

**NATIONAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING INSTITUTE**

**TESTING DIVISION**

**SECRETARIAL EXAMINATIONS**

**CHIEF EXAMINERS REPORT**

**MAY 2010 SERIES**

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE

### TYPIST

#### GENERAL COMMENTS

The paper was standard and well balanced. Candidates performed better in the essay writing than they did in the previous session.

There was a high degree of creativity on the part of candidates and this should be encouraged. Candidates however had problems with mechanical accuracy (spelling, wrong amalgamations, misuse of capital letters etc).

#### GENERAL COMMENT ON INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS

##### Section A -Composition

Most candidates were not able to meet the number of words required. Most essays fell below the 300 words requirements. Words which should have been separated were joined together; those that should be written together were separated. Candidates misused capital letters. A lot of words were miss spelt.

##### Section B - Comprehension

Most candidates' quoted verbatim from the passage. Candidates were expected to answer the passage using their own words. However some candidates gave short relevant and well-constructed answers which earned them high marks.

##### Grammar

Performance in sentence analysis was not impressive. Candidates scored marks but not the majority of candidates.

## SENIOR TYPIST

### GENERAL IMPRESSION

The standard of the paper was within the scope of the syllabus. There was a slight improvement in the performance of candidates than the November 2009 session.

### COMMENTS ON CANDIDATES PERFORMANCE

#### SECTION A - COMPOSITION

1. Candidates were able to raise points on why arm robbery has become rampant and suggested remedies in solving the problem.
2. This question was not highly patronized by candidates. Only few candidates attempted this question, but their performance was encouraging
3. This was a highly patronized question. Candidates were expected to argue on whether boys need to help in the kitchen. Most of the candidates who attempted this question, could not give enough points to score high marks. Essential parts demanded by the question were left out.

#### SECTION B - COMPREHENSION

The passage was short and simple. Answers provided by some candidates suggested that they had little knowledge of answering comprehension questions. Some lifted parts of the passage to answer the question.

#### SECTION C - GRAMMAR

The performance of candidates in this section was satisfactory.

## STENOGRAPHER

### GENERAL IMPRESSION

There was a remarkable change in the performance of candidates as compared to that of the November 2009 session. The questions were within the scope and range of the syllabus.

### COMMENT ON INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS

#### SECTION A - COMPOSITION

1. This was a popular question. Most candidates attempted it. They were able to mention some of the factors that lead to insanitary conditions in their communities. They also suggested some remedies.
2. This was another popular question. Candidates did justice to the question by stating some of the benefits of mobile phones. They also mentioned some of the bad effects in the use of phones.
3. Only few candidates attempted this question. They performed creditably by stating what causes hooliganism among the youth.

#### SECTION B - COMPREHENSION

The passage was not lengthy. Candidates demonstrated their understanding of the questions. They exhibited their maturity in answering them.

#### SECTION C - GRAMMER

Most candidates excelled in this section

## SENIOR STENOGRAPHER

### GENERAL IMPRESSION

The questions set were within the expected standard for the grade. Satisfactory marks were scored by candidates.

### COMMENTS ON INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS

#### SECTION A - COMPOSITION

1. Candidates were able to use informed language, and were able to express themselves. They exhibited maturity in answering the question.
2. This was another popular question. Candidates were able to give balanced views on examination and why it should be used for assessment or abolished.
3. It was not a popular question. The few candidates who attempted this question did not perform well because they lacked facts.

#### SECTION B - COMPREHENSION

The performance of candidates was encouraging as they were able to express themselves well.

#### SECTION C - COMMUNICATION

Candidates' performance was very good. They exhibited maturity in answering the questions, reflecting their level as senior stenographers.

## STENOGRAPHER SECRETARY

### GENERAL IMPRESSION OF SCRIPTS MARKED

The standard of the paper for this session was comparable to the standard of those for the November 2009 session. However, the performance of candidates seemed to be lower than those of recent past.

### COMMENTS ON INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS

#### SECTION A - COMPOSITION

##### Question 1

Candidates were required to write a composition of about 450 words on the three topics given. This question on article writing was intended to test candidates' awareness of cyber fraud in the system. Candidates were expected to mention of the advantages the internet, identify the problems posed by abusers of the cyber or information super highway. The incidence of cyber users in hacking into other subscribers personal domains and fleecing them of their savings were also to be commented on. Of the number of candidates who attempted this question, just a few managed to give a passable account of themselves.

##### Question 2

This question tested candidates views on what should be done about the young and old dying unnecessarily from preventable diseases. Many candidates failed to impress in their attempts to answer. Some could not easily determine which diseases are regarded as preventable. Candidates could not offer good explanation as to how diseases could be prevented rather than cured. The issues of healthy environment, sanitary lifestyles, habits and ignorance were missed by most candidates.

##### Question 3

The question, minimizing waste of water in the home was a popular one. However, several candidates were unable to come up with valid points to explain the ways to stem water waste. The issues of leaking taps, the misuse of treated water, the activities of small-scale farmers along trunk pipelines, the use of outmoded water closet systems that required volumes of water to run and the use of treated water for gardening and other domestic needs should not have missed the attention of candidates.

#### SECTION B - COMPREHENSION

Even though the passage was short and did not contain any unfamiliar words and expression, it was rather technical, intended to relate to candidates being conversant with the internet. Surprisingly, candidates performed abysmally in this section. Candidates were unable to describe the simple process of the Google search engine that combs through index servers, picks relevant items, arranges these items according to

their popularity and then displays the results. Largely most candidates reproduced verbatim from the passage in their attempt to answer the questions. This practice points to the fact that candidates failed woefully to understand and interpret the passage.

### **SECTION C - COMMUNICATION**

A number of candidates failed to read the instruction that said “Attempt both question in this section”. They ended up answering just one question instead of the two.

## PRIVATE SECRETARY

### GENERAL IMPRESSION OF SCRIPTS MARKED

The paper for the May 2010 was standard just as that of the November 2009. However, the performance of candidates was average.

#### Question 1

Candidates were required to prepare a brief report. It was expected that candidates should include the title of the report, date, subject matter, findings, recommendation, name and designation of person filing the report. Most candidates prepared drafts that were simply "an apology of a report".

#### Question 2

This question was a formal letter to a firm acknowledging items returned for reasons of non-standard and non specifications. A good number of candidates answered the question well and as such scored good marks. Some gave twist to the requirement and rather wrote letters purported to return the items to the opposite end.

### AREAS OF CANDIDATES' STRENGTH

- i. Some candidates who ensured that the breadth of their preparation was marked by a sound understanding of the essay topics scored good marks.
- ii. Candidates did organize their work in a more acceptable manner.

### AREAS OF CANDIDATES' WEAKNESSES

- i. Poor spelling continues to be the bane of most candidates. A few examples are as follows;  
"apooling" for *appalling*  
"soo" for *so*  
"befor" for *before*  
"recieve" for *receive*
- ii. Faulty expressions are common place.  
A few of examples are: "first of almost" instead of first and foremost  
"Lack of unemployment" instead of lack of employment  
"If they are not there, it wouldn't have happened" instead of if they were there, it would not happen.
- iii. Some essays were rather repetitious and too winding. The overuse of "so" therefore" and "and", etc was too evident.
- iv. Generally, candidates failed to give headings or titles to the essays they wrote and that was unacceptable.

### SUGGESTED REMEDIES/ RECOMMENDATIONS

It has been reported time and again in our previous reports and we still see the need to report again that teachers of English should step up their efforts in the bid to help students in



grammar, usage and mechanics. The standard is declining so fast and if care is not taken good English Language will soon suffer the fate of “the vanishing prairie dog”.

## PRIVATE SECRETARY

### GENERAL PAPER

#### GENERAL IMPRESSION OF SCRIPTS MARKED

This session’s general paper was of the same standard as those for November 2009. However, the performance of candidates this session seemed to be slightly lower than those of the recent past.

#### COMMENTS ON INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS

Candidates were required to answer any five (5) questions out of the total of eight (8) set of questions.

##### Question 1

The question on why government should invest in education was not properly answered. Many candidates failed to see the benefits of education in the development of the nation. The need to equip the manpower base with skills, the technology transfer and the social development agenda of the government through education were overlooked.

##### Question 2

Candidates were expected to explain the term **Rights** and to give examples of these rights of the individual as enshrined in the constitution. Candidates who attempted this question merely listed some of these rights without making any further attempt to explain them. Explaining the political, legal, social, economic and natural rights should not have eluded candidates who attempted this topic.

##### Question 3

This question on the role of the press was not properly answered. Dissemination of information, checking and exposing corruption and other bad deeds, educating the public, keeping the government on its toes etc. should have been considered as some of the roles played by the press in the dispensation.

##### Question 4

This question tested candidates’ on their understanding of the qualities and duties of a good leader. Most candidates who answered it came up with good points to explain their understanding. However, few were able to suggest the duties of a good leader.

##### Question 5

The question tested candidates, understanding of festivals and their values. This was a highly patronised question and candidates answered it fairly well.

##### Question 6

This question on “**streetism**” was well answered. Candidates attributed the presence of children on the streets to poverty, broken-homes, lack of proper parental control, loss of parents and a few others. However, a few made mention of the effects of “**streetism**” on the children and society.

### Question 7

This question tested candidates on the issue of bush fires in some parts of the country. Candidates who answered this question were able to give a good number of causes to the problem including the activities of farmers, hunters and palm-wine tappers. The mention of Fulani cattlemen, cowherds and others especially in the savannah stretch was omitted.

### Question 8

This question on teenage pregnancy was a popular one. Candidates were able to suggest reasonable causes including lack of sex education, peer influence, the use of drugs and alcohol, lack of parental control etc. However, some candidates overlooked and failed to suggest ways to solve the problems.

### **Areas of Candidate's Strength**

Many candidates exhibited sound knowledge of the subject matter. A good number of candidates organized their answers in a presentable manner.

### **Areas of Candidates' Weakness**

Candidates displayed poor communication skills. Spelling errors, literal translation from the local expression did not help to make their answers intelligible. Some candidates repeated the same points over and over again. A small proportion of the candidates showed exceptional skills in English Language and understanding of the questions.

### **OTHER COMMENTS**

- i) Candidates should desist from merely listing their points. There is the need to explain each point at a time.
- ii) Handwriting poses a challenge to many candidates. Some were not able to make good marks just because their answers were simply illegible.

The poor performance may be attributed to the following:

- a. Insufficient time for preparation.
- b. Poor command and understanding of the English Language.
- c. Lack of understanding of the questions.
- d. Insufficient facts or points on the topic
- e. Bad handwriting
- f. Wrong punctuations
- g. Poor spellings
- h. Wrong tenses
- i. Misuse of capital letters

### **CONCLUSION**

A careful look at the results of the various grades revealed that most candidates either did not attend any classes or did not take lessons seriously enough to enable them pass especially Typist, Senior Typist and Stenographer.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Candidates should in their time of preparation, read widely and keep abreast of current events.

Candidates who avail themselves of social studies and other related activities are noted to perform well in the general paper. Students must be taught on how to answer the questions.

## OFFICE PROCEDURES

### TYPIST

#### GENERAL IMPRESSION OF SCRIPTS MARKED

The standard of the paper was within the scope of the syllabus. The performance of candidates was average.

#### COMMENTS ON INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS

##### Question 1

Candidates were expected to give five advantages of written communication and explain five provisions of a partnership contract.

Most candidates were able to answer the first part leaving the second part unanswered.

##### Question 2

This question was centred on advantages of a limited liability company and some information that could be obtained from a memorandum of association. Unfortunately, candidates could only answer the second part leaving the first part unanswered.

##### Question 3

Candidates were asked to answer questions on advantages of an open plan office and give advantages that customers derive from having a bank account. Both questions were properly answered and was very impressive. Candidates demonstrated a greater understanding of the issues related to having an account.

##### Question 4

This question asked candidates to write short notes on the following;

- i) Rubber stamp
- ii) Jogger
- iii) Folding machine
- iv) Trolley's
- v) Staple machine

And explain the following;

- i) Purchase day book
- ii) Sales day book
- iii) Return inwards books
- iv) Cash book

However, candidates could not explain rubber stamp and a stapling machine but answered the part "B" very well.

## SENIOR TYPIST

### GENERAL IMPRESSION OF SCRIPTS MARKED

The standard of the paper was within the scope of the syllabus. The performance of candidates was average. Spelling mistakes were however abundant.

### COMMENTS ON INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS

#### Question 1a

Most candidates did understand this question very well as a lot did not performed well.

#### Question 1b

This was also well handled.

#### Question 2a

This was well understood and it was well answered.

#### Question 2b

It was not understood as most were confused with all situations. Receiving a visitor without an appointment needs to be understood well. Candidates be advised to read questions more carefully questions before tackling them; again the problem of language comes into focus.

#### Question 3a

Most candidates who attempted this question performed above average. The only problem was that some did not know how to arrange facts on compare and contrast.

Question 3b. This was also well answered despite some few deviations especially on the National Insurance.

#### Question 4a

There were a lot of misconceptions here with some candidates veering into areas that did not even concern stocktaking. The topic needs to be treated very well and if possible with a visit to a stores department in the school or any organization.

#### Question 4b

Though a very good question, candidates lacked ideas on it. They couldn't differentiate between the government and an individual.

#### Question 4c

It was adequately answered.

## STENOGRAPHER

### GENERAL IMPRESSION OF SCRIPTS MARKED

The general performance of candidates was satisfactory.

### COMMENTS ON INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS

#### Question 1

This question required students to provide answers to the case study. Most candidates provided answers that reflected the demands of the case study.

#### Question 2

This was a popular question. Candidates were expected to explain the term “open office” and mention and explain five office equipment used in handling outgoing mails. Most of them who attempted it scored very good marks.

#### Question 3

Candidates were asked to give five effects or consequences of poor filing system and explain five features of a partnership firm.

Candidates failed to answer these questions thoroughly as they were required to do so. However candidates performed fairly well at the (B) part of the question.

#### Question 4

Candidates were required to distinguish between a private limited liability company and a public limited liability company. This was very well answered by most candidates as they were able to provide the major difference in both companies.

#### Question 5

Candidates were asked to answer the following;

- a) Give eight external sources from which office workers are recruited,
- b) Give six items to be purchased with petty cash
- c) Define two column cash book

Both questions B and C were well answered. However, candidate could not enumerate all the eight sources of external recruitment required from them.

## SENIOR STENOGRAPHER

### GENERAL IMPRESSION OF SCRIPTS MARKED

The standard of the paper was within the scope of the syllabus. There was a slight improvement in the performance of candidates than the November 2009 session.

### COMMENTS ON INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS

#### Question 1

Candidates were asked to write a memorandum to the receptionist of a company explaining her function as a receptionist. Almost all the candidates who attempted this question answered the question very well. They demonstrated a greater understanding of writing memos which were very impressive that could influence their output in writing memos at the office.

#### Question 2

Candidates were to explain five purposes of organizational chart and state five objectives of the employers to their employees. Both questions were poorly answered. Candidates were expected to provide organizational chart depicting organizational communication lines, the organizational structure, various departments and sections etc.

On the other hand, employers are obliged to pay agreed remuneration, provide training to employees, provide appropriate communication channels, conducive working environment, health and safety among others.

#### Question 3

Candidates were asked to explain banking terms such as;

Current account

Savings account

Bank account

Fixed deposit

Standing order

Candidates were able to answer the questions demonstrating a good understanding of the subject matter.

#### Question 4

This question also required candidates to explain the following terms;

i) Pay roll

ii) Pay slip

iii) Petty cash system

iv) Imprest system

v) Petty cash voucher

and explain the various parties to a cheque.

Candidates performed poorly in both parts.

#### Question 5

Candidates were asked again to write a memo to the manager explaining why a computer must be purchased for a department.

This was thoroughly answered by candidates. They exhibited massive understanding of the need to purchase a computer and the use of it.

#### Question 6

Candidates were asked to write on motivational system and explain the following;

- i) Piece rate
- ii) Time rate
- iii) Trolleys
- iv) Guillotine machine
- v) Stapler

Candidates could not answer both questions. It was obvious candidates were completely naive about the topics.

#### Question 7

Candidates were asked to state the purpose of interview and benefits of a typing pool. Candidates had a fair knowledge on the topics and exhibited quality output.

#### Question 8

The question was on insurance terms such as;

- i) Utmost good faith
- ii) Indemnity
- iii) Premium
- iv) Cover note
- v) Endowment policy

They were also to state some sources of finance for a sole trader.

This was a popular question and candidates gave out their best in demonstrating the knowledge on the topics. Answers displayed were deserving as senior stenographers.



## STENOGRAPHER SECRETARY

### GENERAL IMPRESSION OF SCRIPTS MARKED

The standard of the paper was within the scope of the syllabus. Candidates performance was average.

### COMMENTS ON INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS

#### Question 1

This contained a case study which students poorly answered. They failed to relate to the concepts involved.

#### Question 2

Candidates were asked to explain the following terms.

- i) Yellow pages
- ii) Dialing instruction booklets
- iii) Post office guide
- iv) Pink pages
- v) Blue pages

and state some contributory factors that may lead to wastage of stationery at the office.

The part A of question was not well answered. Many of the candidates did not seem to know what those terms mean. But in the part B candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the questions.

#### Question 3

Candidates were asked to explain some sources of finance for a partnership business and state some ingredients that make a valid contract.

The first part of the question was well answered. However, the second part could not be answered well.

#### Question 4

Candidates were tasked to state and explain business documents that will be used between an organization and a selling firm in procuring a computer and also state the major parties to a valid cheque.

Candidates demonstrated a high sense of understanding of the questions and produced excellent answers.

#### Question 5

Candidates were asked to write on the following

- i) MS Word
- ii) MS Power Point
- iii) MS Office Outlook

iv) MS Excel

They were also asked to state some qualities of an effective filing system.

Candidates demonstrated a good knowledge of the question and produced good answers and scored high marks.

Question 6

Candidates were asked to state some characteristics of relationship that should exist between a supervisor and a subordinate. relationship. Candidates were also asked to define indexing.

Candidates could not answer the first part but managed to explain the second part of the question.

Question 7

Candidates were asked to write short notes on the following.

- i. The company secretary
- ii. The personnel manager
- iii. Sales department

Candidates were asked to state eight (8) important facts to consider when writing a cheque. Candidates were able to answer all the questions in a matured way and scored very high marks

Question 8

Candidates were asked to explain what stock control is and state some purposes of stock control.

Candidates understood the question and answered them well.

## PRIVATE SECRETARY

### GENERAL IMPRESSION OF SCRIPTS MARKED

### COMMENTS ON INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS

#### Question 1

This was a case study which candidates were required to answer in several parts. Only a few performed well.

#### Question 2

Candidates were asked to write short notes on the following:

- i) Executive committee
- ii) Sub committee
- iii) Adhoc committee
- iv) Statutory committee
- v) Advisory committee

This was well answered by candidates and exhibited maturity and a high sense of understanding of the questions.

#### Question 3

The question was centered on writing a memorandum advising a manager to either purchase a spirit duplicating machine or a stencil duplicating machine for his company and giving reasons for the choice of machine.

Candidates showed a high sense of understanding of the question. They were able to write good memos and showed maturity as private secretaries.

#### Question 4

Candidates were asked to mention and explain five principles on how insurance operates and also to explain the following terms

- i) Crossed cheque
- ii) Open cheque
- iii) Stale cheque
- iv) Dishonoured cheque
- v) Bearer cheque

Both questions were answered with good understanding and scored very high marks.

#### Question 5

Candidates were asked to answer questions on the difference between public limited liability and co-operative society. They were also asked to state the differences between a pie chart and a bar chart. Candidates could not answer both questions. They did not have knowledge of the above topics.

#### Question 6

Candidates were to state the functions of the state bank and explain five duties of a chairman of a meeting.

Candidates could not answer the functions of a state bank. They seemed not to have any idea about it but managed to explain functions of a chairman of a meeting.

### AREAS OF CANDIDATES STRENGTH

Some candidates had good command over the language. They made good idiomatic expression and figures of speech. They also had good knowledge of the subject matter. Good idiomatic expressions, correct jargons and figures of speech were also used. Most candidates demonstrated their understanding of the demands for the essay questions. They wrote with correct tenses.

They were also able to organize the answers in the correct order. Some had very clear handwriting. The right tenses were also used in answering the comprehension passage. The performance of candidates in section C in all the levels was commendable.

### AREAS OF CANDIDATES WEAKNESS

- Most candidates committed the fundamental mistakes of grammatical errors. In additions, the following errors were detected:
- Poor Spelling
- Bad handwriting and lack of clarity of work
- Wrong punctuations
- Wrong amalgamation of words
- Wrong tenses
- Misuse of capital letters
- Dirty work owing to cancellation

Candidates lost a lot of marks due to the following:

**Lack of good communication skills**

**Misuse of capital letters**

### SUGGESTED REMEDIES

- Students should be taught to improve their handwriting skills.
- Teachers are advised to have grammar drills with students.
- Students must read on current issues and trends of the economy.
- Candidates must prepare well before taking the examinations.
- Students should be taught to improve their handwriting skills
- Students must read a lot on their own.
- Students should be taught to spell correctly by way of assigning dictation or spelling in class.

### RECOMMENDATION

- Teachers should intensify the teaching of grammar at all levels.
- There is the need to teach candidates the need to read instructions (Rubrics) well before they attempt any question
- Teachers should always insist on the required length of words for composition during class exercises.

## TYPEWRITING

### TYPIST

#### GENERAL IMPRESSION

The standard of the May 2010 Typist Typewriting questions was comparable to that of the November 2009 sessions. On the whole, candidates' performance was not too impressive.

#### COMMENTS ON INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS

##### Question 1 - Speed and Accuracy

Almost all candidates did not complete the Speed and Accuracy Test due to lack of speed. Those who completed scored very low marks because of poor erasure and overtyping.

##### Question 2 - Display

The question was to be typed on A4 plain paper in single line spacing with a clear line space between items and to retain layout. The top portion of the work was to be typed in double line spacing with leader dots. Some of the candidates failed to type in double line spacing with the leader dots. Some displayed the passage on A5 portrait paper with so many omissions. Some candidates failed to type the main heading in Spaced Capitals.

##### Question 3 - Letter and an Envelope

Candidates were instructed to type on A4 Headed Paper. Use the Blocked style and address an Envelope. Candidates failed to type on A4 headed paper; the reference number was wrongly placed. The date was typed after the Addresses, Address and the Hyphens in the Main Heading was changed to Dashes.

The heading was not typed in Capitals and the 'transposition' instructions were not properly followed. Some candidates rendered the date in figures. Some candidates addressing the Envelope used their own addresses and some added the reference number of the letter.

##### Question 4 - Manuscript

Candidates were instructed to type A4 Plain paper in Single Lines Spacing with double line spacing between the paragraphs. Majority of the candidates typed in double line spacing. Some candidates failed to centre main heading and in capitals. However, most candidates scored good marks.

##### Question 5 - Memorandum

Candidates were instructed to type on A4 Memorandum Form. Some candidates failed to use the A4 Memorandum Form and some typed 'July' instead of 'June' as the date. The balloon instructions were ignored and the first paragraph was typed instead of the second paragraph in the balloon. Some omitted the last paragraph.

##### Question 6 - Tabulation

Candidates were instructed to type on A4 plain paper in double line spacing and to rule by means of the underscore. The style was inconsistent - mixed blocked and centred styles. The vertical line was poorly ruled - they were either too long or too short. Figures were not

properly aligned while some words were omitted. The transposition at the top was wrongly rendered.

## SENIOR TYPIST

### GENERAL IMPRESSION

The standard of the paper compares favourably with previous examinations. The general performance has not improved.

### COMMENTS ON INDIVIDUAL QUESTION

#### Question 1 - Speed and Accuracy

Only few candidates were able to complete the speed test. Unfortunately, some candidates only typed a few lines of the passage whilst others managed to produce about half with so many errors.

#### Question 2 - Memorandum

Most candidates typed 'it' instead of 'if' in the second paragraph. The tabular work was not properly displayed - names and positions were typed in double line spacing, thus their current postings were misplaced. Some candidates also typed '**Angust**' instead of 'August' in the last paragraph.

#### Question 3 - Notice

Some candidates did not expand the abbreviation 'Coy'. 'Coy' is the abbreviated form of company. A number of candidates also did not leave the instructed 3 clear line spaces at the last part of the notice.

#### Question 4 - Letter and Envelope

This question was tackled with a lot of typographical errors and omissions whilst others did not complete the work.

#### Question 5 - Manuscript

Some candidates did not follow the instruction of changing number to Roman Numerals whilst others used the Roman Numerals wrongly. Quite a number of candidates did not complete the manuscript. A few typed 'INSERT "A" HERE' as in the question which goes to show that most candidates were not prepared for the examination.

#### Question 6 - Tabulation

Some candidates did not align the figures in the tabular work thus presentation was not much to be desired, coupled with overtyping.

## STENOGRAPHER

### GENERAL IMPRESSIONS

The standard of this question compares favourably with the previous examinations. The performance of candidates was not impressive. There were a lot of typographical errors and over typing.

### COMMENTS ON INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS

#### Question 1 -Speed and Accuracy

Few candidates completed the speed work with quite a number of errors, overtyping, wrong margins, wrong line spacing and skipping of words.

#### Question 2 - Display Work

This question was carelessly typed. Some candidates ignored the instruction to centre vertically and each line horizontally. Some failed to type in double line spacing and ignored the marginal instructions.

#### Question 3 - Advert

Most of the candidates ignored the Rubric instructions to type in single line spacing with double line between paragraphs. Also they ignored the marginal instructions. Some attempted to expand ECOWAS but it was a total flop.

#### Question 4 - Letter and Envelope

Majority of the candidates did not use "Date as postmark" for the date. Some typed the work in double line spacing, whilst others ignored the instructions to type the sub-paragraphs 1-3 as an Inset Matter.

#### Question 5 - Manuscripts

Some candidates could not interpret the marginal instruction 'in full'. They inserted 'in full' as part of the sentence in the passage. They ignored quite a number of the marginal instructions e.g. LC, UC, Caps and run on. The dash sign was interpreted as 'one plus one'. The paragraph sign was also ignored as so as the Spaced Capitals.

#### Question 6 - Tabulation

Most candidates mixed the styles - Blocked and Centred. They could not arrange the figures with units under tenths. Besides some ruled both the vertical and horizontal lines with pencil.



## SENIOR STENOGRAPHER

### GENERAL IMPRESSIONS

The standard of the question was within the expected range. There was an improvement in candidates' performance for May 2010 exams.

### COMMENTS ON INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS

#### Question 1 - Speed and Accuracy

As usual, most candidates did not do well. Even though some of them completed typing the speed work, there were a lot of typographical errors.

#### Question 2 - Memorandum

Most candidates scored good marks for this question. Some candidates were inconsistent in their paragraphing. Line spacing was poorly done and some candidates ruled a line after the preprinted portion of the form. Some failed to type the Main Heading at its proper place.

#### Question 3 - Notice

Some candidates failed to type the notice in single line spacing and to retain layout. The three clear line spaces instructions were ignored. Re-arrangement in double line spacing was not properly done.

#### Question 4 - Letter and Envelope

Some candidates failed to type the letter in single line spacing. They also typed the addressee's address in double line spacing. The punctuation in the addressee's address was inconsistent. Some of the marginal instructions were not properly done. There were quite a number of typographical errors, poor erasures, overtyping and omissions.

#### Question 5 - Reprography - Manuscript

Some candidates used broken lines for the underscore of the heading 'Reprography'. Some ignore the marginal instruction. Few candidates failed to type the last but one paragraph.

#### Question 6 - Tabulation

Some candidates typed the columnar headings too close to the upper horizontal ruling and too low sitting on lower horizontal ruling. Some of them used mixed styles - Blocked and Centre. There were omissions of lines and overtyping.

## STENOGRAPHER SECRETARY

### GENERAL IMPRESSION

The questions were of the required standard. The performance was very poor.

### COMMENTS ON INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS

#### Question 1 - speed and accuracy

Majority of the candidates were able to score some marks for the speed and accuracy work. All the same a good number were not able to complete and there were a lot of omissions.

#### Question 2 - letter

Most of the candidates were not able to print on A4 headed paper. The date of the examination was used instead of the 'Date as postmark'. The reference number did not align with the pre-printed portion of the headed paper. Some omitted the addressee's address. The style of the letter was inconsistent - mixture of blocked and indented style. Some candidates ignore the instructions to change sub-paragraphs 1-7 to Roman Numerals. Some candidates were not able to complete the letter.

#### Question 3 - memorandum

Majority of the candidates failed to print the memorandum on the Memorandum Form. Some candidates omitted parts of the memorandum. There were quite a number of typographical errors.

#### Question 4 - invoice

Some of the candidates failed to retain the layout of this question. They failed to type in single line spacing with double line spacing between items. Some failed to expand abbreviations. The ruling was not properly done. Alignment of figures was improper. There were typographical errors and omissions.

#### Question 5 - manuscript

Candidates were instructed to print on A4 plain paper and to type in double line spacing. Though candidates were able to follow instructions some of them were not able to finish. There were a lot of omissions and typographical errors.

#### Question 6 - tabulation

Some candidates did not type in double line spacing. The style was inconsistent - mixture of blocked and centred. Improper alignment of figures. There were omissions and typographical errors.

## PRIVATE SECRETARY

### General Impressions

The questions were of the required standard. The performance was better than previous years.

### Question 1 - Speed And Accuracy

Majority of the candidates were able to score good marks. Very impressive performance was exhibited.

### Question 2 - Preparation of a Form

This was a straight forward question. Few candidates were not able to score good marks. Their weaknesses were as follows:

- i) Incorrect line spacing
- ii) Layout was not properly done
- iii) Space between words incorrect
- iv) Incorrect capitalization

### Question 3 - Woodland Studies

Weakness detected on this question was as follows:

- i) Omission of Heading
- ii) Candidates failed to type in double line spacing between items
- iii) Candidates failed to expand abbreviations

### Question 4 - Letter

Some candidates typed the Main Heading of letter below the addressee's address before the Salutation. Candidates failed to type the paragraph headings in capitals. Some failed to block the letter. Re-arrangement not properly rendered. Some failed to expand abbreviations and capitalization improperly done. Unfortunately candidates failed to design the headed paper. Some in designing omitted the last line of the design.

### Question 5 - Memorandum

Some candidates typed the word 'Heading' before the Main Heading. Some candidates failed to print on A4 Memorandum Form. Few candidates ignored some of the marginal instructions. Few candidates did not complete the work.

### Question 6 - Tabulation

Candidates were instructed to type on an A4 plain paper, rule by means of the underscore and to retain layout and ornamental border. Almost all candidates followed this instruction. Only few candidates failed to align figures and also design with ornamental border.

## SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' WEAKNESSES

1. Failure to follow instructions
2. Overtyping
3. Improper indentation of paragraphs
4. Omission of dates or rendering date in figures
5. Poor correction of errors
6. Typographical errors

7. Inconsistent line spacing
8. Vertical and horizontal alignment of figures and words
9. Hanging and dropping letters
10. Wrong spacing between and within words
11. General poor display of material
12. Lack of speed
13. Omission of words and punctuations
14. Spaced caps typed instead of closed caps and vice versa

### **RECOMMENDATIONS/CONCLUSION**

We conclude and recommend the following

- a) Sufficient time should be devoted to typewriting drills
- b) Drills must be well chosen to have great impact on speed development, accuracy and production work.
- c) Errors must be corrected so that no traces of the previous letters could be seen.
- d) The 10 minutes reading time must be taken seriously. Candidates are reminded that during this period, they should CAREFULLY READ THROUGH THE QUESTIONS TO UNDERSTAND ALL THE INSTRUCTIONS.
- e) Candidates must be advised to get sufficient preparation before registering for the various levels of the examination.

## **SHORTHAND**

### **GENERAL IMPRESSION**

All the passages had the same duration of two and a half (2½) minutes. They were set according to the standard prescribed by the syllabus.

Generally, majority of the candidates appeared to have typed the passage. The quality of the transcription was very high but some also could not transcribe their own outlines which was very disappointing.

### **STENOGRAPHER**

Majority of the candidates performed very well. However, the shorthand notes which accompanied some of the scripts were either incomplete to cover the entire passage and some also did not transcribe anything at all.

### **SENIOR STENOGRAPHER**

Most candidates performed poorly. Most of them could not transcribe their own outlines which have been written by them.

### **STENOGRAPHER SECRETARY**

Most candidates wrote shorthand outlines but only few candidates attempted the transcription. The inference could be that they did not have enough practice before taken the examination.

### **PRIVATE SECRETARY**

The general output at this level was bad shorthand notes leading to poor performance. In most cases, the transcription did not tally very well with the notes. Some candidates decided to fall on their colleagues for help leading to very poor passages.

### **AREAS OF CANDIDATES STRENGTH**

A small proportion of the candidates showed exceptional skills in English Language and shorthand outlines.

### **AREAS OF CANDIDATES WEAKNESS**

A large percentage of the candidates were very weak in spellings and grammar. They could not write any good shorthand notes either.

The poor performance of candidates may be attributed to the following:

- a. Insufficient time for preparation.
- b. Poor command and understanding of the English Language.
- c. In some cases insufficient time for transcription or lack of speed on the part of candidates.
- d. Bad shorthand notes.

### **CONCLUSION**

A careful look at the results of the various grades revealed that most candidates either did not attend classes or did not take lessons seriously enough to enable them pass. Some too relied on their friends' transcription which they copied but could not write the shorthand notes.

## RECOMMENDATION

- a. Students preparing for the first speed (Stenographer) should be trained for at least 18 months before writing the exam. At this stage emphasis should be on the Principles especially the need for positional writing and the learning of the short forms.
- b. Intensive review classes should be organized for at least four (4) months to fully prepare candidates for the higher speeds.
- c. Heads of Secretarial Institutions should see to the readiness of their candidates before writing the examination.
- d. Mobile phones should not be taken into the exam hall.
- e. Encourage their students to buy shorthand materials such as cassettes, graded dictation books, memos and phrasography books etc.
- f. The instructors should be reading and drilling to enhance their skills.
- g. Adequate preparation before writing the exam.
- h. A thorough understanding of English Language through reading.
- i. Daily drilling of shorthand outlines to gain speed and confidence in taking the dictation.
- j. Daily or constant reading of materials written in shorthand to be familiar with outlines.
- k. Learning to write good positional outlines.