

CLERICAL OFFICE DUTIES

1. **OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the examination are to test candidates' ability to

- (1) understand the principles and procedures in performing clerical duties in an office;
- (2) apply knowledge acquired on the uses of office equipment and materials and perform basic clerical office duties;
- (3) communicate effectively;
- (4) explain basic personal and professional habits and attitudes necessary for the performance of office duties;

The examination is further meant to:

- (1) develop problem solving skills to deal with clerical and secretarial issues in the office;
- (2) provide the foundation for further courses in business studies.

2. **SCHEME OF THE EXAMINATION**

There will be two papers, Paper 1 and Paper 2, which will constitute a composite paper and will be taken at a sitting.

PAPER 1: This paper will consist of fifty compulsory multiple choice objective questions to be answered within 50 minutes for 30 marks.

PAPER 2: This paper will be made up of one compulsory case study carrying 22 marks and six other questions out of which candidates will be required to answer any three for 16 marks each. The case study will be based on office situations and candidates will be required to show understanding of the issues involved. The paper will carry a total of 70 marks and will last 2 hours 10 minutes.

3. DETAILED SYLLABUS

| TOPICS | NOTES |
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| <p>1. THE OFFICE</p> <p>(1) Definition of an office</p> <p>(2) Functions</p> <p>(a) Receiving information</p> <p>(b) Recording information</p> <p>(c) Processing/Analysing information</p> <p>(d) Giving information</p> <p>(e) Storing information</p> <p>(f) Safeguarding/Protecting Assets</p> <p>(3) Sections</p> <p>(a) Reception</p> <p>(b) General Office</p> <p>(c) Stores</p> <p>(d) Mail Room/Registry</p> <p>(4) Departments</p> <p>(a) Accounts their</p> <p>(b) Purchasing</p> <p>(c) Sales</p> <p>(d) Personnel/Human Resource</p> <p>(e) Production</p> <p>(f) Legal</p> <p>(g) Administration</p> <p>(h) Transport</p> <p>(5) Office Personnel</p> <p>(a) Office Manager</p> <p>(b) Office Supervisor</p> <p>(c) General Clerks</p> <p>(d) Accounts Clerks</p> <p>(e) Data entry Clerks</p> <p>(f) Administrative Assistants</p> | <p>Candidates should be able to:</p> <p>identify the important roles played by each of these sections in an organization;</p> <p>examine the linkages among the departments, sections and functions;</p> <p>identify the interrelationship among heads of departments;</p> <p>outline the relationship among office personnel in terms of their duties/ functions in the office;</p> |

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| <p>(g) Secretaries (i) Company Secretary (ii) Private Secretary (iii) Stenographer Secretary (h) Receptionist (i) Typist (j) Messenger</p> <p>(5) Professional Image of Office Staff (a) Personal and Business Attributes (b) Social habits, Personal Hygiene and healthy Lifestyle (b) Time Management</p> <p>(6) Layout (a) open (b) closed</p> | <p>Candidates should be able to:</p> <p>identify the differences between the different types of secretaries and state their duties;</p> <p>give a detailed explanation of the personal and business attributes of office staff;</p> <p>identify the importance of good social habit and personal hygiene;</p> <p>explain time management as well as identify time management skills and time wasters in the office;</p> <p>give the factors that determine choice of office layout and reasons for planning an office; state the advantages and disadvantages of open and closed office layout.</p> |
| <p>2 ORGANISATION</p> <p>(1) Principles of Organisation (a) Unity of objectives (b) Span of control (c) Authority and Responsibility (d) Delegation (e) Unity of functions (f) Unity of command (g) Supervision (h) Remuneration (i) Accountability</p> | <p>Candidates should be able to:</p> <p>explain of the principles of organisation and how they can be applied in an organization;</p> |

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| (j) Esprit de corps | |
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| <p>(1) Organisational Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Line structure (b) Line and staff structure (c) Staff structure (d) Functional structure (e) Matrix structure <p>(2) Organisational Chart/Organogram</p> <p>(3) BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS</p> <p>(1) Documents used in Business Transactions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Letter of enquiry (b) Price list/ Catalogue/Quotation (c) Local Purchase Order (d) Order (e) Proforma Invoice (f) Invoice (g) Delivery Note/Waybill (h) Debit note (i) Credit note (j) Statement of account (k) Cheques/Payment Orders (l) Receipt (m) Purchase Requisition <p>(2) Methods of Payment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Cash (b) Cheque (c) Standing order (d) Credit transfer (e) Money transfer | <p>draw an organizational chart and state its uses, advantages and disadvantages;</p> <p>identify the documents, their purposes and when to use them;</p> <p>complete the documents;</p> <p>describe the various methods of payment used in business as well as state their advantages and disadvantages;</p> |

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| <p>(3) Payroll Handling</p> <p>(4) Tax Regimes (a) VAT, (b) Income Tax (c) Communication Service Tax(CST) (d) Property Tax (e) Import/Customs Duty</p> | <p>explain the termnologies - wages salaries, gross pay, net pay, allowances, basic pay and PAYE;</p> <p>know the metthods of determining workers' pay - piece rate, time rate, commission, flat rate, overtime and bonus expain and prepare payroll for the payment of wages and salaries of staff with given information;</p> <p>identify and explain the various types of taxes and their importance;</p> |
| <p>(5) Petty Cash</p> | <p>explain the terms petty cash and imprest system and complete the petty cash book.</p> |
| <p>4. BANKING</p> <p>(1) Types of Bank</p> <p>(2) Types of Account Savings Current Fixed deposit</p> <p>(3) Cheques</p> | <p>Candidates should be able to: know the functions of Commercial, Development, Merchant, Rural/ Community Banks and the Central Bank give examples of the various types of banks;</p> <p>state the features of the various accounts;</p> <p>give the definition, types, features of a valid cheque, parties to a cheque as well as the reasons for dishonouring cheques. explain a crossed cheque, various ways of crossing a cheque and the effect of the</p> |

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| <p>5. STOCK PROCEDURE</p> <p>(1) Ordering of Stock</p> <p>(2) Duties of the Storekeeper</p> <p>(3) Requisition Procedure</p> <p>(4) Stock Record and Stocktaking</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">(a) Annual (b) Periodic (c) Perpetual</p> <p>(5) Stock Control</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">(a) Minimum Stock (b) Maximum Stock (c) Re-order level</p> <p>(6) Stock Valuation</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">(a) Cost price (b) Average price (c) Market price (d) Lower price</p> <p>7.OFFICE EQUIPMENT/ MACHINES</p> <p>(1) General Office Machines/Equipment</p> | <p>Candidates should be able to:</p> <p>explain the term ‘stock’, the importance of stock keeping in business and describe the procedure for ordering stock from the manufacturer or supplier;</p> <p>state the duties of the storekeeper and the requirements of a good stock system;</p> <p>describe the store requisition procedure;</p> <p>explain stock, methods of stocktaking, stock records, types of stock records , the different methods of stocktaking and describe the use of various documents. (Bin card, tally card, purchase order etc.);</p> <p>explain the meaning and methods of Stock valuation;</p> <p>Candidates should be able to:</p> <p>mention and explain factors to be considered when purchasing office machines/equipment; identify different office machines/equipment, their uses as well as the advantages and disadvantages of using manual and electric machines;</p> |

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| <p>(a) Computer (b) Photocopier (c) Risograph (d) Collating machine (e) Dictaphone (f) Typewriters (g) Duplicating machines (h) Perforator (i) Calculator (j) Cash Register (k) Pager (l) Fax machines (m) Accounting machines (n) Scanner</p> <p>(2) The Computer and I CT</p> <p>(3) Mail Room Equipment/Materials</p> <p>(a) Letter opening machine (b) Addressing machine (c) Franking machine (d) Shredding machine (e) Scales (f) Pair of scissors, paper knife or blade (g) Stapling machine (h) Staple remover (i) Guillotine</p> | <p>describe how to maintain office machines/ equipment;</p> <p>give the meaning, components, types, peripheral devices, functions, uses, advantages and disadvantages of computers; explain the basic terms used in computing, functions of the Internet, Intranet and the Worldwide web as well as mention service providers.</p> |

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| <p>8. COMMUNICATION</p> <p>(1) Meaning</p> <p>(2) Forms</p> <p>(a) Verbal</p> <p> i. oral</p> <p> ii. written</p> <p>(b) Non-verbal</p> <p>(c) Visual</p> <p>(3) Channels of Communication</p> <p>(4) Barriers to effective Communication</p> <p>(a) Organisational Barriers</p> <p>(b) Physical Barriers</p> <p>(c) Psychological Barriers</p> <p>(d) Socio-Cultural Barrier</p> <p>(5) Business Correspondence</p> <p>(a) Letters</p> <p> i Form Letters</p> <p> ii Circulars</p> <p>(b) Memos</p> <p>(c) Reports</p> <p> i Short formal</p> <p> ii Short informal</p> <p> iii Periodic /Routine</p> <p> iv Special</p> <p> v Statutory</p> <p>(6) Mail handling</p> <p>(a) Mail Room</p> <p>(b) Incoming and Outgoing mail</p> <p>(c) Incoming and Outgoing mail register</p> <p>(d) Postage book</p> <p>(e) Messenger's Receipt book</p> | <p>Candidates should be able to:</p> <p>describe the different forms of communication with examples and identify their advantages and disadvantages.</p> <p>identify the differences between vertical, horizontal and diagonal communication</p> <p>explain and give examples of the various barriers to communication.</p> <p>state the parts, formats, and uses of each type of business correspondence.</p> <p>identify types of reports, the purposes, characteristics and format of each.</p> <p>state the procedure for handling incoming and outgoing mail and complete the various books used in the process.</p> |

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| <p>(7) Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Purpose and kinds of meetings (b) Requirements for a valid Meeting (c) Purpose and kinds of meetings (d) Requirements for a valid Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i Chairperson ii Secretary iii Teller iv Scrutineer (e) Meeting terminologies (f) Preparation of meeting documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i Notice ii Agenda iii Minutes <p>9. BUSINESS ENGLISH</p> <p>(1) Proofreading and office Abbreviations</p> <p>(2) Spelling, Word division and Punctuation</p> | <p>state the duties of the officials.</p> <p>mention and explain meeting terminologies such as notice, quorum, agenda, resolution, ad-hoc committee, minutes, motion, ex-officio, casting vote etc.</p> <p>draft meeting documents from given information</p> <p>Candidates should be able: state the importance and purpose of proofreading.</p> <p>correct errors in passages, expand office abbreviations and use them correctly.</p> <p>know the basic rules for spellings, word division and punctuation.</p> |

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| <p>10. FILING AND INDEXING</p> <p>(1) Methods of Classification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) Alphabetical(b) Numerical(c) Subject(d) Geographical(e) Chronological(f) Alpha-numeric(g) Subject-numeric <p>(2) Systems of filing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) Lateral(b) Suspension(c) Vertical(d) Horizontal <p>(3) Rules for filing</p> <p>(4) Indexing and Cross-Referencing</p> <p>(4) Electronic filing</p> <p>(6) Central and Departmental filing</p> | <p>Candidates should be able to:</p> <p>explain filing, features of a good filing system and reasons for filing.</p> <p>understand the rules for the various filing methods together with their advantages and disadvantages.</p> <p>explain how each system operates and identify the advantages and disadvantages of each system.</p> <p>state the general rules for filing.</p> <p>identify the types/forms of indexing and importance of indexing</p> <p>explain electronic filing and state its advantages and disadvantages e.g microfilming/micrographics</p> <p>compare central and departmental filing and list their advantages and disadvantages.</p> |
| <p>11. REFERENCE BOOKS AND SOURCES OF INFORMATION</p> <p>(1) Reference Books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) General reference books<ul style="list-style-type: none">i dictionaryii encyclopaediaiii almanac(b) Places<ul style="list-style-type: none">i atlasii site plan | <p>Candidates should be able to:</p> <p>mention information that could be obtained from each reference book.</p> |

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| <p>(c) Specialized reference books</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i trade journals ii post office guide iii telephone directory <p>(d) Government Publications</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i Hansard ii White paper iii Gazette iv Financial Instructions v General orders <p>(2) Sources of Information</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Personal documents (b) Driving documents (c) Passport (d) Visa (e) Tax clearance <p>(3) Business Information</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Exchange rates (b) Stock exchange listing (c) Financial bulletins (d) Employment Opportunities <p>12. POST OFFICE SERVICES</p> <p>(1) Postal Services</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Postage stamps (b) Express mail (c) Special mail (d) Poste restante (e) Private mail bag (f) Registered mail (g) Recorded delivery (h) Airmail (i) Business reply service (j) Private mail box | <p>identify the various sources of information with examples, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue offices – taxes • Immigration Service – passport • Embassies/High Commissions – visa • Banks - financial bulletins <p>Candidates should be able to:</p> <p>explain the use of each postal service.</p> |

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| <p>(2) Courier Services Expedited Mail Service (EMS) Delsey, Helbor & Lyn (DHL) Federal Express (FedEx)</p> <p>(3) Agency Services</p> <p>(4) Remittance services Postal Order Money Transfer</p> | <p>state the features and benefits of courier services.</p> <p>mention and explain agency services provided by the post office.</p> |
| <p>13. HUMAN RELATIONS</p> <p>(1) Internal Relations in the Office</p> <p>(2) Relations with the Public</p> <p>(3) Interpersonal Skills</p> | <p>Candidates should be able to: explain internal relations and public relations and identify ways of improving human relations.</p> <p>state factors that promote public relations and ways of improving interpersonal skills.</p> |
| <p>14. HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE IN THE OFFICE</p> <p>(1) Health Hazards in the office</p> <p>(2) Accidents in the Office</p> <p>(4) Staff Welfare</p> | <p>Candidates should be able to:</p> <p>identify and explain health hazard in the office;</p> <p>state the types of health hazards in the office and how they could be prevented;</p> <p>state the types and causes of accidents as well as measures to prevent them;</p> <p>identify welfare services and benefits available to office staff and the advantages associated with them.</p> |

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| <p>15. PRE-EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURES</p> <p>(1) Advertisement (2) Submission of Letters of application and curriculum vitae (3) The interview</p> <p>16. ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SMALLSCALE BUSINESS</p> | <p>Candidates should be able to:</p> <p>design an advertisement; write application letters with curriculum vitae; know how to prepare for an interview.</p> <p>Candidates should be able to:</p> <p>explain the term “entrepreneur” and give the general characteristics of an entrepreneur; explain small scale business and identify the characteristics of a small scale enterprise; identify the importance of small scale businesses in the society/country.</p> |

SUGGESTED READING LIST

1. Secretarial Duties - John Harrison, Pitman Publishing Ltd.
2. Office Practice for Colleges - Elendu O. Elendu, New Africa Publishing Co. Ltd. Owerri (1985)
3. Case Studies, A Skills-Based Approach - Sheila May, Pitman Publishing Ltd.
4. Office Procedure - John Harrison, Pitman Publishing Ltd.