

Examiner's Report

TALENT (SKILLS) CAPSTONE EXAMINATION – JULY 2018

(SS1) EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS

SS1 – Effective Communication Skills of July 2018 question paper comprising three Sections as Section A, Section B and Section C, had 8 compulsory questions to test English grammar, reading, writing, vocabulary and summarizing.

General observations of the paper:

SECTION A

This part consisted of 03 questions.

Question No. 01

This question arranged to assess the interactive ability of the candidates by using the MCQ technique to select the most appropriate word phrase. It was attempted by almost all the candidates with satisfactory performance.

Suggestions for improvements:

The candidates should pay more attention on conversational texts / dialogues while they should be given dialogue-based activities. In addition it is recommended to read interviews in business magazines. Furthermore, they should be familiar with phrasal verbs and idioms which we use in day to day context.

Question No. 02

This question which was prepared to assess the candidates' ability to use the correct word class to complete a factual text of English was attempted by almost all the candidates. The technique used was filling in blanks. Many candidates had performed moderately well.

Suggestions for improvements:

The candidates should pay attention on formation of word classes with use of suffixes and further they should be thorough with English grammar. Much reading is needed.

Question No. 03

This question was set to test the candidates' ability to write a letter of inquiry which is used in various occasions in office environment. The technique used here was guided writing. Since all the points and guidance had been given, many candidates had attempted this question. The performance was at a satisfactory level.

Suggestions for improvements:

The candidates should pay much attention on writing to the point with use of relevant vocabulary and sentence patterns. They should avoid including unnecessary details to the letter. The candidates should practice writing business letters with the correct format.

Candidates should pay more attention on official documents such as memos, business letters, reports, etc. in order to familiarize with the language, formats, techniques, etc.

SECTION B

This part consisted of 03 questions.

Question No. 04

It was set to test the candidates' comprehensive competencies regarding reading, understanding and interpreting directly and indirectly the information stated in a descriptive text quoted from a central bank of Sri Lanka. The majority of the candidates had answered well for this question.

Suggestions for improvements:

Candidates should pay attention on reading technical texts in order to be familiar with the technical words in the business field, and also the candidates should read the questions several times before answering the questions to understand perfectly. Then only they can write a perfect answer. Annual reports, business pages of newspapers and magazines, etc. are recommended to be read.

Question No. 05

This question comprising two parts was arranged for measuring skills of candidates in relation to business writing.

Part A (allotted 10 marks)

It was set to assess the ability to write a speech on a given topic under free writing technique. Many candidates had attempted this question. Those who attempted had scored fairly well. However, some had written the speech as reading texts and the candidates were reluctant to use cohesive devices in their speeches.

Suggestions for improvements:

Candidates should learn how to begin and end a speech appropriately. When writing a speech, the candidates must use the conversational language to attract the audience. Furthermore, the facts and ideas must be organized in a sequential order and should be connected with suitable cohesive devices which would add elegance to the speech.

Part B (allotted 10 marks)

It was set to assess the ability of analytical writing and candidates were expected to analyze a pie chart and write a description. The technique was guided writing. Almost all the candidates had attempted this and most of them had scored fairly well. Some had tried to use proper words and phrases (comparative and superlative degrees) to compare and contrast the facts.

Suggestions for improvements:

The candidates should be given enough practice to interpret statistical data and put them in order logically into grammatically correct and meaningful sentences. The candidates should encourage to write the description using comparing and contrasting words in order to make the description smarter. They should be trained to write a small introduction as the starter to say what the chart illustrates. Furthermore, similar descriptions from newspapers, magazines and annual reports, etc. should be referred to as guidance.

Question No. 06

This question was set up to measure the candidates' ability in preparation of presentations. The question which was followed by the technique, guided writing had been attempted by many of them; but their performance was less satisfactory. Some had presented income statements, which was unnecessary and wasting time.

Suggestions for improvements:

As this was also a speech, the candidates should write this as a speech comparing and contrasting figures on the given details. The candidates should understand the question and thoroughly avoid presenting irrelevant details. However, the candidates should observe presentations of professionals in order to familiarize such works. The candidates should do extra reading such as business pages of newspapers, magazines and annual reports etc. while taking chances to listen to speeches made by professionals.

SECTION C

This part consisted of 02 questions.

Question No. 07

This question which was knowledge-based was designed to test the candidates' knowledge on business management and language skills. Almost all had attempted this but less number of candidates had answered satisfactorily. Some had written unnecessarily long answers. The technique used in this question was questioning and answering.

Suggestions for improvements:

The candidates should encourage to improve theoretical knowledge related to the management field. When following AAT exams, they should read relevant subject related books and should practice answering these types of questions. Reading business articles and magazines will be a great help for them.

Question No. 08

This question was set to assess the ability of candidates on summarizing. Majority of the candidates had attempted this question and only few candidates had summarized the passage well. Some candidates had quoted sentences and phrases from the passage to their answers. A considerable number of candidates had exceeded the word count when writing the summary.

Suggestions for improvements:

The candidates should learn the summarizing techniques first. The word limit is very important when writing a summary. Another important thing is that they should avoid quoting sentences and phrases to the answer, but understand the main idea of the given passage and write the summary using appropriate tenses. Further they can jot down the important points and arrange them in suitable sentences to write their own summaries.

Common suggestions for improvements:

- (1) Attention should be paid on spelling and punctuation marks when answering.
- (2) The candidates must pay their attention on grammatical accuracy and appropriateness of the answers to the questions.
- (3) The candidates are required to follow the given instructions thoroughly and read the questions as well.
- (4) The candidates should pay their attention on clarity and should write relevant question numbers correctly.
- (5) The candidates should use reading techniques like scanning, skimming and inferring when attempting to answer questions related to reading.
- (6) The candidates should practice more and more exercises with respective samples and should pay attention on required length of answers.
- (7) Candidates should improve good range of vocabulary.
- (8) Hand writing should be clear and legible.
- (9) The time management is critical in answering the paper.

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