

THE UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND
DEPARTMENT OF ACADEMIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS
SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION: 2008

TITLE OF PAPER	ACADEMIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS
COURSE CODE	ACS 102
TIME ALLOWED	TWO (2) HOURS
INSTRUCTIONS	WRITE THE NAME OF YOUR FACULTY ON THE ANSWER SCRIPT ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS
TOTAL MARKS	100

This examination paper contains 6 pages including the cover sheet.

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INVIGILATOR

QUESTION 1**Comprehension**

50 Marks

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow.

No escape from sea for Pakistan's child fishermen

- 1 A year in an Indian jail hasn't put 13-year-old Rasool Baksh off returning to Pakistan's Arabian Sea coast and going back to sea. He was arrested in 2004 for fishing in Indian territorial waters near the disputed Sir Creek, between India's Gujarat state and Pakistan's Sindh province.
- 2 Released last year as part of a hesitant peace process between the nuclear-armed neighbours, Baksh has not seen his life change.
- 3 "It was hard in the Indian jail but fishing is our business. It has been passed to us down the generations. We can't do any other job so we take the risk," Baksh says.
- 4 He and his relatives stock up their wooden boat with food, fuel and ice and set sail from their village in Thatta district 100km east of Karachi in Pakistan. They hope for a good catch but all of them know they could end up in jail.
- 5 Baksh is a member of an estimated 50,000-strong force of children working in the fishing industry along Pakistan's 1,125km coastline.
- 6 "I can't read or write. From childhood I have only seen my father, uncles and brothers catching fish. I like following them," says Baksh, his teeth stained from chewing a betel nut and tobacco concoction known as gutka.
- 7 Child labour is widespread in Pakistan. A government survey in 1997 counted 3.3 million children working in different industries. No survey has been done since.
- 8 For many fishing families, children are essential workers in an industry that is being increasingly squeezed by foreign competition.
- 9 Children go out to sea with their older relatives in small, slow boats where they have to compete with big, deep-sea trawlers. The government has given permits to trawlers from South Korea, Japan and China to fish off Pakistan, but not within 65km of the coast. But Mumtaz Mandhrio, an official at the Pakistan fishermen's forum, says trawlers come well inside that limit and devour fish stocks.
- 10 Amjad Baloch, 12, says he sometimes has to stay out at sea for 40 days to ensure a good catch.
- 11 "I'm not scared of doing it," says Baloch, who lives in Mubarak, a village near Karachi of 7,500 people with no power, gas, or source of clean drinking water. It has a primary school but no teacher.
- 12 Despite the grim conditions, Baloch laughs and plays pranks on a beach where he sorts out nets in preparation for his next voyage.

- 13 Dada Ibrahim, 14, dressed in a dirty blue *shalwar kameez*, says he loves fishing as it brings him money, and that means freedom.
- 14 "If we don't go out and help our families we would starve," he says. If he is lucky, Ibrahim says he can earn 1,000 to 1,300 rupees (\$16 to \$18) on a trip to sea that might last two weeks.
- 15 The fishermen's forum says many fishermen can't afford to send their children to school because they are in debt to boat owners.
- 16 Saifullah Chaudhary, an official with the UN International Labour Organisation (ILO), says the government is trying to eliminate child labour and is focusing on the fishing industry.
- 17 The ILO has started projects in fishing villages to teach children to read and write, improve health and try and provide alternative employment. But Chaudhary says it will take time before children stop heading out to sea for a living.

Reuters

Questions Each question carries 5 marks, except 9, which has 10 marks.

- 1 What two things do Baksh (¶ 1), Baloch (¶ 10) and Ibrahim (¶ 13) have in common?
- 2 What country does Baksh come from?
- 3 Who are the nuclear-armed neighbours (¶ 2)
- 4 Why was Baksh sent to prison?
- 5 Why do boats carry ice? (¶ 4)
- 6 "Foreign competition" (¶ 8). Give one example of this.
- 7 What sort of thing is a "shalwar kameez"? (¶ 13)
- 8 How does it seem the children feel about working at sea?
- 9 The following phrasal verbs are used in the passage:
 - a. put off (¶ 1)
 - b. stock up (¶ 4)
 - c. end up (¶ 4)
 - d. sorts out (¶ 12)
 - e. heading out (17)

Here are five definitions. Match the verb to its correct definition. Answer with the letter and number only: e.g. a. 1, b. 4 etc.

- 1 to organise things and put them in order
- 2 to go out in the direction of a particular area such as the mountains, the coast etc.
- 3 to make someone lose interest in or enthusiasm for something
- 4 to find yourself in a place or situation that you didn't intend or expect to be in
- 5 to fill something with food, water etc with the intention of using it later

QUESTION 2

Cloze Test

50 marks

In the following passage, words have been omitted. Write the numbers 1-25 in a column in your answer sheet, and next to each write ONE word that will appropriately fill the corresponding gap in the passage.

Trial by ink

Universities continue to champion hand-written exams, a skill with no useful function in the modern world

Mary Braid

Twenty years after my first degree, I'm back at university, and plenty has changed. Last time, the subject I was studying was a sideshow in [1] was essentially four years of unadulterated leisure. It's the mantra of the ancient but nonetheless true that if I had known then [2] I know now, I would have appreciated that fluid, free existence much more than I [3] at the time.

This time round, university is no hang-out heaven. In [4] it is all about the subject and getting the degree. I attend psychology lectures three nights a week at Birkbeck College, London, and in the [5] work full-time as a journalist.

There's not enough space in my current circumstances for the wasted, alcohol-drenched weekends or endless playtime [6] full-time, grant-aided, just-turned-18 study allowed. Back then I was often to be found in the library, but seldom actually doing any work. These days, I fantasise about creating enough time for a full day of bliss in the [7].

But my circumstances are not all that have altered. Technology has revolutionised learning. The once laborious business of hunting down books and journals has boiled down to the touch of a [8] keyboard buttons. The library is filled with PCs with internet access to endless academic publications, and with most of us mature

Birkbeck students equipped with PC or laptop at home, it is often not [9] necessary to physically visit the college.

All this has impressed me. What has shocked me, [10], is that in the midst of all this high technology, one near-Neanderthal practice endures - exam by ink. Suggest to a lecturer during term-time that you might not word process an essay and expect a hissy fit. That's understandable when you take a quick squint at many students' handwriting. [11] ask to use a word processor in your end-of-year exams and it's as if you have requested the college fix it for you to [12] the £21m lottery triple rollover.

Last year, with my first-year exams looming, I did ask to use a word processor. For university students straight out of school, exam-by-ink may be easy, but the prospect terrified [13]. My last degree's endless note-taking scrambled a once almost elegant hand. On top of that, I've spent almost 20 years using a [14] for nothing but shorthand, causing not just more deterioration in pen skills, but instances where words transmute into Teeline symbols.

I've also had more [15] a decade of word processing all my work. And word processing does not foster the linear progression of argument or thought required in handwritten composition. Quite the opposite; it actually encourages you to [16] arguments in the middle, not at the beginning, to routinely cut and paste thoughts and insert finesse. In short, it fosters a very different [17] of thinking and constructing.

None of these arguments washed with Birkbeck's administrators. They were sympathetic - the Registrar admitted that after years of word processing she would hate a handwritten [18] too - but unless I was actually disabled, I would be handwriting like [19] else. Apparently there are a few challengers to the status quo every year, but so far [20] enough to threaten current practice. But how long can the status quo endure? Most of my fellow students have [21] working for at least a decade, and in the world of work who ever asks you to handwrite a report? More importantly, who ever judges you on your ability to do so? Schools and universities are championing a [22] that in the real world quickly rusts and flakes away.

According to Cathy Williams, chair of the Academic Registrars' Council, exam by ink is not a big [23] in higher education. Williams reckons that mature students - moulded by the word-processing demands of the real world - are likely to have more objections to ink tests than other students. Like grown-ups everywhere, her deputy, Brendan Ferguson, sympathises with my position. "I tend to use word processing myself and that is a blessing for all concerned," he says. He can see exam by [24] becoming more of an issue if more computers are installed in schools.

Poor provision of school computers may be all that is preventing a full assault on ink exams, and another education resource headache. Williams admits that while security issues around word-processed exams would be tricky, "it's cost that would defeat us".

Meanwhile, I limp on in my exams, trying to reach a workable compromise between answering questions quickly and trying to give the examiner a fighting chance of

actually reading what I have written. I got through last year, but no-one will convince me that a mediocre, neatly written answer does not predispose the average marker to give a higher score than a more informed response, presented in the style of a dog's breakfast.

Given that the archaic handwritten exam serves neither student nor marker, it is inconceivable to me that in two decades' time - should I pop back for a third degree - universities will still [25] insisting on handwriting. That, to me, would be like the Starship Enterprise whizzing forward at warp factor 5, with the Flintstones on the bridge.

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