OFFICE ADMINISTATION FOUNDATION LEVEL

> **Paper 8971/5222**
>
> **Communication and Task Management**

General comments

The completion of examination papers has continued to improve once again with the majority of scripts achieving a very good standard. There were still a few answers which indicated insufficient knowledge, and gave no evidence of applying knowledge which would have been gained through work experience.

Some Centres are still focusing 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 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 that presentation and legibility of scripts continues to improve.

Centre Administrators who took note of the administration difficulties which had been encountered in previous years made the problem of identifying papers easy. 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.

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 proofreading skills or not ticking off a question as it has been answered.

The good results being achieved are probably due to more candidates being 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.

There is evidence to indicate that some Centres are still using rote learning for selected parts of the syllabus. Whilst this is sometimes useful, candidates often find it difficult to apply that knowledge to questions being asked especially when the task set is given a scenario in which the candidate needs to apply their knowledge.

OFFICE ADMINISTRATION FOUNDATION LEVEL

Paper 8971/5223

Office Procedures

General comments

There has been a marked improvement in the standard of work in 2007. Congratulations to Centres and candidates.

The comments made in the Communication and Task Management Examinations also apply to the Office Procedures Examination in that there is evidence to indicate that only selected areas of the syllabus had been covered by a minority of Centres. Candidates need underpinning knowledge to ensure full coverage of the syllabus.

Owing to the majority of candidates achieving success when completing Paper A it has not been necessary to use Papers B and C in 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.

There is evidence of excellent work by some candidates, this would indicate guidance on how to read examination questions and how to ensure that every part of the question has been attempted. However, there were still several candidates who omitted whole or parts of questions, or, did not give the requested number of points.

All candidates should 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.

Comments on specific papers

Foundation Level

Paper 5223A

Task 1

Candidates were asked for a reason why a quotation is sent following an enquiry and why statements of account are used. It was obvious when candidates gave a very weak answer or omitted the question that this was an area of the syllabus which was not covered. The final part of this question related to a credit note and the majority of answers referred to a credit card.

Task 2

This task asked why mail room staff would use a circulation slip. Again, this part of the task was often omitted or an irrelevant answer given, indicating non coverage of syllabus.

Task 3

In this task candidates were asked about monitoring stationery. Many candidates knew little about this topic and were unable to discuss physical checking of stationery.

ICT FOUNDATION LEVEL AND OFFICE ADMINISTRATION FOUNDATION LEVEL

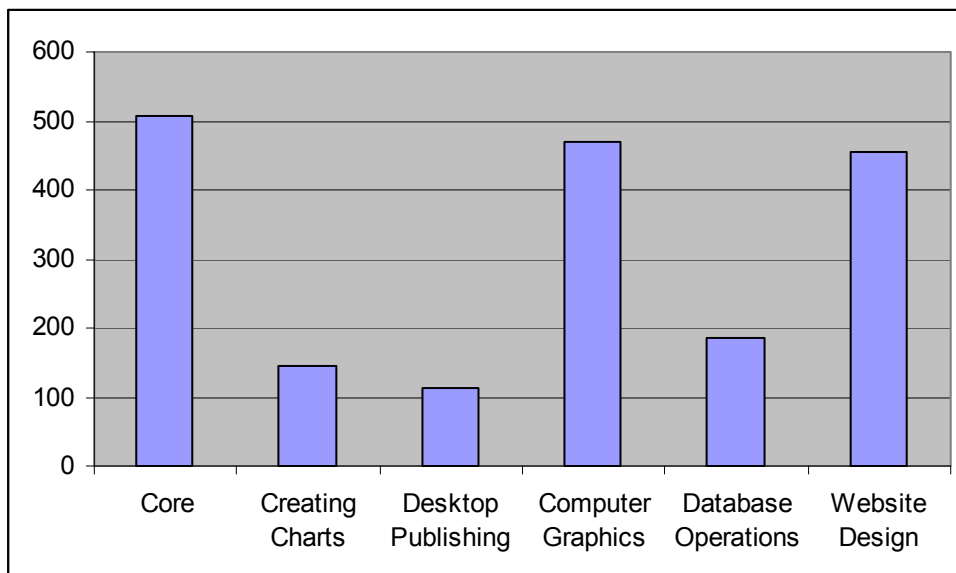<div style="border:1px solid black; padding:8px; text-align:center;">

Paper 5181

Communication, Document Production, Data Manipulation

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General

The scheme had 7509 English entries and 355 in Spanish. The total numbers of entries at each level in English were 1875 entries at Foundation Level, 4147 were at Standard Level and 1487 at Advanced Level. This indicates a 28% increase in Foundation entries, 4% increase in standard level entries and 36% increase in advanced entries. Spanish entries declined significantly from the previous 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.

5181 Foundation Core

The overall standard of entries for this module was excellent. The most common errors found this year included:
- The failure to correct the spelling errors introduced into the source file to test this skill.
- 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 left align or fully justify text.