

Paper 2 – Business Communication

Aim

This paper aims at assessing students' ability to apply a broad range of language skills to cope with a variety of communication activities related to the accounting field. A skills-based approach to the examination of communication is adopted.

This paper also aims at testing students' ability to communicate effectively and concisely within a business environment through ~~accepted~~ standard English.

Content

1. Introduction

Competence Required	Activity To Develop and Demonstrate Competence	Indicative Level
Understanding of the basic concepts of communication	• Define communication	2
	• Identify the communication process	2
	• Define the communication model: - sender - message - encoding - channel - receiver - decoding - feedback	2
	• Recognise <u>Describe</u> the importance of the you-attitude: - differentiate between the you-attitude and the I-attitude - describe how to develop the you-attitude	2

2. Communication for career advancement

Competence Required	Activity To Develop and Demonstrate Competence	Indicative Level
Ability to apply communication skills to career advancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Understand-Outline</u> the relationships between employers and employees 	1
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the employment process and understand the requirements from an employer's perspective 	1
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply communication skills to job searches and interviews 	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify methods for self-analysis and planning a career path 	1
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare an effective resume with a proper layout: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - format - information required - style - tone 	3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a covering letter with a strategic purpose 	3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline the information and material required for a job search: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reference - transcripts - portfolio - interview attire - organisational chart 	3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare other employment related letters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - thank-you letter - letter to decline an offer of a position - letter of resignation 	3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Understand-Describe</u> the needs and reasons for a reference letter 	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline the necessary information included in a reference letter 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare reference letters for subordinates / friends / colleagues 	3	

4. Language proficiency

Competence Required	Activity To Develop and Demonstrate Competence	Indicative Level
Understanding of the writing process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the writing process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - brainstorming - defining goals and audience - doing research - planning - drafting - revising - proof-reading 	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Be able to identify</u> and eliminate common problems in writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - wordiness - the overuse of passive sentences - excessive use of 's' and commas - choppiness - subjectivity - negativity - clichés - lack of variety 	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the four major techniques for emphasis in writing business documents 	3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use punctuation marks correctly 	3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write complete, grammatically correct sentences; avoid such problems as awkward construction, dangling modifiers, and misuse of words 	3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply unity and clarity in writing effective sentences 	3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Understand-Explain</u> the rules of paragraphing and use topic sentences in writing clear paragraphs 	3
Ability to prepare and compose business writing in a professional tone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate knowledge of business jargon and abbreviations • <u>Understand-Discuss</u> the advantages and disadvantages of presenting information from diagrams, charts, tables and graphs in writing • Use an appropriate tone: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The four Ps: personal / polite / positive / professional 	<p>2</p> <p><u>42</u></p> <p><u>23</u></p>

5. External written communication

Competence Required	Activity To Develop and Demonstrate Competence	Indicative Level
Ability to convey accurate and concrete information in written business communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss and distinguish the differences between the following business communication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - business letter - memo - agenda / minutes - report - proposal - e-mail - fax message • Demonstrate clear understanding of the definition and application of the various jargon in the above business correspondence 	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2</p>
Skill and ability to write different forms of external business communication effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand <u>Explain</u> the nature and features of business letters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enquiry letter - letter of request - letter placing an order - collection letter - sales and promotion letter - complaint letter - letter of recommendation - letter of appreciation - letter of congratulations - letter of condolence • Distinguish the tone and format of the above types of letters • Compose effective and concise written documents and correspondence • Be able to p<u>P</u>repare responses for the following business correspondence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enquiry letter - letter of request - letter placing an order - complaint letter 	<p style="text-align: center;">23</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3</p>

6. Internal written communication

Competence Required	Activity To Develop and Demonstrate Competence	Indicative Level
Skill and ability to write effective internal business communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Understand-Discuss</u> the nature and needs for writing the various kinds of documents for internal communication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - memorandum - agenda and minutes - report - proposal - notice 	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the degree of formality used in a memorandum 	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write clear and effective memorandums for routine enquiries, responses, policies, directives and indirect messages 	3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Be able to convey facts and d</u>Describe <u>facts and</u> incidents concisely and clearly 	2
Capability to produce short reports that are informative, accurate and timely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define the purpose of a report 	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinguish between the various kinds of reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - formal / informal report - long / short report - proposal - recommendation report - evaluation report 	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Understand-Outline</u> the report-writing process and explain the importance of objectivity in report writing 	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a complete report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identify the different styles of report and the features in a report - understand the pros and cons of including diagrams, pictures, data, tables in a report - discuss the importance of design and layout of a report - gather and select information and summarise relevant data from research material - evaluate the quality of the report 	3
Ability to apply appropriate style to short reports for internal communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the prefatory parts of a report in relation to length and formality 	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply conventional organisation in writing short reports, adapting this for writing reports such as staff, audit and technical reports 	3

7. Preparation for a meeting

Competence Required	Activity To Develop and Demonstrate Competence	Indicative Level
Understanding of the nature and requirements for a business meeting	• Explain the functions of a meeting / conference	2
	• Describe the process for calling a productive and effective meeting	2
	• Identify the features of a meeting: - people - purposes - venue	2
	• Prepare an agenda and minutes	3
	• Convey and e Consolidate materials into effective, concise presentation materials for the meeting	3
	• Describe the problems of a meeting: - group-think - hidden agenda - interpersonal conflicts	2
	• Evaluate the quality and effectiveness of a meeting	2

Examination Format:

Section A	10 – 25 multiple choice questions	20 marks
Section B	Not more than 5 short questions	20 marks
Section C	3 out of 4 questions	60 marks

		100 marks
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Essential reading:

<u>Author</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Publisher</u>
Heathman, G. and Lee, P. K. L.	Business Communication (2003 Edition)	HKIAAT (formerly HKAAT)
<u>Bovee, C.L. and Thill, J.V. Cullinan, M.</u>	<u>Excellence in Business Communication. (7th Edition)</u> Business Communication Principles and Processes (2nd Edition)	<u>Prentice Hall</u> <u>Harcourt Brace</u> <u>College</u>
Bilbow, G. T.	Business Writing for Hong Kong (3 rd Edition)	Longman

Additional reading:

<u>Author</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Publisher</u>
Guffey, M. E.	Business English (8 th Edition)	South-Western
Taylor, S.	Communication for Business: a practical approach (4 th Edition)	Longman
Brieger, N. and Sweeney, S.	The Language of Business English – Grammar and Functions (1st Edition)	Longman
Aldred, D. and Offord-Gray, C.	Written Business Communication: A Course for Accountants	HKICPA (formerly HKSA), Hong Kong University Press
Macintosh, D.	English for Business (6th Edition)	Book Marketing Ltd