

WEST AFRICAN SENIOR SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION  
SHORTHAND

## **PREAMBLE**

The aim of the syllabus is to assess the ability of the candidates to write dictation in shorthand with relative ease and produce mailable transcripts on the typewriter.

## **OBJECTIVES**

Candidates are expected to:

- (a) master shorthand theories so as to be able to represent words in shorthand;
- (b) acquire the ability to phrase correctly as an aid to increasing the speed of writing shorthand;
- (c) spell and punctuate accurately;
- (d) acquire the technique of transcribing shorthand accurately on the typewriter;
- (e) attain a minimum speed of 90 wpm in shorthand for both personal and office use with a testing speed of 80 wpm.

## **SCHEME OF THE EXAMINATION**

Two passages will be dictated at 80 words a minute with an interval of 2 minutes. Each passage will last three minutes. After the last passage, five minutes will be allowed for candidates to read through their shorthand notes before the commencement of transcription. The syllabic intensity of the passages should be 1.35 – 1.40. All transcriptions must be done on the **Typewriter**. The use of **English and Shorthand Dictionaries is allowed**. The examination shall be of 1 hour 13 minutes duration (6 minutes for dictation, 7 minutes for intervals and 1 hour for transcription).

## **DETAILED SYLLABUS**

(a) **Business Matters**

One of the passages for dictation should be business in nature e.g. Letters, Memoranda, Reports and other related topics.

(b) **Literary Matters**

The other passage must be literary and within the experience of the candidates. (It should not be technical or controversial)

## **NOTES ON THE EXAMINATION**

- (a) Candidates must provide their own typewriters, shorthand notebooks, and other writing materials.
- (b) The shorthand notes may be written with either pen or pencil. The shorthand notes must be attached to the transcripts.

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- (c) Specially marked typing papers will be supplied by the Council. No typing paper other than those supplied by the Council may be used.
- (d) Candidates **must not be allowed** to make any carbon copy.
- (e) The shorthand readers must be allowed access to the passages twenty minutes before the dictation commences.

**A preliminary passage of two minutes duration will be dictated before the commencement of the actual examination to enable candidates to become accustomed to the reader's voice. The preliminary passage must not be transcribed and does not form part of the examination.**

- (f) The candidate's shorthand teacher may be appointed to dictate the passages. The invigilator must check the dictation and note errors or deviation from the total time allowed for each passage. A signed certificate of the actual time taken should be returned with the completed scripts.
- (g) As far as possible, the person dictating should adhere to the quarter-minute indications printed on each passage. Care should be taken to articulate the words very distinctly. Punctuations must be indicated by the inflexion of the voice and in no case dictated.
- (h) The reader is expected to leave the examination hall immediately after the dictation, taking away with him the shorthand passages. These should be returned to the Council or an official of the Council where one is available. **On no account should the passages be left with either the invigilator or Supervisor.**

### **READING LIST**

- (1) First Course – Pitman 2000
- (2) First Course Review – Pitman 2000
- (3) Pitman 2000 Phrase Book
- (4) First Dictionary – Pitman 2000 shorthand
- (5) 700 common words – Pitman 2000
- (6) Office skills magazines
- (7) Journals
- (8) Speed development – Pitman 2000  
– Bryan combs
- (9) Speed Builder – Bryan combs