

# **Examiner's Report**

**December 2009 Session**

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**Paper 2**

**Business Communication and  
Organization and Management**

## **General Comments**

This is the second examination for Paper 2 under the New Qualification Framework.

To pass this paper, candidates should be able to demonstrate not only a basic understanding of the subject matter but more importantly the ability to apply this knowledge to everyday business communications.

The question paper for this examination is consistent with the requirements of the New Qualification Framework which focuses on three competency levels: awareness, knowledge and application. Each component of the syllabus is assigned a level of competence and this assignment helps the candidates to prepare for the examination as well as determining how much effort is required in studying each component. For example, a level three component requires the candidate to be able to apply that knowledge to a business scenario whilst a level 1 component only requires the candidate to be aware of the concept and the environment in which it may be applied.

Candidates' performance in this examination has improved as compared with the first examination. The main reason for candidates obtaining a failing grade was that they did not do well in the mandatory short answer questions in Section B. In particular most candidates failed Question B3 which focused on demonstrating an understanding of the characteristics of a service company. In addition many candidates were unable to answer the introductory questions associated with Questions C1 and C2.

When preparing for this paper, candidates are advised to both practise their reading and comprehension skills and develop a comprehensive understanding of the theories underpinning business communication and management. Additionally, candidates should focus on the "Organization and Business Management" sections of the key competencies (which were introduced in the New Qualification Framework) as these make up 33% of the overall competencies of Paper 2.

Candidates should also write legibly and layout their work in an easily readable format because script-markers also award marks for English writing proficiency and presentation.

### **Section A – 15 Multiple-choice Questions**

Questions in this section test candidates' knowledge of the basic concepts of business communication and focus on a level one awareness. Thus candidates should be able to demonstrate familiarity with the concept such as defining it or relating it to the role of an accounting technician.

This section was done very well with the majority of candidates obtaining a passing grade. This performance highlights that the candidates were achieving a level one awareness of the subject material.

### **Section B – 3 Compulsory Questions**

This section aimed at testing candidates' comprehension using short answer questions which focused on level 2 competencies. Candidates are expected to explain a concept in more detail and discriminate between its components parts.

The performance in this section varied greatly amongst the three compulsory questions. However in aggregate the candidate's performance was very poor.

The first question (B1) focused on the role that meetings play in business communication and management. This question was attempted by a high percentage of candidates with less than half achieving a passing grade.

The second question (B2) focused on defining the characteristics of an agenda as both a communication and a management tool. This question again was attempted by a very high percentage of candidates and their performance was better than Question B1.

The final question (B3) focused on an understanding of the characteristics of a service company. This question again was attempted by a very high percentage of candidates, however most of them failed in this question.

The relatively poor performance of the candidates in this section as compared to the very good performance in Section A (the multiple-choice questions) suggests that whilst candidates are able to memorise concepts, they are unable to express this knowledge in answering open-ended questions.

### **Section C – 3 Optional Questions**

This section aimed at testing candidates' ability to execute or implement knowledge using long answer questions which focused on level 3 competencies. Candidates are expected to apply their knowledge to solve problems in real world situations. The key to answering these questions is based on comprehending a given business situation and then applying the appropriate concepts to the answers. In addition, it is important that candidates can identify the key statements in the narrative and focus on their use in the answers.

A number of candidates failed to apply the relevant concepts in their answers and relied instead on general knowledge. Some candidates lost marks because they copied unrelated text into their answers rather than paraphrasing the required content. In addition many candidates were unable to answer the introductory questions associated with Questions C1 and C2.

#### **Question C1**

This question focused on the ability to comprehend and extract business information relating to the preparation of a collection letter. Almost all candidates attempted this question and were able to achieve a passing grade. Candidates were also given the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge by discussing any three characteristics of a collection letter as well as identifying the additional information found in a second collection letter.

The main reasons for loss of marks in the preparation of the collection letter were:

- Copied unnecessary information into the collection letter;
- Poor grammar and/or layout; and
- Not able to discuss the main characteristics of a collection letter.

#### **Question C2**

This question focused on the ability to comprehend a given business scenario and apply the communications theories discussed in the course to prepare a facsimile acknowledging the receipt of a customer order. The narrative also contained superfluous information to test the candidates' ability to comprehend only the relevant information needed to answer the question.

Candidates were also required to demonstrate their knowledge of the facsimile preparation processes and discuss the main characteristics of a facsimile.

The main reasons for loss of marks in the preparation of the facsimile were:

- Copied unnecessary information into the collection letter;
- Poor grammar and/or layout; and
- Not able to discuss the main characteristics of a facsimile.

Almost all candidates attempted this question, however just over half of them achieved a passing grade.

### **Question C3**

This question focused on an understanding of the characteristics of international business and the reasons and strategies companies use to expand their business operations internationally. Very few candidates attempted this question and less than half of them achieved a passing grade.

The low percentage of candidates selecting this question and their relatively poor performance were also consistent with the poor performance in the June examination for the business management question. This trend strongly suggests that candidates are still not focusing on the new “Organization and Business Management” sections of the key competencies for Paper 2.

**[ END OF EXAMINER’S REPORT ]**