

GENERAL RÉSUMÉ OF THE CHIEF EXAMINERS’ REPORTS FOR THE WEST AFRICAN SENIOR SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION FOR SCHOOL CANDIDATES, 2018

1. STANDARD OF THE PAPER

The Chief Examiners agreed in their reports that the standard of the papers compared favourably with that of the previous year. The questions were well within the scope of the candidates. They were clear, straightforward and without any ambiguities.

2. PERFORMANCE OF CANDIDATES

1. HUMANITIES

The Chief Examiners for the humanities reported that the performance of candidates varied from one paper to another. While candidates for Social Studies 2, Christian Religious Studies 2, Islamic Religious Studies 2 and Music 3 recorded a slight improvement, candidates for Government 2, History 2 Geography 3 and Economics 2 recorded poor performances.

2. LANGUAGES

The Chief Examiner for English Language lamented the poor performance of the candidates in the subject while a few candidates showed glimpses of brilliance, a majority performed below average. Performances in Literature-in-English, French 2, Asante Twi 2, Akwapim Twi 2 and Dangme 2 were quite good. There was also a slight improvement in the performance of candidates in Ga 2.

3. BUSINESS SUBJECTS

The Chief Examiners for Financial Accounting, Principles of Cost Accounting, Clerical Office Duties and Typewriting observed that candidates’ performance was better than that of the previous year. It was noted, however, that candidates’ performance in Business Management was slightly below that of the previous year.

4. SCIENCE SUBJECTS

The Chief Examiners expressed varied views on the performance of candidates. While performance in Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, Biology and General Agriculture were described as good, Forestry, Physics, Chemistry, Crop Husbandry and Horticulture and Integrated Science recorded just average performances.

5. MATHEMATICS

The Chief Examiners for Mathematics (Core) and Mathematics (Elective) stated that the performance of candidates declined as compared to that of last year.

6. TECHNICAL SUBJECTS

The performance of candidates in Electronics 2, and Building Construction 3, were considered satisfactory. There were also average performances in Technical Drawing 2 and 3, Auto Mechanics 3, Woodwork 3 and ICT 2 and 3.

7. VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS

The Chief Examiners reported that candidates' performance was varied; while the performance in Basketry 2, General Knowledge in Art 2, Foods and Nutrition 2, Picture Making 2, Ceramics and Sculpture 2 improved, the performance in Management in-Living 2 and Foods and Nutrition 3 were just average.

3. SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' STRENGTHS

1. HUMANITIES

- (a) The Chief Examiners for Government, Social Studies 2, Geography 2, Economics 2 and History 2 found commendable, the ability of candidates to adhere to the rubrics of the papers
- (b) It was observed that candidates in History 2, Government 2, Economics 2, Christian Religious Studies 2 and Social Studies 2 presented their answers in clear comprehensible language and neatly arranged paragraphs.
- (c) The candidates also displayed a good knowledge of the subject matter.

2. LANGUAGES

The Chief Examiners commended candidates for the following:

- (a) Adherence to rubrics
Candidates for English Language 2, French 2, Asante Twi 2, Akwapim Twi 2 and Dangme 2 reported that a good number of the candidates kept to the rubrics of the papers.
- (b) Good Organisation of Essays
A considerable number of them were able to organise their essays properly especially in French 2, English Language 2 and Literature-in-English 2.
- (c) In-Depth Knowledge of Set Texts
Candidates displayed a remarkable familiarity with the set texts in Literature-in-English 2 and 3, Akwapim Twi 2 and Dangme 2.

3. BUSINESS SUBJECTS

- (a) The Chief Examiner for Financial Accounting noted the following commendable features in the work of most candidates:
 - (i) They presented concise answers;
 - (ii) They provided correct headings and indicated monetary denominations
 - (iii) They displayed an improvement in the preparation of both the Adjusted Cash Book and the Bank Reconciliation Statements.

- (b) The chief examiner for Principles of Cost Accounting reported that candidates were able to:
- (i) list the good qualities of Cost Accounting information;
 - (ii) explain Standard Costing and the various standards used in industries;
 - (iii) prepare Job Cost Sheet and determine the unit cost of production
 - (iv) calculate re-order level and the other stock levels.

4. **SCIENCE SUBJECTS**

The Chief Examiners noted that the candidates performed well in the following topics of the respective subjects.

Biology (Characteristic features of mammals, Dentition, Health, Hygiene and Sanitation). General Agriculture (Animal Health and Production, and Farm Mechanization). Crop Husbandry and Horticulture (Cultural Practices in vegetable production, and Importance of Organic matter in crop production). Chemistry (Mole concept, Application and calculation on solubility of salts, and Properties of carbon responsible for forming compounds). Physics (Sketch of velocity-time graph and calculation of total distance covered, and Application of Gas laws). Integration Science (Digestive system of poultry, Electricity, Soil erosion, and Ecology). Animal Husbandry (Management of rangelands, and Animal Health). Forestry (Exploitation of forest resources, and Forest ecology and wildlife). Fisheries (Aquaculture, and Roles of fisheries in natural economy).

In addition to all the above, the Chief Examiners unanimously reported that candidates wrote legibly and presented their responses in clear language and in an orderly manner.

5. **MATHEMATICS**

(a) The Chief Examiner for Mathematics (Core) listed some of the strengths of the candidates as ability to:

- (i) complete table of values for a given quadratic equation;
- (ii) complete tables for addition and multiplication in modulo;
- (iii) construct cumulative frequency graphs;
- (iv) solve problems involving transformation.

(b) The Chief Examiner for Mathematics (Elective) reported that the candidates were able to:

- (i) Compute Spearman's Rank correlation coefficient from a given data;
- (ii) Use moment equation to solve related problems;
- (iii) Find acute angles between two given vectors;
- (iv) Apply the laws of logarithm.

6. **TECHNICAL SUBJECTS**

The Chief Examiners observed the following strengths in the candidates' work:

- (a) Orderly presentation of answers

The Chief examiners for Building Construction 2, Woodwork 2 and Technical Drawing 3 reported that candidates presented their answers in an orderly manner. Also, Auto Mechanics 3 candidates approached their tasks confidently and systematically.

(b) **Demonstration of In-Depth Knowledge of Subject Matter**

Candidates displayed knowledge in performing experiments with circuit diagrams in Electronics 2 and 3. A few candidates presented good quality line work in Technical Drawing 2 and 3 and Metalwork 2. In Auto Mechanics 2, candidates explained principles well, supporting them with accurate sketches. Technical Drawing 3 candidates showed commendable draughtsmanship skills.

7. **VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS**

The Chief Examiners highlighted the following strengths in candidates' work:

- (i) Improved skills in the application of processes in making articles in Visual Arts 3, GKA 3 A and B. Candidates were innovative in the execution of their work.
- (ii) Appropriate understanding and use of terminologies in Basketry 2, and improved spelling of words in Foods and Nutrition 2 and Management-In-Living 2.
- (iii) Skilful use of tools and materials in GKA 3 A and 3 B and in ceramics 2.

4. **SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' WEAKNESSES AND SUGGESTED REMEDIES**

1. **HUMANITIES**

- (a) The Chief Examiners for Economics 2, History 2 and Government 2 observed that most candidates exhibited very poor expressions and bad spelling.
- (b) They also reported deviations in candidates' answers for History 2, Government 2, Economics 2 and Christian Religious Studies 2.

Other weaknesses reported were:

Geography - The Chief Examiner for Geography further reported on candidates' inability to interpret maps, identify desert landforms and to do comparative study on major climates.

Economics - The Chief Examiner for Economics emphasized candidates' inability to explain points and provide illustrations.

REMEDIES

The Chief Examiners recommended among others that:

- (i) Candidates should be encouraged to devote time to the reading of relevant literature and novels to enrich their language and knowledge on the various subjects;
- (ii) Teachers should urge their students to stick rigidly to the rubrics;
- (iii) Candidates should read questions thoroughly before answering them;
- (iv) Candidates should do well to number their questions properly and answer each question on a fresh page.

2. LANGUAGES

The Chief Examiners noted the following weaknesses in candidates' work:

(a) **WEAK LANGUAGE USE**

Poor grammar and spelling in English Language, Literature-in-English 2 and 3, Asante Twi 2, Akwapim Twi 2 and Dangme 2.

(b) **INADEQUATE PREPARATION**

Inadequate preparation especially in Literature-in-English, Asante Twi and Akwapim Twi as candidates showed evidence of not reading the prescribed texts at all or not reading them well.

(c) **POOR STORE OF VOCABULARY**

Candidates exhibited a poor store of vocabulary especially in English Language and French. The dearth of sufficient vocabulary on the part of candidates, hampered their ability to meaningfully express themselves in plain good English.

REMEDIES

The Chief examiners recommended that:

- (i) Emphasis should be placed on spelling drills and teaching of grammar to equip candidates with enough knowledge to tackle questions well;
- (ii) The importance of reading well-written materials to improve linguistic proficiency should be underscored;
- (iii) Teachers should be admonished to give adequate lessons and exercises on comprehension, summary and essay writing;
- (iv) Candidates should read prescribed texts diligently especially for Literature-in-English.

3. BUSINESS SUBJECTS

- (I) The Chief Examiner for Financial accounting reported that some of the candidates did not adhere to the requirements of the questions. He noted inadequate coverage of topics such as:

- Characteristics of accounting information;
- Accounting ratios;
- Preparation of accounts relating to depreciation.

The Chief Examiner for Principles of Cost Accounting reported that candidates could not explain;

- Why overhead absorption rate should be predetermined;
- The difference between overhead apportionment and absorption;
- Budgetary control and the objective of preparing Cash, Production, Sales and Capital Expenditure Budgets.

- (ii) The Chief Examiner for Business Management noted that candidates could not explain;
 - Certificate of deposit;
 - The Characteristics of negotiable instruments;
 - The Role of managers.
- (iii) The Chief Examiner for Clerical Office Duties reported that some of the candidates displayed poor grammatical expressions and a lack of understanding of the questions
- (iv) The chief examiner for Typewriting noted that most candidates were unable to:
 - complete the speed work;
 - Understand the rubrics and marginal instructions;
 - Use punctuation and capitalization.

REMEDIES

- The Chief Examiners suggested that candidates:
- must adhere to the rubrics of the papers;
- must be given sufficient exercises to do;
- must be encouraged to read extensively on both the subject matter and other relevant literature.

4. SCIENCE SUBJECTS

The Chief Examiners noted that, candidates performed woefully in the following topics of the respective subjects;

Biology (Biological drawing, Causes and consequences of variation, and Process photosynthesis). General Agriculture (Agribusiness, Chemical Weathering and Agricultural development). Crop Husbandry and Horticulture (Establishment of potted plant enterprise, Crop pests and diseases). Chemistry (Electronic configuration, Partition coefficient and chromatography, and Redox titration). Physics (Heat transfer, Semi-conductors, and Nuclear physics). Integrated Science (Hydrocarbons, Animal production, and Magnetism). Animal Husbandry (Marketing of animal products, and Animal nutrition). Forestry (Forestry sector structure, and Forestry estate). Fisheries (Roles of extension services in fisheries development, and Maintenance of fish landing sites)

In addition to the above, the following weaknesses were noted:

- Inadequate preparation;
- Poor language use;
- Lack of understanding of the demands of the questions;
- Inability to explain simple scientific terms;
- Inability to assign proper units to figures;
- Inability to draw and interpret graphs.

REMEDIES

The Chief Examiners for the Science Subjects generally recommended that candidates should be taken through adequate practical lessons. They should also prepare adequately for the examinations.

They also suggested that candidates should:

- Be taken through calculations drills to improve their speed and accuracy;
- Learn the conventions of writing scientific or technical terms;
- Identify and understand the scientific principles underlying everyday occurrences;
- Be allotted more time during practical lessons.

5. MATHEMATICS

The Chief Examiner for Mathematics (Core) listed some of the weaknesses of the candidates as difficulty in:

- Translating word problems into mathematical statements;
- Solving probability related problems;
- Solving equations simultaneously;
- Solving problems involving mensuration.

The Chief Examiner for Mathematics (Elective) reported that candidates had difficulty in:

- Expressing rational functions into partial fractions;
- Finding equation of a circle when given three points;
- Finding the nth term from the list of n terms of a sequence;
- Solving probability related problems.

REMEDIES

The Chief Examiners for both Mathematics (Core) and Mathematics (Elective) suggested that teachers should give students sufficient exercises in the various topics treated. They also recommended that candidates should be given in-depth tuition in their areas of weakness by explaining thoroughly the relevant concepts.

6. TECHNICAL SUBJECTS

The Chief Examiner identified the following weaknesses:

(a) LACK OF ADEQUATE PREPARATION

The Chief Examiners reported that candidates' responses showed a clear indication of lack of preparation. Candidates could not identify and make pictorial sketches of basic hand tools.

(b) Lack of in-depth knowledge of subject matter

Candidates lacked knowledge in their relevant subject areas. In Technical Drawing 3, candidates could not section their sketches nor label them. They could not use appropriate technical jargons and expressions.

(c) **NON-ADHERENCE TO THE RUBRICS OF THE PAPERS**

Most of the candidates failed to adhere strictly to the rubrics of the papers leading to their failure to answer the required number of questions. Some candidates spent time providing sketches in Woodwork 2 for which marks were not awarded.

(d) **LACK OF PRACTICAL EXPOSURE**

In Auto Mechanics, candidates exhibited a clear lack of exposure to some tools and their usage. They could not select the right tools for the correct job.

REMEDIES

The Chief Examiners suggested among other things that:

- Practical work should be intensified by instructors and teachers;
- Names and use of tools should form part of the lessons;
- Teachers should endeavour to complete all sections of the syllabuses before the examination.

7. VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS

The Chief Examiners found the following weaknesses in candidates' performance:

- Poor grammatical expressions and construction in English Language in Foods and Nutrition and Management-in-Living;
- Wrong spelling of basic terminologies and words in Basketry 2 and Foods and Nutrition;
- Inadequate preparation for the examination;
- Inadequate knowledge of the subject matter;
- Inability to apply certain principles to practical situations in Graphic Design and Visual Art.

REMEDIES

- (I) Candidates should be equipped with the right textbooks to enable them to prepare adequately for the examinations.
- (II) Candidates should take their time to read the questions properly before attempting to answer them.
- (III) Teachers should engage candidates in more practical activities.
- (IV) Candidates should be taught to spell and use technical terms/terminologies associated with their subjects.