

MAY/JUNE 2011 WEST AFRICAN SENIOR SCHOOL
CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

GENERAL RESUME OF CHIEF EXAMINERS' REPORTS

1. STANDARD OF THE PAPERS

All the Chief Examiners agreed in their assessment of the standard of the various papers reported on. According to them, the papers did not differ from the previous years', notwithstanding the fact that the candidates were being examined on the revised syllabuses for the first time.

The difficulty level of the questions was said to be within appreciable limits and that the generality of the questions covered almost the entire range of topics outlined in the various syllabuses.

This was the situation as exemplified by Integrated Science, Business Management and Financial Accounting, just to mention a few.

2. PERFORMANCE OF CANDIDATES

The unanimous position taken by the Chief Examiners on the standard of the papers, however, shifted significantly when it came to the performance of the candidates. It was almost as varied as there were subjects, ranging from 'remarkable

improvement' in Mathematics (Elective), Business Management, History and Economics among others, 'slight improvement' in Typewriting, Financial Accounting and Clerical Office Duties, through 'good performance' in Physics and General Agriculture, to 'the same performance compared to previous years' in Integrated Science, Auto Mechanics, Applied Electricity, Technical Drawing and 'below average' or 'below expectation' in Mathematics (Core) and Principles of Cost Accounting, while 'poor performance' was ascribed to candidates for Chemistry and Biology.

3. A SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' STRENGTHS

(1) Mastery of Subject-Matter

A number of Chief Examiners commended candidates for their hands-on approach in answering most of the questions. Such was the case in Physics, Animal Husbandry, Literature-In-English, Akuapem Twi and Nzema.

(2) Adherence to Rubrics of Question Papers

Candidates for Twi (Asanti), English Language, Christian Religious Studies, Economics and History generally adhered to the rubrics of their paper.

(3) Good Answering Skills and Use of Appropriate Vocabulary

The Chief Examiners for Integrated Science, General Agriculture, Literature-In-English, Government, History and Social Studies praised their candidates

for the expert manner in which they handled the questions through the use of appropriate diction.

- (4) Use of Relevant Examples and Illustrations
This was mentioned as one the strong points for candidates in Government, Geography, and Literature-In-English.
- (5) Demonstration of Good Practical Skills
For the practical-oriented subjects such as applied Electricity, Electronics, Music, Physics, Biology and Technical Drawing, candidates were lauded for the facility with which they handled their workpieces and their demonstration of deep practical understanding.
- (6) Improvement in the Use of English Language
The Chief Examiners for Integrated Science, Biology, Crop Husbandry and Horticulture and Animal Husbandry noticed an improvement in the candidates' use of English Language to explain the scientific terms.
- (7) Accurate Headings and good responses to Speed and Accuracy Tests
These were noticed as commendable features in the scripts of candidates for Financial Accounting and Typewriting respectively.
- (8) Good Handwriting
The handwriting of candidates for Biology, Crop Husbandry and Horticulture, Christian Religious Studies, Economics, History and Social Studies received special mention for good handwriting.
- (9) Observance of Safety Rules and Regulations
The Chief Examiners for Auto Mechanics, Electronics and Metalwork gave thumbs-up to candidates for demonstrating a good sense of safety consciousness in handling some of the their equipment.

4. A SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' WEAKNESSES

The following weaknesses were identified:

- (1) Lack of in-depth knowledge of Subject-Matter
Some candidates were said to have demonstrated insufficient understanding of subject-matter. This manifested itself in the scrappy and pedestrian answers given to some of the questions as typified in candidates' work in Social Studies, Chemistry, Integrated Science, Building Construction, Literature-In-English, Ga, Business Management, Geography and Economics.
- (2) Inadequate Preparation for the Examination
Chief Examiners for Auto Mechanics, Woodwork, Physics, Integrated Science and Chemistry cited inadequate preparation as the bane of some candidates in those subjects.
- (3) Poor Expression and Inappropriate Use of Language
This was reported as a negative feature prevalent in the scripts for such subjects as Biology, Animal Husbandry, Auto Mechanics, Metal Work, English Language and French.

- (4) Deviation
Quite a number of candidates were reported to have completely missed the demands of the question in Geography, and History.
- (5) Failure to Observe Rubrics
Some candidates reportedly failed to observe the instructions in Principles of Cost Accounting, Geography, Chemistry, Fisheries, Biology and General Agriculture.
- (6) Poor Handwriting
Illegible handwriting was cited for some candidates in General Agriculture, Crop Husbandry and Horticulture and Animal Husbandry.

5. SUGGESTED REMEDIES

The following suggestions were given as the way forward in addressing the weaknesses highlighted above:

- (1) Candidates should ensure that they cover their syllabuses adequately before the examination.
- (2) Candidates should be well-equipped by way of adequate preparation before the examination.
- (3) Extensive reading of relevant material is recommended for building up a strong vocabulary base and for effective use of language.
- (4) Candidates should take adequate class exercises and quizzes so that they would be well-versed in the topics treated.
- (5) Candidates should be exposed to more practical activities through collaborative efforts with garages, building contractors, mechanics, other artisans and industrial concerns.
- (6) Candidates are reminded that it is important to write legibly in examinations so that none of their points can be missed.