

MAY/JUNE 2012 WEST AFRICAN SENIOR SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

GENERAL RESUME OF CHIEF EXAMINERS' REPORTS

1. STANDARD OF THE PAPERS

All the Chief Examiners, without exception, agreed that the standard of the papers compared positively with that of previous years. The questions were said to be unambiguous and within the scope of the syllabus for each subject.

2. CANDIDATES' PERFORMANCE

Assessment of candidates' performance was, however, paper-specific as it varied from one to the other. According to the Chief Examiners for Social Studies and Economics, most of the candidates performed 'excellently', while Principles of Cost Accounting and Financial Accounting described overall performance as 'commendable'. Typewriting, Gonja 1, Dagaare 1, Nzema 1 & 2, Fante 2, Eje 2, Physics 1, Chemistry 1 & 2, Biology 2, Animal Husbandry 1 & 2, on the other hand, reported an 'improved performance' in candidates' output.

Performance was said to have remained the 'same', compared to that of last year, in Literature-in-English 2, Ga 1, Twi (Akuapem) 2, Geography 1 (b) and Islamic Religious Studies, while it was measured as 'average' in Building Construction 2,

Woodwork 1, Auto Mechanics 2, Technical Drawing 2, Applied Electricity 1, Mathematics (Core) and (Elective) 2, Physics 2 and Biology 1. Performance, however, fell 'below average' in Integrated Science 2, and 'below expectation' in Business Management, Dagaare 2, Twi (Asante) 1 & 2, Gonja 2, Ga 2 and Eje 2.

In Music 1A & B, Christian Religious Studies, Government and History, performance was simply 'poorer'.

3. A SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' STRENGTHS

The Chief Examiners attributed the commendable performance by some of the candidates to certain laudable features including:

(1) Adherence to Rubrics

Candidates were commended for answering the stipulated number of questions from the various sections and writing within the required limits in Fante 2,

French 1, Fisheries 1 & 2, Crop Husbandry 2, Forestry 2, General Agriculture 1 and Physics 2.

(2) Good Presentation Skills

Candidates were commended in Metalwork 2, Auto Mechanics 1, Technical Drawing 2, Crop Husbandry and Horticulture 2 and Animal Husbandry 1 for the orderly manner in which they presented their answers.

(3) In-depth Knowledge of Subject-Matter

This was a 'plus' for some candidates as exemplified in Applied Electricity 1 & 2, Electronics 1, Woodwork 3, Building Construction 1, Physics 1 and Biology 2.

(4) Improvement in the Use of English Language

The use of English Language to express Scientific ideas was said to have improved significantly in Science 1 & 2, Fisheries 1 and Animal Husbandry 1.

(5) Knowledge of the Formal Features of Essay

Candidates were applauded for demonstrating appreciable knowledge of the formal features of the various types of essay in English Language 1, Gonja 1, Dagaare 1, Nzema 1 & 2 and Fante 2.

(6) Demonstrating Good Practical Skills

For the practical-oriented subjects such as Electronics, Applied Electricity and Auto Mechanics, candidates were commended for their practical ability in circuit-diagram principles and selection of the appropriate tools.

(7) Knowledge of key Mathematics Principles

Candidates for Core Mathematics were praised for their ability in drawing Venn diagrams and image of triangles under given transformation, ability to complete table of values and to evaluate mathematical expressions involving application of BODMAS.

In Elective Mathematics, they were commended for being able to integrate polynomial functions and resolving forces into components.

4. A SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' WEAKNESSES

The strong points of candidates notwithstanding, the Chief Examiners identified certain negative factors that accounted for the poor show of some of the candidates

(1) Poor Orthography and Syntax

This was the bane of some candidates as typified in such papers as English Language 1, Twi (Akuapem) 1, Twi (Asante) 1 and Kasem 1.

(2) Lack of Answering Skills and Understanding of Questions

Some candidates were said to have misunderstood some questions and therefore gave answers that were scrappy and pedestrian. This was the case as reported in Physics 2, Chemistry 2, Crop Husbandry and Horticulture 2, Woodwork 1 and Electronics 2. In some instances such as Economics and History, there was complete deviation.

(3) Inadequate Preparation

Some candidates' output in Physics 2, Chemistry 2 and Forestry 1 & 2 showed that they were ill-prepared for those papers.

(4) Illegible Handwriting

The Chief Examiners for Fisheries and some of the Ghanaian Languages reported that, the handwriting of some candidates made it difficult to read and mark their scripts.

(5) Poor Application of Technical Terms

The Chief Examiners for Metalwork 2, and Building Construction 2 reported that, some candidates exhibited poor knowledge of technical terms and were also unable to link theory with practical.

5. SUGGESTED REMEDIES

To address the weaknesses cited, the following were recommended:

- (1) Intensive and extensive reading of relevant material.
- (2) Effective teaching and learning to ensure that the various syllabuses are wholly covered before the examination.
- (3) Exposure of candidates for science and technical subjects to industry for a hands-on approach towards the acquisition of the needed skills.
- (4) A more serious approach to the acquisition of good handwriting skills.