

EXAMINER'S REPORT**TALENT SUBJECT - JULY 2023****(310) BUSINESS COMMUNICATION**

Business Communication – July 2023 Talent Subject paper with three sections as **Section A**, **Section B** and **Section C**, had 7 compulsory questions to test AAT students' English language abilities in various business contexts, in that English grammar, reading comprehension, report writing, writing with analytical skills, letter writing and vocabulary had been tested.

The performances of the candidates in July 2023 are as follows:

Section A

One compulsory Question with two parts (allotted 25 marks)

Question No. 01

(A) This question arranged to assess the interactive ability of the candidates in relation to business contexts by bringing out the most suitable answer from given 4 options. The MCQ technique was used in this question which was attempted by almost all the candidates and their performance was at a satisfactory level. However, It was noticed that some candidates had not answered well due to poor attention to the question and its instructions. Even though the candidates had been instructed to read all parts of the question before answering, they had not done so.

Suggestion for improvement:

The foremost advice to the candidates is that they must read and understand the questions and the instructions carefully before writing the answer and sometimes they might have to read the question several times. Further, the candidates should pay more attention on conversational type texts / dialogues specially in the business contexts 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 contexts.

(B) This question was also set to measure the communicative ability of the candidates in a context where they need to use English language in their day to day life. The technique used in this question is to fill in the blanks with exact words/ a phrase by understanding the natural and coherent flow of the conversation. It was somewhat easier for the candidates as a considerable number of them had answered well and almost all had attempted this question. So the opinion of the examiners was that it was a good question in the paper.

Suggestion for improvement:

The candidates should pay attention to a practical exposure to answer this type of question and the candidates are advised that they should practise a lot of dialogue based activities while learning grammar and vocabulary in English. It is recommended that they are to be more familiar with conversational texts.

- (C) This question was made to assess the candidates' grammar skills related to prepositions. All had attempted this and their performance was at a moderate level though some had answered in a very poor manner while some had answered all correct.

Suggestion for improvement:

The candidates should pay more attention on English grammar with doing more reading activities.

Section B

Five compulsory Questions (allotted 50 marks)

Question No. 02

This question which was prepared to assess the candidates' reading ability in English and many had understood the text. Almost all had attempted this and scored average marks. This question was integrated with writing as well for seeking for communicative skill of the candidates.

Suggestion for improvement:

The candidates should pay much more attention on reading various passages in order to grab different meanings according to the context. Candidates must pay attention on English grammar too. It is recommended to read various articles in newspapers and magazines. Vocabulary including phrasal verbs must be improved.

Question No. 03

This question was set to test the candidates' ability in understanding a text by fill in blanks with suitable connectives to bring out a meaningful text. It was a popular question among candidates and many had scored well.

Suggestion for improvement:

Candidates are advised to read materials such as reports, business pages of newspapers and magazines, etc. should practise activities related to complex sentences in order to get familiar with use of connectives. Furthermore, they should concentrate on learning grammar with a good range of vocabulary.

Question No. 04

This question was set to assess letter writing skills of the candidates by composing an email in a format of making a letter of apology to the customer. This was a technical type question as the letter should be in professional manner with all the given guidelines in order to tackle the unsatisfied customer. The performance of the candidates was in a little below the average level with some reasons. One is that they did not address all the points expected while neglecting the format of the email. Some sentences were fragments with limited vocabulary. There were some answers which had no appropriate beginnings and endings also. Successfully answered students were able to obtain more than average marks.

Suggestion for improvement:

The candidates are advised that they should do reference to the model answers to learn the formats and technical features of business letters. The contents must be appropriate to the points and they should learn to use of appropriate vocabulary. They should try to avoid fragments of sentences. The important thing is that candidates should follow the given guidelines and instructions to write a good answer.

Question No. 05

This question was set to assess the ability to analyze data and write a description of a bar chart extracted from the Central Bank of Sri Lanka. Almost all the candidates had tried this question and though the majority of them had understood and answered this at a moderate level, some had answered well by elaborating data sufficiently and making comparisons effectively.

However, it was noticed that there were some sentence fragments and frequent errors of grammar in answers and the some candidates were in confusion in analyzing data in correct manner and their presentation of facts were limited.

Suggestion for improvement:

Candidates are advised to read business articles in newspapers, company annual reports etc. Further, candidates should understand the contents of the data and which data to be taken out before writing the analysis. The candidates must be thorough with writing skills and grammar to produce a good answer for this type of a question. It is recommended that the candidates can improve their writing skills by reading the same type of texts.

Question No. 06

This question was set to assess the competency in use of relative pronouns to bring out a meaningful text. All had tried this question as it was seemingly easy for the candidates when answering. But it was noted that some felt that it was quite difficult in selecting proper relative pronouns. Therefore, the performance of candidates for this question could be rated as at a moderate level.

Suggestion for improvement:

The main advice the candidates are given is that they should be very good at grammar to answer this question. For that they have to be thorough with grammar by doing grammar-based activities very often while reading various types of texts. So they are recommended to read newspapers, stories, magazines, etc.

Section C

One compulsory Question (allotted 25 marks)

Question No. 07

(A) This question was set to assess the ability of writing a covering letter to be attached to a Curriculum Vitae in responding to a job notice. As the guideline was given to the contents of the letter, many candidates had attempted this question and had answered at a satisfactory level. However, it was noted that some candidates had written CVs instead of the covering letter though it was clearly mentioned in the question itself not to write the CV. In some answers it was found that there were unnecessary elaborations which had led to a complexity of answers.

Suggestion for improvement

It is recommended that candidates should read the question well with paying much attention to the text. It is recommended to follow sample covering letters and practise such writing activities.

(B) This question was set to assess two integrated skills namely English Communication and Marketing which are essentially needed for an AAT Technician to do in the field.

Majority of candidates had tried this question and scored moderately and among these answers there were some very good answers too in that they had used excellent word choice with proper technical words related to marketing.

Suggestions for improvement:

The candidates are advised to read business articles, newspapers, etc. in order to improve their technical knowledge and connected words.

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COMMON SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS:

- (1)** Pay attention on spelling and punctuation marks when answering.
- (2)** Pay attention on grammatical accuracy, appropriateness to the questions.
- (3)** Follow the given instructions thoroughly and read the questions understandably.
- (4)** Pay attention on clarity and should write relevant question numbers correctly.
- (5)** Use reading techniques like scanning, skimming and inferring when attempting to answer questions related to reading.
- (6)** Pay attention on required length of answers.
- (7)** Improve good range of vocabulary.
- (8)** Clear and legible hand writing.
- (9)** Manage time to answer the paper.
- (10)** Pay attention to the given guidelines.
- (11)** Practice more exercises include in the Self-study Text.

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