

Chartered Institute: Executive Level- Communication & People Skills

Batch - 2 Final Examination held in December 2015.

Question (1) - Reading. Fill in the blanks with the given words. (5 marks)

- Only a few students were able to get full marks. Many students were able to get between marks 3 - 4.
- It was observed that the students had not fully understood the context or the vocabulary.

COMMENTS: This question is focused on the parts of speech, vocabulary and comprehension.

Candidates have to be taught the basic parts of speech and sentence pattern. And most importantly if they cannot understand the vocabulary, they should be able to find the correct word to fill in the blanks with the main parts of speech and other textual hints.

Thus, when preparing a closed text, it would be beneficial for students if more textual hints are provided. The teacher should draw the attention of the candidate to the clues to get the correct word. E.g. an article usually follows a noun or an adjective.

Punctuation marks would be another clue for candidate to decide on the use of the correct word.

Question (2) - Reading. Identifying the wrong word and correcting it. (5 marks)

- Again there were only a few candidates who scored the full marks.
- It seemed that many candidates have not identified the wrong word at all, and some had not corrected it.

COMMENTS: This question mainly focused on Grammar. It showed that many did not know their basic grammar, or else the context was so difficult for them to understand that they did not understand the obvious error. More practice in answering this type of tasks would help them. The candidates should be taught from the simple to the complex in identifying the wrong word.

If the candidate ignored the level of the vocabulary, the errors were simple basic grammatical errors.

Question (3) - Reading. Read the passage in Microsoft and answer the questions. (10 marks)

- Many candidates were able to obtain high marks for this question.
- The candidates were not given instructions to write the alphabet corresponding to their choice or the whole answer. While marking it was a little difficult. If the students were asked to write the alphabet corresponding to the correct answer, it would have been better.
- The most difficult question was the (viii) and (ix) as it gave the students to write the meaning of the pronouns.

COMMENTS: The candidates should have more experience in writing short answers, although they are expected to write short answers, they had not given short answers, but rather full answers and imbedded answers. These answers did not earn marks.

Although the passage was fairly easy and the content was authentic and closer the lives of the candidates, they were able to score marks.

Question (4) - Reading. Read the passage and answer the questions. (12 marks)

- A fair number of candidates had obtained marks in the range 10 - 12.
- The main question that candidates had found difficulty in answering was - (v).

- Serious grammatical errors that had a significant impact on the meaning was given half marks. (Insignificant grammar errors and spelling errors were not penalized).

COMMENTS: Although the passage was more complex than the passage given on question (3), the marks obtained by students show that many of the students have attempted this question very confidently.

Therefore it is suggested that the candidates should be exposed to many reading techniques in the classroom. The class should be well supervised, answers should be corrected in the class itself and feedback should be given individually. The candidates must practice the art of writing short answers.

In general, for reading questions (3) and (4), if explicit instructions had been given to write short answers, students would not have attempted to take the entire lot of sentences from the paragraphs in giving the answers.

Question (5) - Writing. Compare the information given on the two graphs and write about 150 - 200 words. (10 marks)

- The candidates had to explain the most salient points and also to compare the two graphs.
- No one obtained full marks and only a few exceeded the half mark range.
- The marks were allocated by awarding 5 marks for the content and 5 marks for the appropriate use of language, grammar and vocabulary.
- The number of words were also taken into consideration when giving marks to the content. Descriptions exceeding 250 were penalized.
- One of the salient points were the final finding of the candidate after looking at the two graphs.

- Almost all of the students had attempted to answer this question but it was noticed that the use of the required vocabulary was very low.
- Candidates who were able to write in a very formal manner with the use of appropriate vocabulary gained more marks and this is higher compared to student performances during the last exam held in September 2015.

COMMENTS: The candidates should be given more experience in answering this kind of questions in the classroom, even asking them to make an oral presentation will be very beneficial.

The number of words written should also be stressed as they should be able to give everything in a nut shell. Candidates should be more familiar with the technical jargon, the appropriate spelling and the correct use of them. Many candidates had used the word 'fluctuations', whereas the graphs did not show any.

Question (6) - Writing. A formal letter of apology. (8 marks)

- The points that should be included in the letter were given $\frac{1}{2}$ mark each and $\frac{1}{2}$ marks was added if the candidate had given the correct idea as this particular writing activity is a guided one.
- The format of the letter was given 1 mark and both block and semi-block had been used by candidates which was not penalized. 5 marks were allocated for the use of appropriate language.

COMMENTS: In order for candidates to gain higher marks they should be constantly guided by the teacher in the classroom. As this question is fairly common, extra effort should be put in making the students to obtain full marks for this question.

Practice of sentence patterns and the vocabulary needed to write formal letters should be taught in the classroom.

Question (7) - Writing. Read the passage and summarize the article. (10 marks)

- Many candidates were able to understand the context and all had written the summary when compared to student performances in the exam held in September 2015.
- 5 marks each were allocated both for Content and Style. In order to score full marks for Contents, the candidate should obtain at least 3 marks for the Style section.
- Almost all candidates had attempted but no one obtained full marks.

COMMENTS: The paragraph has the right relevant standard for the candidates. It seems that the candidates had been taught to write the summary in class but they lack practice.

Question (8) - Writing. Report Writing. (10 marks)

- 2 marks given for structure, 4 marks for Content and 4 marks for Language.

COMMENTS: Many candidates had not done the activity successfully and it showed that they needed more practice in answering this type of questions and the time given is also restricted for them to think and construct a report.

It showed that they did not know the structure or the use of the vocabulary. For e.g. some had started the report with the introduction followed by recommendations and then the findings. Many failed to get even 1 ½ marks for the structure.

Question (9) - Listening. (5 marks)

- Many candidates were successful in obtaining 3 - 4 marks. Some students were successful in obtaining 5 full marks.

COMMENTS: It was obvious that candidates were weak in their listening ability. When comparing the overall performance of candidates, it was observed that students who did well in Listening scored low marks in writing and reading questions while those who got high marks for writing and reading got low marks in listening.

Thus, all these skills should be equally stressed in the class. Candidates should be made to understand that listening is one of the main language skills that have to be improved.

Question (10) - Listening. (10 marks)

- Many candidates were able to get more than half marks for this question.
- Some of the candidates couldn't score marks because they messed up with the numbers although they have captured the correct word.
- Also, it seemed that the candidates had difficulty to figuring out which question required a three word answer.
- Candidates were not penalized for simple spelling mistakes that did not impede meaning as this was a listening question.

COMMENTS: Candidates should have more experience to listen and find required information to fill in the blanks. They should also be given the number of blanks according to the number of words required in the answer. In that way they would be able to listen to the number of words that they need to fill in the blanks and answer better.

There should not be two or three options for this type of listening activities. There should be only one answer for listening questions. Thus, the candidates would be able to listen to that particular word.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

Although instructions had been given on the paper asking candidates to write all the answers on the booklet, it seemed that some candidates had lost marks as they had not attached the question paper. A few candidates had written the answers on the question paper itself and had attached them to the answer booklet. May be the candidates could be instructed verbally to write all the answers on the booklet before the exam begins. The first part of the paper is Reading section, which gives a good motivational start for the candidates to proceed with the rest of the question paper.

By placing the Listening question at the end, the candidates are able to get into the mood of listening and successfully finding the right answer. Even if the candidates are late to come for the examination, they will be able to attempt this section.

Candidates should be given continuous guidance by the teacher in sentence patterns, vocabulary, word classes and basic grammatical patterns. Inferring, grasping the overall meaning of the text and interpreting the graphs should be practiced in class.