

# OFFICE ADMINISTRATION FOUNDATION LEVEL

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**Paper 8971/5221**

**Text Processing**

## General comments

The candidates' overall performance was very varied. Some of the work submitted was of a high standard, with accurate work that was well presented. However, some candidates submitted scripts which were inaccurate and which showed little, if any, evidence of proofreading.

Some candidates did not succeed because they failed the Speed Test (Task 1). Candidates are required to key in all the text (to achieve the required speed of 25 wpm) within the error tolerance (6 errors maximum are allowed) and within the time allowed (5 minutes).

Some candidates were successful in the Speed Test but then incurred too many errors in Tasks 2 to 5.

## **ERRORS OCCURRING IN TASKS 2, 3 AND 4**

- Abbreviations not expanded correctly (such as "immed" ["immediately"] – 5221/A, Task 2).
- Words omitted or keyed in inaccurately.

## COMMENTS ON SPECIFIC TASKS

### **Task 1**

Although the majority of candidates completed the task within the error tolerance, there were a few who did not complete the text within the 5 minutes allowed. Some candidates did complete all the text but incurred more than the 6 errors maximum allowed.

### **Task 2**

- Today's date was omitted.
- Abbreviations not expanded (such as "poss" to "possible" – 5221/A).

### **Task 3**

- A variety of typing errors, which ranged from omitted words to errors which the spellchecker would not have identified as incorrect, such as "than" instead of "that".

### **Task 4**

- The words "Our ref" were omitted.
- Today's date was omitted.
- Abbreviations not expanded (such as "opp" ["opportunity"] – 5221/A).
- The enclosure was not indicated.

### **Task 5**

- Many candidates produced excellent tasks that were accurate and well presented. However, some candidates did not make use of the many forms of emphasis available to them.

### **General Comments**

Candidates are reminded that, at the Foundation Level, only the words that are circled on the draft contain errors to be corrected.

Many candidates seemed to rely on spellcheckers and grammar checkers as their only means of proofreading.

#### **Task 1**

Candidates should be advised that they are required to type the text once only and to spend any time remaining proofreading and correcting their work before printing.

The candidates who passed Task 1 (Speed Test) typed all the text within the 5 minutes allowed, thus achieving the required speed of 25 wpm, within the error tolerance - 6 errors maximum.

#### **Task 2**

Today's date is required, as is normal business practice. Omission of the date incurs 3 penalty errors (page 12 of the syllabus refers).

The subject heading should be keyed in as displayed in the draft, for example Initial Capitals and Underlining or ALL CAPITALS. This assesses candidates' ability to use a variety of styles as presented in the draft (such as may be required by a company's house style) – page 9 of the syllabus refers: bulleted point 3, Notes section.

Errors of agreement may be quantity/noun or subject/verb (page 12 of the syllabus refers). These will include errors such as "5 book" ("5 books") and "the clerk were" ("the clerk was").

#### **Task 3**

Care should be taken to ensure that text is displayed consistently throughout the document. Some candidates produced text where the linespacing between paragraphs was inconsistent.

A page number on a single-page document is not required.

#### **Task 4**

Letters must be produced on letterheaded paper – some candidates used plain A4 paper and others keyed in the letterheading themselves. The letterheading may be prepared as a template for the use of word processor operators, or may be pre-printed. Candidates must **not** key in the letterheading themselves. They are being assessed on their ability to produce letters in a realistic manner, as would be required in business.

Today's date is required – full style is preferred, e.g. "31 December 2006".

#### **Task 5**

This task was very accurately typed by the majority of candidates. The methods of emphasis used were often very imaginative and most effective.

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**Paper 5222**

**Communication and Task Management**

## General comments

Once again it is pleasing to report that the scripts completed by candidates this year have continued to be of a better standard than in previous years. Most candidates demonstrated sound underpinning knowledge. However, there were still a few candidates who produced answers which indicated insufficient knowledge, and no evidence of applying knowledge which would have been gained through work experience.

It is a continuing worry that some Centres focus on selected aspects of the syllabus resulting in gaps in candidate knowledge and thus some questions were either unsatisfactorily answered or not attempted. Centres should note that efforts are made to ensure that all aspects of the syllabus are covered at least once in a three year period.

It appeared that questions which were not straight knowledge recall questions were received favourably by all levels of candidates who had covered the syllabus.

There are no comments for questions, or parts of a question, which were generally found to have been answered satisfactorily. Most of Papers B and C have not been used by Centres and therefore there will be no comments on those papers in this report.

Centres have taken note of the comments made in previous reports and it was pleasing to see the continuing improvement in both presentation and legibility of scripts.

Thank you to Centre Administrators who took note of the administration difficulties which had been encountered in the previous year. There have been no problems, this year, with transposition of the number of the paper that a candidate had completed and the incorrect paper number being entered on the front of the envelopes.

It must be said once again that good examination techniques are being practised by most Centres although it is still a concern that some candidates are omitting to answer parts of questions or are not providing the requested number of points in their answers. This could be because of limited knowledge but it could also be as a result of not reading the question, poor proof reading skills or not ticking off a question as it has been answered.

It is important that candidates be given the opportunity to use past assessment papers and to sit mock examinations under timed conditions. This not only assists candidates in their examination preparation but provides them with feedback and to know their individual weaknesses in parts of the syllabus.

Some Centres are still using rote learning for selected parts of the syllabus and, whilst this is sometimes useful, candidates often find it difficult to apply that knowledge to the questions being asked.

## Further general comments

Results were much improved with most candidates who completed this level achieving success.

A few Centres still teach candidates to rote learn chunks of theory. Their candidates were disadvantaged since they were unable to apply that learning to the questions asked and therefore achieved minimum marks.

It also needs to be repeated that some candidates who were entered for Standard and Advanced level would have benefited from having completed Foundation level initially. It is an introduction to the question types

and wording used throughout the three levels as well as developing underpinning knowledge for topics that are part of the syllabus for all levels.

**Comments on specific papers**

***Paper 5222A***

**Task 1**

Some candidates had insufficient knowledge of Notice of Meeting and Agenda to be able to sort the information given into the correct order.

# OFFICE ADMINISTRATION FOUNDATION LEVEL

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**Paper 5223**  
**Office Procedures**

## **General comments**

The general standard of work in 2006 has continued to improve and Centres should be congratulated.

Similar comments apply as with the Communication and Task Management Examinations in that there is evidence to indicate that only selected areas of the syllabus had been covered by some Centres. Candidates must have underpinning knowledge to ensure full coverage of the syllabus.

Owing to the greater numbers of candidates achieving success when completing Paper A it has not been necessary to use Papers B and C in some of the levels and therefore there will be no comments on those papers in this report. No comments have been made for questions, or parts of a question, which were generally found to have been answered satisfactorily.

It must be said that although there is evidence of good work, some candidates would benefit from guidance on how to read examination questions and how to ensure that every part of the question has been attempted. Several candidates omitted whole or parts of questions or did not give the requested number of points.

Once again it is endorsed that candidates must also be given the opportunity to use past assessment papers and to complete mock examinations under timed conditions. This not only assists candidates in their examination preparation but provides them with feedback and to know their individual weaknesses in parts of the syllabus.

## **Further general comments**

Most candidates who completed the examination at this level were successful.

However, some candidates had rote learned parts of the syllabus and gave answers taken directly from textbooks. This information often did not answer the question and although marks are awarded wherever possible, candidates are at a disadvantage when this happens.

It should be noted that some Centres that entered candidates for Standard and even Advanced levels would probably have benefited from having completed Foundation level initially. It is an introduction to the question types and wording used throughout the levels and is helpful in identifying weak areas of the syllabus which are common to all three levels.

## **Comments on specific papers**

### ***Paper 5223A***

#### **Task 1**

Candidates were asked for three ways of organising a stationery cupboard so that items could be found easily. Some candidates were only able to give two reasons and for the third gave an irrelevant point such as cleaning. This was a question which candidates at this level should have been able to answer had the topic been covered thoroughly.

**Task 4**

Some candidates did not know the term “pager” and were unable to answer the question.

***Paper 5223B***

**Task 4**

Candidates were asked for three ways of taking care of a floppy disk. Many answers contained only one correct response again indicating insufficient coverage of this part of the syllabus.

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**Paper 8971/5225**

**Customer Care**

## **General comments**

Reports submitted under this module were of good quality. They were well laid out and presented. Only two weaknesses were identified and these were that some candidates did not include any reference sources to accompany their work and candidate self-evaluation was weak. Guidelines for both of these elements can be found in the module booklet.

## **Specific Comments**

None.

# OFFICE ADMINISTRATION FOUNDATION LEVEL

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Paper 8971/5181

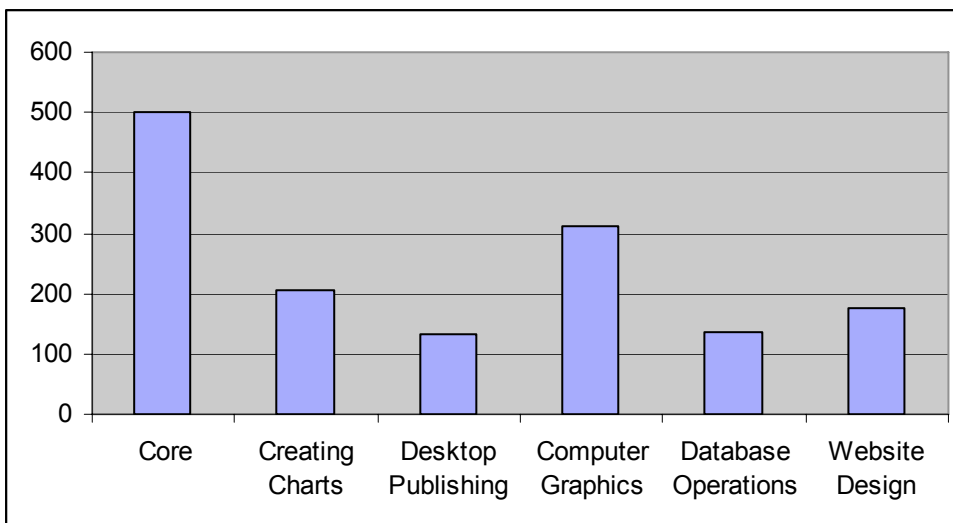
Core and Information and Communications Technology

## General

The scheme has had a successful year with entries of 8307 marginally below the 8480 in 2004-5. The award was available in English, Spanish and Greek. The total numbers of entries in English were 6530, of which 1460 entries were at Foundation Level, 3987 were at Standard Level and 1083 at Advanced Level. This indicates a significant increase in numbers in the Standard Level entries. The entries in Greek remained static and the entries in Spanish have shown a small increase on the previous year, with a total of 653 entries during this year.

## Foundation Level

This level comprised a Core module and five enhancement modules.



The overall pass rate for these modules was in line with last year with candidates showing a good understanding of the subject knowledge and practical skills. The quality of work received from centres in all modules was generally very high.

The overall standard of entries for this module was excellent. The most common errors found this year included:

- The failure to produce formulae printouts from the spreadsheet. The most common package used was Excel and many candidates did not know how to use Tools, Options and tick the Formulas box prior to printing.
- The loss of data integrity during sorts. Many candidates failed to highlight all the data prior to sorting by a specified field which meant that the data became irrelevant to the task in hand.
- The failure to correct the spelling errors introduced into the source file for this purpose.
- The failure to left align or fully justify text.