

**EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL OF
ESWATINI**

JC

EXAMINATION REPORT

FOR

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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JC English Language

Paper 101/01

General Comments

This component is a reading and writing examination that comprises of five exercises. The paper was able to make a clear distinction between weak, average and above average candidates. Very few scored above forty and there was quite a number who scored below twenty.

Exercise1

This is an exercise aimed at finding out if the pupils had mastered the skill of skimming and scanning. A number of candidates scored above average in this exercise.

- (a) This question required candidates to give '**Helium Group Inc.**' Most candidates got the answer correctly. Only a few candidates got it wrong because they used small letters.
- (b) The majority did not get the correct answer just because of leaving out "over" which was key in the answer. The question required '**over 500 Helium hotels**'.
- (c) This question gave the majority of the candidates a challenge as they did not understand the idea of 'visitors'. They gave the general information that was given in the passage. They gave 'suitably located for both business and leisure' instead of '**the Hotel rests within walking distance of all the services of the city**'
- (d) In this question, almost all the candidates were able to give the correct answer as there were many options available. The expected responses were: **greeted by welcoming staff/escorted to your table/accommodated guests enjoy round the clock snacks and grab-and-go items/room service**
- (e) Candidates were able to identify the answers but some failed to get a mark because they left out 'locally' which was key in the answer. The answer was '**from locally accredited suppliers**'.
- (f) The majority of candidates was able to give the correct answer except for a very few candidates. The expected answer was '**long after you return home**'
- (g) This question was well done by a majority of candidates. The question asks why travelling with children is not stressful for the visitor. The expected answer expected was '**rooms provide extra beds if travelling with children**'.
- (h) Candidates were able to answer this question though some left out the key part. The answer expected '**a spacious work area with desk**'. They left out 'spacious' which was key as the question wanted things that ensure a comfortable working environment.
- (i) Most candidates performed well here. The expected response **was when you book more than 5 rooms**
- (j) Most candidates were able to pick the correct information though there were those few who wrote everything including the website leading to loss of marks yet the required answer was **+268 34026800**.

Exercise 2

An exercise aimed at testing the candidates' ability to read for details and infer information from a given text.

- (a) Required candidates to explain how GM cottons are made. Candidates were able to identify the correct answer except for a few who left out "selected" which was key. They were expected to give "selected individual genes to be transferred from one organism to another."
- (b) Most candidates were able to give answers except for a few who left out 'about'. The question required '**about 400 tonnes per hectare**'.
- (c) Candidates were able to give the correct answer. The question was: what encourages the growing of GM cotton? The answer was **drought that affected the country for about three years**.
- (d) Most candidates gave one point instead of two as 2 marks were allocated to this question, so they ended up getting 1 mark. The expected response was: **It does not need a lot of water and the conditions in the area are ideal**.
- (e) Candidates were able to give correct answers. The question was: what proof is there that pesticides are not harmful to the environment? The answer was '**pesticides used are the same as those used for conventional cotton**'.
- (f) In this question candidates were unable to give all the points. Some gave their responses in a paragraph form instead of point form making them lose marks. The expected responses
- **Learn how to prevent outbreaks and any accompanying factor**
 - **A car disinfectant by the gate**
 - **Seed brought in to the farm both planted and not planted are accounted for**
 - **Unused seed are stored safely**
 - **Proper control in place to ensure seed are not misplaced**

Exercise 3

This exercise aimed at testing the candidate's ability to follow given information and to transfer relevant information into a form.

Section A

This section was done well by almost all candidates except for a few who did not use block letters.

Section B

Candidates did this very well.

Section C

Most candidates did not do well in this section as they failed to identify the main idea of

- (i) 'passion and talent' 'family support and find direction early in life'
- (ii) 'someone moving from one level to another' 'do not fear to break new frontiers'

Most candidates still fail to start their sentences with 'I' or involve themselves in the sentences. A majority of the candidates failed to score the full marks because they focused on one idea instead of both.

Exercise 4

This is an exercise aimed at testing the candidate's ability to present given information in note form under relevant subheading. This was another discriminating exercise. Few candidates scored above average but others could not due to:

- writing sentences instead of notes
- use of capital letters
- use of full stops
- presenting incomplete responses

Exercise 5

This is an exercise aimed at testing the ability to identify relevant points to the question and present them in continuous prose. An overwhelming majority of candidates was able to score above average in this exercise. They could easily identify the points. However, for the language part, only a few could score above average. The rest had limited expression. They relied on lifting from the original text and failed to group and sequence ideas in their own words. Some write in two paragraphs instead of one.

Recommendations

Due to the foregoing discussions, it is therefore imperative that when preparing candidates for the paper, they must:

- be exposed to a lot of reading to enhance their understanding of the written work and to enrich their vocabulary
- be given a lot of comprehension work to help them master the question analysis skill and for responding to the questions asked
- be taught basic grammar and sentences construction
- be taught the skill of note-making.

Paper 101/02**General Comments**

In the year 2021, the number of candidates registered for the examination was far above that of 2020. In 2021 there were about 23400 candidates who sat for JC English Language Paper 2, compared to the 19000 that wrote the paper in 2020.

Generally, the question paper was learner-friendly as most of the questions proved to be accessible to most learners. This paper consists of three exercises to be answered, Exercises 1 and 2 are compulsory, guided-writing exercises, while Exercise 3 is a free-style writing task comprising three topics of an argumentative/discursive essay; a descriptive, narrative, or expository essay. Candidates are expected to choose one. In this component, candidates have the liberty to showcase their creativity and competence in the English Language.

Exercise 1.

In this exercise, candidates had to write a friendly letter to a cousin who had confided that he wanted to leave home because he felt the parents were treating him unfairly or differently from the other children. Candidates were then supposed to advise the cousin by highlighting possible reasons for the unfairness, how their cousin could cope, as well as suggestions of people they could talk to about their predicament.

This question was fairly done as most candidates were able to tackle all the bullets. Bullet one required the candidates to state what could be the root cause of the unfair treatment by the parents of the siblings. Most candidates were able to give sensible reasons why their parents were likely not to treat them equally, their reasons included birth order, the patriarchal society that regards boys more highly than girls, or even the possibility that the complaints were caused by just the need for attention that comes with teenage hood. Some lambasted their cousins for their perverse behaviour and told them that unless they shaped up, their parents would find it hard to treat them like the other siblings. Others appealed to their cousins to be more understanding as their parents were dealing with a lot of personal issues like debts and divorce, hence their behaviour was not normal. They also gave a stern warning to the aggrieved cousin about the repercussions of leaving home. Most candidates were able to give sound advice on a number of things that the cousin could do to ease the frustration, as well as provide some ideas that would help them relieve their frustrations. Finally, they suggested relevant people that could be consulted to provide counselling. All in all, the dynamics of our society were reflected in the deliberations brought forward by the candidates.

Candidates who failed to score average marks were those who did not understand the question. Some failed to understand who the audience was, and instead of giving advice to the cousin, they sought advice from the cousin stating unfair treatment they were receiving from their stepmothers. Others wrote to their siblings about their plight after the death of their parents. Another challenge was that some candidates failed to use the correct register, they used formal language yet this was a friendly letter.

Teachers are advised to teach and expose learners to the different types of informal writing, for example, different types of friendly letters such as, a letter of advice, sympathy, a congratulatory letter, etc. Teachers are also urged to spend time teaching learners about question analysis because most candidates fail to properly unpack the demands of questions, which leads to many of them falling within the partly relevant mark band which is 1-2 marks for content according to the marking guide. Learners must also be taught how to develop the prompts at length. Most of them just provide a line in response to a bullet or they simply write a list of undeveloped responses. For the last bullet where candidates were supposed to suggest a person that could be consulted about the problem, most candidates merely mentioned the person without explaining why they were recommending him

or her. Lastly, the need to conscientise learners about the importance of attempting all three bullet points cannot be overemphasised. A lot of marks are lost as a result of this negligence.

Exercise 2

In this section, candidates had to write a letter to the editor of a local newspaper giving their views about the issue of home learning i.e. learning through lessons broadcast on radios and televisions. For a number of candidates, this question was accessible as they were still fresh from the experience during the COVID-19 period. Most of them understood the concept of home learning and could discuss its benefits and disadvantages. However, a number of them failed to analyse the demands of the question. They did not adhere to the requirements of a letter to the editor. Instead, they approached it as a discursive or argumentative essay, and some even wrote a speech. This was a major error as they failed to address the editor who was the audience. It was also noted that a number of candidates used addresses in this section which took up half the allocated space, resulting in most of them writing a few lines for the content and eventually scoring very low marks. The majority who were aware of the audience failed to take a firm stand, instead, it was a general discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of home learning. In such cases, the whole article was without the voice of the writer, which led to candidates scoring in the partly relevant mark band. Candidates who scored good marks were those who were aware of the style and register to use when writing a letter to the editor, bringing forth valuable ideas about their stand and developing them fully with illustrations. Such candidates were able to also bring out the other side of the coin but would quickly make a rebuttal so that the reader would not be confused about their stand.

Teachers are urged to teach learners the different types of formal writing as it was evident that most learners were not exposed to the letter to the editor. It was also noted that some candidates fail to make a clear distinction between persuasive writing/argumentative writing and discursive writing as most of them failed to take a firm stand in persuasive writing where they are required to express their views. A majority of candidates sit on the fence and write a general discussion of the issue at hand instead of writing persuasively and making their standpoint loud and clear. Persuasive writing skills must be taught i.e., candidates must know how to rebut and quickly go back to their standpoint so that their voice is not neutralised. Also, the correct cohesive device to be used for the different genres must be taught as learners tend to use them inappropriately. The best approach is to use a well-written text to teach these skills.

Exercise 3

The types of essays from which candidates had to pick their choice were a narrative, a descriptive, and a discursive essay.

1. Write a story based on these words, '*Life can be so full of surprises*'

This was a narrative composition where candidates were expected to write a story that was supposed to have an element of a surprise. This question was popular as most candidates opted for it, however, there were many challenges in how they tackled it. For instance, some failed to realise that they had to write a story, one story and hence a number of them treated it as a description of a series of different surprises. Other candidates wrote far-fetched fictional stories which were not realistic. A significant number simply wrote about surprise birthday parties and then would conclude by saying life is indeed full of surprises.

On the other hand, the good stories were quite impressive with varied vocabulary and a gripping storyline. Well exposed learners came up with surprises such as starting your day on a slow note only to meet an international soccer star at your local mall. The story would unfold frame by frame, with a captivating description of the reluctance to go out, the surprise meeting, the incredible exchanges, and the emotions. These candidates would also throw in some humour, thereby making the

experience relatable. Other surprises would really stretch one's imagination, such as spotting an allegedly extinct hedgehog species during a camping night with the family, and how the find catapulted the writer to fame. The suspense-filled description of the eerie night sounds, the sneaking out of the tent and the ultimate find would instantly transport any reader to the scene. It became very clear that those candidates were extensive readers and also that they possibly watch rich TV shows like documentaries.

Teachers are advised to equip learners with the correct tools for writing a narrative essay – an entertaining introduction; elaborative detail for crucial characters, objects or setting; a slow-motion description of the main event, as well as a memorable ending, e.g. a memory/decision/feeling/wish. Tenses and grammatical errors like poor sentence construction, punctuation, and spelling continue to be a limitation for a majority of the candidates.

2. Question 2 read '*Describe your favourite career and state how it can benefit you*'.

This was a descriptive composition where candidates were supposed to thoroughly describe their favourite career and then discuss how it would benefit them. A number of the candidates who chose this question failed to attend to the two parts of the question. Most of them failed to describe their careers, instead they dived straight into the benefits throughout which lowered their marks as they failed to fulfil the given task. A few candidates did not understand the meaning of a career, instead, they described a hobby and stated the benefits, and some described their role models. For others, it seemed career meant a caring person so they would talk about their mothers or teachers. Coming to how the careers would benefit them, some branched out to talk about how the careers would benefit their communities. Some would have just one benefit; e.g. money, and then they would talk about the different things they would do with the money.

Average candidates wrote about mainline careers like teaching, nursing, law or being a doctor. But other learners showed they were ready to explore careers not-so-common in the country such as civil or chemical engineering, geology, and Forex trading. They some would talk about their aspirations to become air hostesses, therapists, fashion designers, and dance artists. As they described their careers one could tell they had big dreams and knew exactly what those desired career paths entailed, and how they would benefit them.

Teachers are implored to expose learners to double-barrelled questions, as well as train them to address both parts of the question. Carelessness is costly, therefore learners should take their time to read and understand the questions.

3. The third question read; '*Government must take full responsibility for the elderly. Discuss.*'

This was a very popular choice for candidates, however, a majority failed to realise that it was a discursive essay and that they had to be objective and balance their discussion. A majority picked a side and argued strongly for it. They were mostly advocating for government to be fully responsible for the elderly, without considering reasons for the other side of the coin. Those who were able to score high marks were able to follow all the conventions of a discursive composition, these candidates were able to introduce the discussion by providing a solid background of the issue and then exploring both sides. They went on to develop the discussion using illustrations and appropriate examples to advance their points. Such candidates would even bring forth some suggestions for improving the status quo in their conclusion.

Teachers are once again urged to make a clear distinction between argumentative and discursive writing. Candidates must be provided with all the proper tools needed to write the composition e.g., how to develop a paragraph, cohesive devices for objective writing, as well as how they can organise their essays. It was evident while marking that while some candidates understood the discursive task,

they were not sure how to bring it out in their writing, and hence ended up sounding like someone who sits on the fence during an argument.

Lastly, it was also noted that a number of candidates decided to write compositions on all three topics which was quite disturbing. Such candidates would write a paragraph on each topic and obviously, it was not adequately developed, and consequentially, they lost a lot of marks as they could only be scored within the 'little relevance' mark band.

Conclusion

It is recommended that;

- Learners be trained on the importance of question analysis and topic selection before they attempt any question.
- Learners be empowered on grammatical rules and the mechanics of continuous writing. A quick example could be the use of prepositions; learners make statements like I last saw you on the wedding; this results to...; so by that reason then it is clear that... Also, the most basic spelling, tenses, and sentence construction continue to impede candidates' writing.
- A clear distinction between persuasive writing and discursive writing be made and taught to learners
- Teachers must be intentional about using reading as a springboard for writing, as well as assisting learners with vocabulary building activities and appreciation of writing style.
- Teachers need to be vigilant and help learners understand that some words/expressions are not appropriate for classroom use, even if the register is informal. Huge social media influence also continues to be a problem. It was therefore not unusual to come across words/phrases such as pissed, sucks, I was shook, situationship and many such words. The use of such language places learners at a disadvantage.

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| Paper 101/03 |
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General Comments

This component is aimed at testing the skill of listening for specific information with understanding. It was noted from the candidates' responses that some still need to improve this skill. It was observed that there is a need for some candidates to improve their standard of language comprehension and usage which seems to have dropped. This was displayed through spelling errors and failure to follow the basic rules of the language like the use of capital letters for proper nouns. Some candidates would have scored good marks if they had not had challenges with spelling some words. Some candidates left whole questions or part of them unanswered which might have been a result of challenges with their listening skills thus making them score very low marks.

Comments on Specific Questions**Exercise 1**

There were five scenarios based on short spoken texts that required short answers. Most candidates were able to provide correct responses with some, on the other hand, not being able to.

Question 1: Why is Linda not able to get a return bus ticket?

Answer: They do not issue return tickets before 8 a.m.

Few candidates were able to get the answer correct while most could not score due to the fact that they left out the time unit.

Question 2: Give two ways in which Susan earns her income.

Answer: dress-making and hair-dressing

Most candidates got the answer correct with a few getting it wrong. Those who could not score were those who missed the question and wrote the profession as the answer instead of the job. The answers given were sewing/hairdresser/tailor/making dresses/2 sales person/hair-cut.

Question 3: Who can start a fitness routine?

Answer: everyone/anyone/young or old/one who is medically fit

Most candidates failed to address the "who" part of the question. Those who were able to address it were able to score a mark while some could not score a mark since they gave incorrect answers. Among the other responses given that could not score were visit doctor/client/never too old or young/healthy person/healthy eating plan/Muzi Gama.

Question 4: What challenges does Nelly have with Technical Drawing?

Answer: She is not good at drawing

This question gave the candidates a challenge as most failed to score.

Those who could not score gave answers such as she is not good at Technical Drawing/she is not good at it/she was tired.

Question 5: Where will the treasure hunt take place?

Answer: Lion's Den Game Reserve

Most candidates were not able to score since they did not provide the correct answer. Others could not notice that the answer was a proper noun thus had to be written using capital letters for the first letters. Some could not score since they came up with answers such as the name of the school or the date.

For Den they gave words such as Dan/Dern/Dam/Din. For reserve they gave responses such as reseve/reserv/resev. For Lions' Den other candidates gave answers such as Limestone/Lionstone.

Exercise 2

This is a gap filling exercise. Candidates were expected to listen to a talk about clearing clutter and then fill in the details. The performance in this exercise was average though some candidates could not score. The challenge here was spelling errors and getting the correct words to use. Some candidates could not provide correct answers for all the items.

Item 1: Disadvantages

Answer: wasting

Some candidates could not write the correct spelling. They came up with words such as westing/weasting/waysting/waisting thus they could not score.

Item 2: Ways to identify clutter

Answer: visualise

purposefully

The spelling error for visualise contributed to most candidates not being able to score. Others gave words such as virtualise/virtualize/visualis/vidualise virsualize.

'Purposefully' also proved to be a challenge for most candidates as they failed to identify the answer and they gave words such as mess/tidy/clean clear. Some candidates could identify the answer but because of spelling mistakes they could not score. They gave words such as purposeful/purpocefuly/perposefully.

Item 3: Health problems

Answer: breathing

Most candidates got this answer correct even though there were a few who could not score. Other responses given were breathing/brething/breeding/breading/breath/breathe. Others gave irrelevant answers such as health/respiration.

Item 4: Storage

Answer: label

Most candidates were able to score with a few not scoring due to spelling errors. Some gave words such as lable/laibel/lebel/labele.

Exercise 3

This is another gap filling exercise where candidates were expected to listen to a talk about keeping pets and then fill in the information in the gaps.

This exercise was fairly done by most candidates as quite a number of them were able to score fairly.

Item 1: Definition

Answer: pleasure

Most candidates were able to give the correct answer. Some though had spelling challenges. Among the answers given were words such as pressure/pleazure/plesure/pleassure/pleasure.

Item 2: Benefits of keeping a pet

Answer: alert / attentive

Responsible

Some candidates were able to score fairly even though some still had challenges with spelling the word correctly.

For 'alert', some gave words such as alet/arlet/alert/arlett/alerte

For 'attentive' they gave responses such as atentive/atteentive/attertive/attentively.

It was observed that a few candidates gave attentive as the answer and alert was the commonly given response.

For 'responsible' responses given were responsible/responsible/responseble/risponsible.

Item 3: Elderly people

Answer: boost

Most candidates were able to access the answer but some had spelling challenges, for example, some gave words such as booste/boots/broost/bost/brust.

Item 4: Pets in health facilities

Answer: tension

Most candidates were able to give the correct answer. There were some who had challenges with spelling. They gave words like tention/tantion/tansion/tenssion/ternsion/tenshion.

Exercise 4

Candidates were expected to listen to a lecture about silk production and then answer the questions.

Question 1: How long has silk been in production?

Answer: thousands of years

Most candidates were able to access the answer though there were some who failed to write the answer correctly. Those who could not score gave answers such as 1000 of years/tousands/thousand years ago.

Question 2: How many eggs does the silk worm lay at a time?

Answer: about 400

Most candidates omitted the key word **about** thus rendering their answers incorrect. Other responses given were 400 egg/400 eggs/400.

Question 3: How do you know that a silk worm is ready to spin their cocoon?

Answer: They stop eating and raise their head.

Most candidates did not score since they wrote wrong responses such as start eating/stopping eat/stop eat/stop feeding/rise their heads/rise their hands/rotating its body/spin their heads/6 weeks old/raise their hands/raise their heads/stop their length and raise their heads.

Question 4: Why is it important to dissolve the gum holding the cocoon in boiling water?

Answer: To soften and dissolve the gum holding the cocoon together.

Most candidates were able to access the answer though spelling challenges still proved to cause some to lose marks.

For 'soften' they gave responses such as suffocate/suffle.

Some gave responses such as: to suffocate and dissolve the gum to ensure no damage on the thread/to suffle them and dissolve the gum/in order to soffing them/to suffer the damage.

Question 5: How do manufacturers make sure that they produce a wide range of choice in colour and shade?

Answer: By using various dyes.

Most candidates had a challenge with spelling thus they could not score.

For 'various' they gave words such as virus/verious/varus/varous/varies.

For 'dyes' they gave words such as dice/dies/dys.

Exercise 5

Candidates were to listen to an interview by Bob Watt from B News and a renowned popstar Jayson Bhembe and then answer the questions.

The overall performance in this exercise was average. Most candidates scored between 2-4 with a few scoring the total. There were some who scored zero (0) due to spelling errors, wrong answers and omission of key words.

Question 1: What is the name of the show that hosted Jayson?

Answer: What's Hot

Most candidates failed to access the answer. They came up with answers such as hot pop/B News/Bob Watt/What Heart/Jerusalem/Popular Show/musician.

Some candidates failed to follow the rules of the language in that since it is a proper noun, they were expected to use capital letters at the beginning of the noun.

Question 2: How did Jayson's mother support him?

Answer: By taking videos of him singing

She uploaded videos of him singing on You Tube.

Most candidates were able to identify the answer but failed to clearly express themselves. They gave responses such as took videos of me singing instead of him singing.

For 'videos' they gave words such as vidoes/vidios/viodes.

For 'uploaded' they gave words such as up load/apload/uploded.

Question 3: What is the name of the social network in which Jayson has many followers?

Answer: Twitter

A majority of the candidates were able to access the answer while a few could not due to spelling errors.

For 'Twitter', they gave words such as treater/twister/twitha.

Others gave responses such as You Tube/Social networks/Social media, answers that are not in the script.

Question 4: What evidence shows that Jayson is generous?

Answer: He gave to charities / helped build schools / donated to developing countries.

For 'charities' they gave words such as cherities/cheritees/charittys.

This question was a challenge to most candidates. They did not understand the question especially the key word generous. This resulted in them giving incorrect responses such as invested money to companies/dancing with DJ Kabza/gave to charity schools/have many followers/he was famous/Good morning Africa.

Question 5: What challenges came with being famous at a young age?

Answer? Being nabbed for reckless driving

Disagreements with fans and the media

This question was also a challenge to the candidates. They were able to identify the answer but had a problem with the spelling. They came up with responses such as rapist driving/nagged for reckless driving/napped for reckless driving/wreckless driving/rackless driving/drunken driving.

Some wrote responses such as disagreement with friends/disagreements with funds/fighting with friends/disagreement on the media.

For 'disagreements' they gave words such as dissagrement/disaggreement/disagrement.

Conclusion

Generally, one could conclude that the candidates could have performed better since they were able to identify answers but they were disadvantaged by the mistakes they made as they were presenting their answers. For the candidates to improve their performance, the following is recommended:

- there is a need to help candidates to improve their spelling
- candidates should be made aware that the rules of the language and grammar apply fully and therefore they should be adhered to
- candidates should use the pre-test reading session effectively in order to be familiar with the context as they read through the questions
- candidates should be encouraged to make sure that they answer all parts of the question correctly so that they can score marks
- candidates should be continually exposed to extensive reading.

Paper 101/04

This component is school based. It is assessed by teachers at school and then moderated at ECESWA.

General Comments

This year, there was a slight noticeable decline in the performance compared to the previous year as there were many candidates who fell within the minimum mark range of 3 to 6 in total. Candidates exhibited challenges, probably because they had little time to be exposed to this type of component. In spite of this, the examination was fairly conducted considering the hiccups and challenges of COVID-19 and political unrests faced this year. Very good candidates performed exceedingly well, while weak ones struggled. The most popular cards were card A, and card E (A – Being Friendly; E – Visitors). The least popular cards were card C and B, (C – Curiosity, B – Forgetfulness). Card D was average (D – Spending Time Indoors).

A considerable number of examiners did not simplify, paraphrase or prompt candidates during the course of the conversation to enable candidates to speak at length. This resulted to candidates having difficulty in expanding or developing points. Some centres seemed to have not coordinated before the exams as there was observed inconsistency in the manner the exam was conducted.

Some examiners seemed not to have read the Teacher/Examiner Notes which help on how to conduct the exam. Examiners are encouraged to read the notes given, especially the part on warm-up, Handing of the card, how to conduct the exam as well as general expectation.

Comments on Specific Aspects of the Oral Test**Part A – Welcome and Brief Explanation**

Most examiners handled this part well as a majority was able to explain the format of the test properly. However, there were those who forgot to do this. Examiners are urged to be alert at all times.

Part B – Warm-Up

This part was also fairly done as most examiners were able to stick to the stipulated time and asked useful general questions, thus being able to choose the most suitable cards for the candidates. Other examiners though, had either too short warm-ups or too long warm-ups and at the end were unable to deduce what card to give a candidate. It would be wise to stick to the stipulated time.

Part C – Handing out the Card and Preparation Time

This part was handled well by examiners. Examiners are reminded to pause the recorder and allow candidates to read given cards. Examiners are also advised to simplify cards for candidates in this part. This will help ease the conversation.

Part D – Conversation

This is the most important part of the test as it is graded, hence it should be handled well. It should strictly be conducted in English. Examiners are encouraged to be friendly and welcoming to candidates, always. This allows candidates to be free and ease into the conversation in a relaxed mood. Please try to ask open-ended questions which allow candidates to elaborate more. Asking closed questions disadvantages candidates as they are unable to develop their points in a conversation.

There are some examiners who were mainly silent during the course of the conversation, resulting in candidates being compelled to speak on their own, giving a presentation instead of a conversation. Such candidates performed poorly as they were blank on what to do or how to structure their responses to given bullets.

The bullets given are meant to guide examiners on how to expand on the given topics. They should not be used as a tool for question and answer. It is imperative to read the cards and prepare other subsidiary or supplementary questions for the oral test prior to conducting it. This will help cover even those weak candidates.

Most candidates used simple structures and struggled to venture beyond. Only a few dared to use compound and complex structures. Weak candidates had challenges with their tenses, resulting to a poor performance.

Vocabulary was generally too simple, with only a few candidates being able to use precise vocabulary. For example, on the card Forgetfulness, good candidates were able to even dare talk about psychological challenges like Dementia and Alzheimer, which was precise vocabulary. Weak candidates only focused on given vocabulary, not giving their own. Teachers are advised to expose candidates to more precise vocabulary.

Topic Cards

The bullets in the topic cards are primarily meant to direct the flow of conversation. The first couple of bullets usually touch on personality, inviting candidates to first focus on themselves or people they know of. As the conversation progresses, the bullets seem to be of higher-order as well. This is to make candidates talk about both general and complex issues based on given topic. The last bullet especially, touches on more complex and sophisticated issues which may be abstract thus giving abstract ideas. The cards given to candidates this year seemed to be friendly at face value but proved challenging once the test commenced. Card C seemed to be very challenging for most candidates, followed by card B. Examiners are advised to simplify cards for candidates so they have something to say and be more relaxed.

Card A – Being Friendly

This was the most popular and friendly card to both urban and rural area candidates. It proved to be simpler to explain for examiners as it was the go to card. Candidates given this card flowed in their conversations, they were able to relate to it and a majority used personal experiences to respond to prompts.

Weak candidates had a challenge though with tackling the last bullet point which required candidates to talk about the extent to which a society can attract tourists. For some candidates, they assumed that being friendly is all about facial expressions such as smiling all the time while others could not differentiate between a tourist and tourism. Most failed to come up with the disadvantages of being friendly. They mostly talked about being taken for granted and being made a fool as the disadvantages of being friendly.

Card B – Forgetfulness

This was the second most challenging card for candidates, surprisingly. The effect of forgetfulness was not clearly shown. Very good candidates tackled the card in its class, that is, being a noun and NOT a verb. These candidates ventured beyond simple forgetfulness but also talked about Dementia as an aspect or part of forgetfulness. They gave examples like, “**My grandmother is so forgetful. She always asks us what our names are even if we have told her a minute ago.**” Such were very good candidates. When talking about ways on how to minimize forgetfulness, good candidates came up with solutions to curb forgetfulness such as keeping a diary, having sticky notes pinned on walls and on the refrigerator door as well as setting reminders on the phone.

Some examiners disadvantaged weak candidates, though, as they limited the topic to ‘not to remember’ instead of exploring forgetfulness as a habit or condition. This led to candidates focusing on trivial things such as forgetting a pen, a book or a test exercise book for the better part of the conversation. Such candidates did not fully comprehend that being forgetful can be a sickness.

Card C – Curiosity

This is the most challenging card for 2021. Most candidates failed to have synonyms of curiosity, let alone understanding what it entails. Others confused curiosity with being curious. Examiners are advised to help learners note the part of speech under which a topic falls. Examiners also failed to simplify the card, especially the last bullet: *the role society can play in providing sources of positive information for young people.*

Very good candidates talked about curiosity at length and made it clear that curiosity is of essence in any career path a person takes. They went on to talk about how philosophers thrive on curiosity for their success. Weak candidates however, confused curiosity with being too caring, for example parents

enquiring about their children's whereabouts. Some had no appropriate vocabulary thus relying on examiners to supply vocabulary to them. Examiners are advised to simplify the last bullet for candidates as again it proved to be a hurdle.

Card D – Spending Time Indoors

This was the average card and one card that touched on recent incidents; the lockdown, quarantine and curfew. Although average, it was the least favoured and attempted card yet it was relevant to candidates lives.

Good candidates were able to relate as they talked about staying indoors benefitting them in terms of having self-introspection, being able to bond with family members thus seeing their love, for medical reasons and escaping from life threatening situations. Weak candidates focused on general reasons such as '*staying indoors makes you become light in complexion*'. Some candidates couldn't even remember the recent COVID-19 restrictions and the curfew which forced people to be indoors. They could also not see the positive aspects of keeping indoors like benefitting academically.

Card E – Visitors

This was the second most popular card, suitable for all candidates. A majority of candidates given this card performed very well as it was relevant and hence most could relate to it. Good candidates recounted their good and bad experiences with visitors, talking about overstaying their welcome, taking over their space, being given better treatment by parents and being costly to take care of. Positives they talked about included gaining new information on other cultures thus being tolerant, revenue, living in peace with family since parents cannot yell due to presence of visitors. Weak candidates thought of visitors as tourists who come into the country, neglecting the relatives and acquaintances who visit occasionally in their homes.

Problems/Challenges Encountered

1. Attendance Register

- Failure to tick Script Submitted column. Please note that a candidate's audio track is equivalent to a script. Ensure you tick this column to confirm availability of a candidate's recording
- Failure to submit attendance register
- Failure to indicate with a tick in appropriate column for present and absent candidate
- Failure to fill in page totals in each page as instructed as well as signing the attendance register

2. MS 1

- This was the main problem as it was missing for most centres. Please check and enquire availability of MS1 with ECESWA before submitting
- Writing percentage scores instead of raw scores
- Erroneous/Inappropriate shading
- Shading 'M' (missing) instead of 'A' for absent candidates
- Failure to indicate and grade Absent for absent candidate- A- Absent, did not take exam; M- Missing candidate who sat for exam (marks missing, or recording not submitted, maybe)
- Using pen (ink) instead of HB pencil
- Failure to sign MS1
- Tampering with MS1 like switching candidates' numbers. Please contact ECESWA before doing anything of the sort

3. Summary Sheet

- Mixing up candidates in summary sheet instead of following the order of appearance in Attendance Register
- Failure to cross check if all candidates have been entered
- Inclusion of marks for absent candidates
- Failure to double check mark addition

- Writing marks in External Moderator column. This should be left blank

4. CD/Recordings

- Inaudible CD's
- Failure to label CD's thus resulting to unaccountability for all candidates in centres
- Having missing candidates in recording
- Mix up of candidates in recording
- Failure to press pause before handing of card and beginning of conversation
- Incomplete conversations in CD and submitting blank CD's
- Kindly let candidates be audible and do not dominate conversations
- Some conversations were too short either because the examiner did not assist the candidate or because recording was not completed
- Some conversations were longer than the stipulated time. Please refer to the Teachers' Notes.

Recommendations

1. Coordination of marking criteria for consistency in grading and in time taken in conducting the exam
2. Please kindly read notes given to examiners before exam is conducted to understand exam procedure
3. Sit down as a department 72 hours before exam and carefully study each card and simplify or create follow up questions to ask candidates
4. Please carefully check all paperwork before submitting. This is to help minimise unavailability of some paperwork
5. Always present candidates according to order of appearance on Attendance Register
6. Have one or two teachers listen to recordings to make sure all candidates have been included before submitting
7. Include well-labelled CDs. Remember to label all CDs on the CD cover and on the actual CD using an appropriate marker
8. Mark register correctly following given instructions
9. Large centres should have more than 1 examiner. The ratio is 1 examiner to 30 candidates. The whole department is to be involved in this exercise, not to leave all the work to 1 teacher.
10. Centres should have backups for all information on Paper 4. Do not delete or discard information quickly.