded by teachers. It was also noted that advanced display features were not utilized in Assignment 3, although full marks were awarded in some cases. In many instances, Assignment 4 did not include the relevant documents required for the portfolio. Submissions often lacked correct descriptive titles, a table of contents and a bibliography. In some cases, the table of contents with page numbers did not align with the submission. However, marks were still awarded.

General Recommendations

Teachers should
- ensure that assignments along with the required samples submitted along with the samples so that moderation can be conducted fairly
- pay close attention to the accuracy of marks awarded for each profile in every assignment
- ensure that the requested samples are submitted with the moderation sheet, which shows the allocation of marks as outlined in the current syllabus
- begin planning for the SBA early in the school year to allow adequate time for the design, preparation, administration and marking of each student's work, as well as the selection, packaging and submission of required samples
- provide students with ample practice using the tools and features of various software packages, as mastery of these tools is essential for producing accurate, professional documents
- adhere strictly to the guidelines for marking the portfolio as detailed in the syllabus, and make students aware of these guidelines
- offer feedback on students' work and give them opportunities to amend and improve their initial drafts
- encourage students to check their work for errors before printing and submitting it
- teach the required format for each document, including margins, date formats, and paragraph formatting for different types of letters.

PAPER 032 — ALTERNATIVE TO SCHOOL-BASED ASSESSMENT

Paper 032 consisted of two compulsory questions that assessed candidates' ability to apply production principles to create business documents from skeleton notes. The maximum mark for this paper was 100 and the mean score was 33.94. The highest score achieved by any candidate was 76 marks.

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Question 1 — Preparing Minutes of Meeting and Letter of Complaint with Letterhead in The Blocked Style

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This question assessed candidates' ability to apply production principles to create minutes of a meeting from notes and a letter of complaint with letterhead in the fully blocked style. All 149 candidates attempted this question. The mean score was 15.93 out of 52 and no candidate earned the maximum mark available.

Candidates demonstrate strengths in their ability to
- prepare the letter
- create a letterhead
- perform page setup
- type the letter.

However, several weaknesses were observed, including candidates' inability to
- prepare minutes
- format a letter in the blocked style
- insert correct subject line
- include members' complaints as provided in the notes
- used bullets or enumeration where required
- include the date in an acceptable format (dd/mm/yyyy or mm/dd/yyyy)
- type the letter on a single page
- apply correct spacing in the signatory block
- insert an appropriate logo or image in the letterhead.

Minutes of Meeting

Candidates were required to assume the role of a secretary for an organization, record the discussions of a meeting held on a specified date and prepare the minutes for the next meeting in accordance with the general guidelines for writing minutes and the formatting instructions provided.

In Part (a) (i), candidates were asked to prepare the minutes using the general guidelines for writing minutes. Few candidates demonstrated knowledge of the correct procedures for preparing minutes of a

meeting. Many candidates experienced challenges in applying appropriate agenda headings and in cases where shoulder headings were inserted, they were often not placed in a logical order.

In Part (a) (ii), candidates were required to use bold, uppercase letters and left alignment for all agenda items in the minutes. Candidates inconsistently applied these editing principles as specified in the question paper.

Recommendations

Teachers are encouraged to do the following.

- Ensure candidates dedicate sufficient time to practising for the examination. Teachers should utilize authentic tasks aligned with the syllabus to expose students to a wide variety of stimulus material.
- Pay significant attention to editing and formatting during curriculum implementation. Students can be provided with unedited scripts to promote conceptual understanding of document preparation requirements.

Letter of Complaint with letterhead in the blocked style

In Parts (b) (i) and (b) (ii), candidates were asked to use the information provided to design a suitable letterhead with a logo for the association. While most candidates demonstrated the ability to create a letterhead, the logo was often excessively large and not in keeping with good document preparation standards.

In Parts (b) (ii) and (iii), candidates were required to use the letterhead they designed to prepare a letter of complaint on behalf of the members. This letter was expected to be in the fully blocked style and signed by the association's president. Many candidates displayed limited knowledge of the correct format for preparing a blocked-style letter. Some candidates simply retyped the instructions from the question paper without attempting the task.

In Part (b) (iv), candidates were required to insert the current date. However, many of them displayed weaknesses in using the proper date format (dd/mm/yyyy or mm/dd/yyyy).

In Part (b) (v), candidates were required to include an appropriate subject heading, which should have been bolded and underlined. In most instances, subject headings were omitted and where they were included, they were not aligned with the question requirements.

In Part (b) (vi), candidates were required to expand on the provided pointers to develop the content of the letter. Many candidates demonstrated weaknesses in following instructions, even though the complaints were clearly identified in the skeletal notes.

In Part (b) (vii), candidates were required to include the recommendations made and request a meeting with the relevant authorities to further discuss the issue. Most candidates were able to include the recommendations and specify the date and time of the next meeting.

Recommendations

Teachers are encouraged to do the following.

- Curate sample letterheads and have students recreate them to build visual and theoretical understanding of page layout and header placement.
- Engage candidates preparing for Paper 032 in activities that require composing mailable documents from skeletal notes, especially in the absence of an SBA.
- Provide mock-ups that reflect the layout of different styles of business letters and incorporate peer review activities to reinforce conceptual understanding.
- Reinforce the need to place dates on business correspondence.
- Reinforce the importance of reading the question to ensure adherence to instructions.

Question 2 — Creating a Spreadsheet and PowerPoint Presentation

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This question assessed candidates' ability to utilize production principles to create business documents. Candidates were required to prepare a three-column table, create a bar chart, and develop a PowerPoint presentation based on the information provided. All 149 candidates attempted this question. The mean score was 18.01 out of 48, and no candidate earned the maximum available mark.

Candidates demonstrate strengths in their ability to
- prepare the three-column table
- insert a row
- create a chart
- create a PowerPoint presentation.

However, there were some areas of weak performance. Candidates demonstrated an inability to
- apply design principles to prepare business documents
- utilize formatting principles according to instructions
- present main and sub-headings as required
- create a bar chart using the correct information
- include required content in particular slides as instructed
- insert tables and bar charts in slides.

Recommendations

- Students who are preparing for P032 exam should engage in activities that require them to compose mailable documents from skeletal notes.
- Students should review the CXC syllabus requirements and past paper questions to gain a better understanding of what is expected.

Spreadsheet

In Part (a) (i), candidates were required to use the most appropriate software to represent the information in a three-column table. Many candidates displayed a lack of understanding of this requirement. They failed to recognize that the two tables provided in the question shared an identical Period column, which only needed to be included once. Instead, several candidates chose Microsoft Word rather than a spreadsheet application, relying on manual calculations to compute totals.

In Part (a) (ii), candidates were required to include a main heading and a subheading for the table. Most candidates demonstrated limited understanding of the difference between main and subheadings. There was an inability to use formatting features such as merge and centre where necessary.

In Part (a) (iii), candidates were asked to center all the contents in the table. The majority of candidates successfully demonstrated a good understanding of how to centre the contents of tables.

In Part (a) (iv) candidates were required to insert a row to calculate the total number of complaints. A number of candidates did not insert the row as instructed; some inserted a column instead, resulting in incorrect totals. Other candidates who inserted the row either did not calculate the totals or calculated only one total.

In Part (a) (v) candidates were required to create a bar chart using the data from the tablen and most of them were unable to do so correctly. Instead, they produced generic charts or charts using incorrect data. Additionally, many failed to include suitable main headings, titles, and legends.

Recommendations

To strengthen students' spreadsheet skills, teachers are encouraged to

- Conduct activities that require candidates to collapse or merge the contents of multiple tables into a single table with additional columns or rows. Emphasize that spreadsheets are the most appropriate software for creating tables with calculations rather than Microsoft Word and explain why this choice is important.
- Conduct more exercises which require the use of various formatting features for presentation of documents with emphasis on the creation of main and sub-headings.
- Offer exercises or activities that reinforce the difference between rows and columns and teach the use of functions such as SUM for accurate calculations.
- Use charts that clearly illustrate the difference between bar and column charts. Demonstrate the correct procedure for creating charts from given data and extracting data from larger tables. Show how to add titles and legends and provide sufficient practice opportunities for students.

PowerPoint Presentation

In Part (b) (i) and (b) (ii), candidates were required to prepare a PowerPoint presentation on waste management using the information provided. The majority of candidates did not demonstrate the ability to extract specific details from the question, such as the name of the organization and the name and position of the presenter for Slide 1. The time was also omitted. Most candidates were able to identify the minimum required three complaints for Slide 2 and insert a suitable graphic. They also demonstrated the ability to add Slides 3 and 4; however, inserting the table and bar chart from Part (a) proved challenging. Even though the content for Slides 5 and 6 was provided in the question, some candidates were unable to insert the appropriate content as instructed. The majority of candidates who added Slide 7, titled Discussion Time, successfully inserted a suitable graphic and added Slide 8 for the closing Thank You message. Overall, candidates demonstrated the ability to create a PowerPoint presentation, apply a design template, and use suitable font sizes for slide headings.

Recommendations

Teachers should provide candidates with more scenarios that require extracting specific, relevant information to use as content for PowerPoint presentations. Additionally, more practice is needed in resizing graphics and charts inserted into slides.

General Recommendations

The following teaching and learning strategies are recommended to support conceptual understanding in the implementation of CSEC Electronic Document Preparation and Management.

- Strategies to improve accuracy and speed development

  Teaching strategies to enhance students' speed and accuracy development include the following.
    — Touch typing training: Teach proper finger placement and home row keys, use interactive typing tutorials and games to track students' progress regularly.
    — Proofreading and editing skills: Emphasize the importance of proofreading, identify common typing errors, and encourage collaborative editing among peers.
    — Formatting: Teach document structuring, engage in collaborative learning, incorporate assessments that test formatting principles separate from document preparation to identify gaps in learning.

- Strategies to improve comprehension
    — Use visual aids and online tutorials as learning tools, in conjunction with the syllabus, to aid document preparation.
    — Utilization of collaborative learning strategies that provides opportunities for students to engage in peer-to-peer learning using online platforms, the textbook and the syllabus to

engage in formatting and presentation of business documents emphasizing page setup, alignment, font styles, editing principles and manuscript signs with abbreviations.

— Template Utilization: Provide customizable templates and guide students on editing them while maintaining adherence to document preparation principles.

— Peer Review and Feedback: Organize peer review sessions to offer constructive feedback and facilitate group discussions on document preparation principles and techniques.

— Structure lessons around step-by-step activities that mirror exam tasks (e.g., setting margins, inserting symbols, applying correct spacing, using printer's correction signs and abbreviations). Use live demonstrations followed by immediate student practice to reinforce learning.

— Present examples of correct versus incorrect formatting and layout side by side. Discuss the impact on mailability and ask students to identify what was done correctly or incorrectly.

— Use screen recording or live screen-sharing tools to demonstrate formatting steps (e.g., inserting braces, symbols, headers and footers, columns, character spacing). Then, have students replicate the steps in a simulation or actual document.

— Assign realistic tasks such as formatting unedited documents. Allow students to reflect on the tools they used and discuss why those tools were appropriate.

— Encourage group discussion around common mistakes and misconceptions.

— Reinforce the importance of reading the question to ensure adherence to instructions.

- Strategies to improve presentation and use of technology when creating business documents

  — Allow students to review each other's documents using a checklist to reinforce attention to detail.

  — Provide documents with intentional errors. Have students identify and explain the steps to correct these errors utilizing technological tools within the associated application software.

  — Train students to use digital alignment tools to neatly arrange text, headings, and design elements.

  — Encourage students to plan margins, columns, headers, footers, and other layout and formatting elements before beginning to type. This will result in better organization and management skills.

  — Guide students to use or customize templates that already include standard business formatting to save time and minimize errors especially for advanced display work.

  — Promote the use of print preview to identify and correct spacing, alignment, or formatting issues before final submission.