

THE UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND
DEPARTMENT OF ACADEMIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS
FINAL (MAIN) EXAMINATION 2007

TITLE OF PAPER	ACADEMIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS
COURSE CODE	ACS1 (M)
TIME ALLOWED	THREE (3) HOURS
INSTRUCTIONS	WRITE THE NAME OF YOUR FACULTY ON THE ANSWER SCRIPT ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS
TOTAL MARKS	100

This examination paper contains 11 pages including the cover sheet.

DO NOT OPEN UNTIL PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED BY THE
INVIGILATOR

QUESTION 1**LETTER/MEMORANDUM WRITING**

(30 marks)

Write **either** a letter **or** a memorandum in response to one of the following instructions. Write at least one page but not more than two.

A Letter

Write a letter to a prominent businessperson in your society requesting him or her to help support a project your community has started working on. Invent names and addresses.

B Memorandum

A research study recently revealed that a large number of students engage in unprotected sex, and that many have several sex partners at the same time. The University authorities are concerned about a casual attitude to sex. They have asked you to make suggestions as to what students should do to change their attitudes and behaviour.

Write a memo making your suggestions, addressed to the SRC secretary.

QUESTION 2 COMPREHENSION

30 marks

Read the passage below and then answer the questions that follow.

Off your head? Cannabis psychosis

As a series of new studies proves the link between cannabis dependency and mental illness, an Observer investigation reveals the plight of young users struggling to find help to deal with the disturbing effects of a drug once considered 'safe'.

Yvonne Roberts

1. Cannabis is the most widely used illicit substance around the world, particularly among young adults. Users are smoking it from a younger age and in larger quantities for longer, not least because young people today have more ready cash than their Sixties counterparts did and a small quantity of cannabis now costs less than a packet of cigarettes or a couple of pints.
2. Cannabis, or marijuana, comes in different forms. Hash, the resin of the plant, is cheaper than grass or weed, which is the plant's dried leaves. 'Skunk', which is much more expensive at around £200 an ounce, is herbal cannabis grown from

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selected seeds by intensive indoor methods. Skunk is twice as potent, on average, than hash or weed.

3. Cannabis, often mixed with tobacco, is either smoked in a joint or in a water pipe, or cooked into food and eaten. The plant contains more than 400 chemicals including delta-nine-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), its main psychoactive component. Interactions between THC and specific proteins on the surface of the brain cells, known as cannabinoid receptors, produce the laid-back, pleasure-enhancing awareness after smoking cannabis and is sometimes accompanied by an urge to eat.
4. Research also shows that sustained use of cannabis over several years may result in cognitive impairment, affecting memory, attention and the organisation and integration of complex information.
5. What is certain is that, in many parts of Britain, a young person with cannabis problem would be very fortunate indeed to find effective help. Heroin, cocaine and crack cocaine have a more established link to crime and death, so receive a far higher priority in public policy. Cannabis may lay waste to lives, but often the casualties suffer a lifetime of delusion and reclusiveness while their families privately mourn their loss.
6. For years, the debate on cannabis has progressed little. 'The issue has been polarised between those who argue that if everyone smokes it, it will lead to world peace and those who believe that a few spliffs may send you psychotic,' says Dr Luke Mitcheson, a clinical psychologist. 'That shows a deep immaturity in the face of increasing evidence that we need a far more sensitive dialogue.'
7. Daniel Hrekow is 23, articulate, musically talented and academically bright. In the past five years he has dropped out of two universities and experienced two breakdowns. At the age of 19, after several years of feeling depressed, anxious and increasingly disconnected, he was diagnosed as having Asperger's syndrome, a form of autism.
8. Signs of Asperger's include an inability to empathise or understand other people's emotions, difficulty in tolerating change, and obsessional behaviour. In Daniel's case, this obsessional behaviour can mean periods of smoking cannabis for several days and nights at a time. Since his teens, out of fear and frustration, Daniel has tried to control every aspect of his mother's life. He has also become extremely violent to her, his father, Peter, and younger brother, Ben.
9. Daniel an example of a disturbing statistic revealed last week - an alarming 40 per cent rise in hospital admissions for mental ill-health prompted by cannabis use since 2001, when it was first proposed to reduce the legal penalties for possessing or consuming it..
10. A new study demonstrating the link between psychosis and cannabis - written by Professor Tom Barnes - will be published in the *Journal of Psychiatry* next month, adding yet more pressure on the government to take a fresh look at the price paid by increasing numbers of young people dependent on cannabis.

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11. Daniel is just one example of this growing problem. 'When he's violent, he bangs his head against the wall, punches and shakes me, smashes furniture and cuts himself with kitchen knives,' says his mother. His parents have had to ask the police to remove their son from the family home several times - and again this weekend, Daniel has been abusive and threatening.
12. Last September, after 18 months in a residential institution for the mentally ill, Daniel decided to return to university. He was supposed to receive support but none was forthcoming after he left hospital. After several weeks at Goldsmiths College in London, he began to do what he has always done, since the age of 15, to ease the pain of his loneliness - he began to smoke cannabis excessively.
13. 'When you're trying to live life as a normal person, and you're stoned, you deceive yourself that you're normal, and pretend there's nothing wrong.' Daniel says. He gives a long and moving account of life with a cannabis addiction. 'At first, with cannabis, it becomes so much easier to float by unnoticed. But then you become paranoid. You're quick to assume the world isn't going to make a place for you. Through drugs, I've come close to destroying myself, but sometimes the only option is to be in this oblivious state, trying to get a break from the pressure. But it's no break at all really.'
14. 'In my teens I used to champion cannabis but once you've taken yourself to places I've taken myself to, you can't hide from what your brain felt. Now, I don't get a high at all. Instead, my brain hurts so much, and I don't sleep for days. It goes wrong so quickly that what's going on internally becomes visible to everyone and that's frightening for me. No one at 23 who's been into cannabis for years can get away with saying it doesn't mess your head up. If you're smart and have potential and you do drugs for too long, it takes you further away from a healthy balanced way of living which is what you secretly wanted in the first place - when you had that first joint.'
15. Several recent studies have demonstrated the links between cannabis and schizophrenia. Professor Robin Murray, a consultant psychiatrist at the Maudsley Hospital in south London and one of the leading researchers in the field, estimates that 25,000 of the 250,000 people with schizophrenia in the UK could have avoided the illness if they had not used cannabis. In addition, the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD), in a report to the Minister of Health arguing against legalisation, suggested for the first time that cannabis may not only cause schizophrenia in those with pre-existing mental conditions, but could also exacerbate a range of other mental health problems.
16. In the UK, 250,000 people experience psychosis - a term that refers to symptoms including delusions and hallucinations, rather than a specific diagnosis. 'Five years ago, 95 per cent of psychiatrists would have said cannabis doesn't cause psychosis,' says Murray. 'Now, I would estimate 95 per cent say it does. It's a quiet epidemic.'
17. And have a number of recent court cases dealing with horrifically violent crimes involving cannabis raised us from years of torpor about the use of cannabis? Earlier this month, Peter Thomas, aged 21, was given an indefinite jail sentence after beating Lisa Voice, the mother of his former girlfriend, so severely that she needed 11 operations. 'He smashed my skull, my nose was a pulp he

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smashed my eye sockets and my eye was hanging out,' Voice said. Medical experts said Thomas had been suffering from 'cannabis-induced psychosis'.

18. James, in his twenties, began smoking cannabis at 15. 'The reason I never did any other drugs was because their dangers were well known. I was a sensible person,' he said, aware of the irony. 'Even when I went to two GPs, saying I was having problems with anxiety and paranoia, they gave me antidepressants and said if the cannabis helped me to relax, I should carry on.'
19. At 19, he had a breakdown and was hospitalised with drug-induced psychosis. At school, he achieved seven A stars in his GCSEs. Now he is unable to hold down a job. 'My brain works but I don't do well in social situations. If only I'd known about the risk.'
20. What's required now, experts in the field say, is for the Health Minister to spend much more money on the treatment of cannabis victims. However large or small the issue of cannabis dependency, it needs ring-fenced sustained funding, more research, the right support available across the country and improved universal drug education given earlier in schools and to professionals such as family doctors.
21. In the meantime, Daniel Hrekow is optimistic that if he receives the right kind of help, he will be able to build a life for himself. But his mother is angry.
22. 'Everyone on the ground will tell you there's a big problem with young people and cannabis,' she said. 'But where do they or their families go for help? Mental health services are at the bottom of the spending list, and cannabis is even lower.' Mary knows it will be a long and hard road, but she wants her son back.

Sunday February 19, 2006 *The Observer*

1502 words

Questions

Each answer carries 3 marks.

- 1 Supply a suitable word or phrase to complete the following sentences according to the passage above.
 - a) People with a marijuana problem can [-----] get help and treatment in Britain.
 - b) This report suggests that cannabis is very [-----].
 - c) Cannabis abuse is [-----] in Britain.
 - d) The main similarities between Daniel (para. 8-10) and Peter Thomas (para. 17) are that they both take cannabis and [-----].

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- e) Doctors in Britain need [-----].
- 2 What is “Asperger’s” (para. 7-8)? (Answer ONE).
- (a) A mental illness
 - (b) A form of cannabis
 - (c) A breakdown
 - (d) Smoking cannabis.
- 3 The word “irony” in para. 18 shows that
- (a) James thinks he was “sensible” when he started to smoke cannabis
 - (b) James is now a sensible person.
 - (c) In fact, James knows that he was stupid to start smoking.
 - (d) James does not realise that it is not sensible to smoke cannabis..
- 4 Explain the word “joint” (para. 14, last word).
- 5 In what year was Daniel born?
- 6 Explain why Daniel’s mother is angry (para. 22).
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Question 3: Summary

(20 marks)

Read the following passage, and then, in about one page, explain in your own words why Mr Malan wants to leave South Africa. Do not copy from the text.

South Africa: not civil war but sad decay

Rian Malan

When the winter rains closed in on Cape Town I thought, bugger this, I’m selling up and moving somewhere sunny. To this end, I asked the servant to come in and help spruce up the house. We were scrubbing and painting and what have you when her broom bumped the dining table, and crack — a leg snapped off, its innards hollowed out by wood-borers. I thought this was an omen. Something awful is going to happen.

Nine months ago South Africa seemed to be muddling through in a happy-go-lucky fashion. The economy was growing, albeit slowly. Trains ran, if not exactly on time. If you called the police, they eventually came. We thought our table was fairly solid, and that we would sit at it indefinitely, quaffing that old Rainbow Nation ambrosia. Now,

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almost overnight, we have come to the dismaying realisation that much around us is rotten. Nearly half our provinces and municipalities are said to be on the verge of collapse. A murderous succession dispute has broken out in the ruling African National Congress. Our Auditor-General reportedly has sleepless nights on account of the billions that cannot be properly accounted for. Whites have been moaning about such things for years, but you know you're in serious trouble when President Thabo Mbeki admits the 'naked truth' that his government has been infiltrated by chancers seeking to 'plunder the people's resources'. I knew in my bones that it would come to this, but somewhere along the line I got tired of stinking up my surroundings with predictions of doom, so I shut up about it.

But I have a pretty good idea why things went wrong, and it all began with 'transformation', a euphemism for ridding the Civil Service of whites, especially white males. Under apartheid, they ran everything. Clearly this had to change, but white males carried the institutional memory in their brains, and the blacks who replaced them tended to flounder. This led to what we call 'capacity problems', a euphemism for blacks who couldn't or wouldn't carry out the jobs for which they were paid. Capacity problems in turn led to crises in electricity supply, refuse removal, road maintenance, healthcare, law enforcement and so on. Again, white malcontents have complained about such things for years, but you know you're in trouble when an eminent black journalist like Justice Malala dismisses the Mbeki administration as an 'outrage', characterised by 'a shocking lack of leadership' on the part of a Cabinet riddled with 'incompetent, inept and arrogant' buffoons. In short, we're in crisis. Everyone acknowledges it, but somehow we never see firm corrective action. Previously we were told it was awkward for a black liberation movement to purge black appointees, even if they were useless.

Back in April, around the time of the ominous table-leg incident, I dined with a bossy American woman who bit my head off when I opined that our recently deposed deputy president, Jacob Zuma, would one day step into Nelson Mandela's shoes. For her, it was unthinkable that a man with only four years of schooling, and with rape and corruption charges pending should become president of anything.

My explanations to the contrary were dismissed as racist rubbish, but let me air them anyway. Zuma is a Zulu, and when he became a target for criminal investigation, many fellow tribesmen suspected he was being stitched up by President Mbeki, who was reputedly keen to eliminate him as a potential successor. Conspiracists noted that Mbeki was a Xhosa, and that various members of what we call the 'Xhosa nostra' had become billionaires as a result of their political connections, whereas Zuma's allegedly improper payments were limited to a trifling £100,000. They found it even more fishy that the sad and desperate young woman who invited herself to spend a night in Zuma's home, only to accuse him of rape in the aftermath, was acquainted with the minister of intelligence Ronnie Kasrils, a Russian trained master of the dark arts of espionage, presumably including honey traps.

Zulus are a warlike bunch, as we know, and the Zuma affair got their blood up. Thousands turned out to cheer their homeboy at his rape trial, and to denounce his accuser as a harlot bribed to bear false witness. Zuma's acquittal sparked riotous celebrations, and when his corruption trial started last month the crowds were even larger. '100% Zulu Boy' T-shirts were still evident, but now there were red flags too, because radicals had started rallying to the Zuma cause. First to join were the young lions of the ANC Youth League. They were followed by the Young Communists, then by large sectors of the trade union movement and the Communist party proper. All that remained was for Winnie

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Mandela to take sides, and lo: when the judge dismissed Zuma's corruption charges in late September, she materialised among the jubilant masses, praising the Lord for answering her prayers. These developments confounded naive left-liberals, who had repeatedly assured us that Zuma was politically dead. Feminists recalled the dalliance with Ms Lewinsky that almost destroyed Bill Clinton. Aids activists were scandalised by Zuma's failure to use a condom during the rape-case escapade, even though the woman involved was HIV-infected. Moralists contended that even though criminal charges had proved unsustainable, there were enough facts on the table to show that Zuma was sorely lacking in probity. For such people, it was unHINGING to see Zuma become the leading contender for South Africa's presidency, greeted at every turn by adoring supporters who informed reporters that the Ten Commandments were an alien invention that didn't apply to African males. Their campaign song was even more unnerving: 'Bring me my machine gun.' A Serbian journalist living here took one look at this and wrote a piece headlined, 'Time to Panic'.

Let's look at law enforcement, one smallish aspect of the growing problem. After years of slow decline, crime surged earlier this year, with insurance companies reporting a 20 per cent rise in claims. Some blamed a strike by security guards, who took to looting shops they had previously guarded. Others pointed the finger at feral refugees from Zimbabwe.

'Capacity problems' in the police were certainly a factor, too. In the middle of all this, a convoy of expensive cars carrying senior ANC dignitaries rolled up at a prison outside Cape Town. Uniformed warders swarmed out of the gates, and the gathering turned into a revolutionary song-and-dance extravaganza in honour of Tony Yengeni, a popular ex-MP about to start serving four years for fraud.

Is this not bizarre? A politician accepts a discounted Mercedes from an arms contractor, lies about it, gets nailed — and several of the ruling party's most prominent leaders hail him as a hero, a staggering insult to their own criminal justice apparatus. In her eagerness to charm the rabble, National Assembly Speaker Baleka Mbete went so far as to claim that Yengeni had never committed fraud, even though he pleaded guilty to same. The main opposition party, the Democratic Alliance (DA), termed her behaviour 'disgraceful', but there was no retribution. Why? Because a crackdown by Mbeki might cause figures like Mbete to defect to Zuma, who is not particularly punctilious about whom he accepts as allies. Don Mkhwanazi, for instance, got into hot water after hiring a 'well-known crook' to assist him in his duties as boss of the Central Energy Fund. Mkhwanazi claimed racists were defaming him, but fell silent when it emerged that his bent chum (who earned £300,000 a year) was channelling money into a bank account that paid Mkhwanazi's mortgage in a posh Jo'burg suburb. Mkhwanazi resigned in disgrace. Today he is a trustee of Zuma's unofficial election campaign.

My pal Steve says one shouldn't take such things too seriously, noting that respectable people have also cast their lot with Zuma. Maybe so, but Zuma's core supporters are scary. The other day they put on a spectacular display at a conclave of Cosatu, South Africa's mighty Congress of Trade Unions. Whenever an incumbent cabinet member appeared, delegates rose to their feet, waving red flags and chanting, 'Tell us, what has Zuma done?' One minister was jeered off the podium. The hecklers went on to sing, 'It is better for us to take over this country, we will go with the Communists.' President Mbeki wisely kept his distance, but they had a song for him too: 'We will kill this big ugly dog for Zuma.'

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Alas, poor Thabo. I'm no great fan of our remote and autocratic president, but the charges emanating from the red brigade — 'betraying the poor' and 'tolerating inequality' — are stupid. A former communist, Mbeki saw the light in the late 1980s and cajoled his comrades into a historic compromise with capitalism. His saturnine manipulation of business and labour led to a massively increased tax harvest, which in turn financed the creation of a welfare state, with 11 million poor now receiving subsistence grants of one sort or another. This is amazing. A welfare state in Africa!

Unfortunately, such goodies are the fruits of gradualism, and I can't see us staying the course. Jacob Zuma wants the big job, so he promised to resurrect the ANC's revolutionary tradition, whereupon the movement's most dedicated activists immediately rallied to his standard. As I see it, the only way for Mbeki loyalists to block Zuma is by promising even more loot to the masses, and once they do that, Zuma will surely move even further leftward. Nobody (save DA leader Tony Leon, who is white and therefore irrelevant) is going to stand up and say, 'Sorry, folks, this isn't the answer, we have to work harder, exercise self-discipline and bring white technocrats back into government so as to make things work again.' And besides, if by some miracle Mr Leon started swaying the electorate, would our rulers put up with it? The ANC dominates almost everything else, but it has never won an election here in Cape Town. This enrages the city's black power faction, which has prevailed upon the ANC to oust DA Mayor Helen Zille and impose a multi-party government. The stated reason for this initiative, launched two weeks ago, is that Zille's coalition is weak and unstable. Maybe so, but we all know it's really a power grab, inspired at least in part by fears that Africa's last white - and Creole - controlled city will continue to prosper while all else hurtles into a black hole of dysfunctionality. Some in the ruling party have a peculiar view of democracy. They see it as a system designed to put themselves in power.

No, there won't be civil war. Whites are finished. According to a recent study, one in six of us has left since the ANC took over, and those who remain know their place. I want to get out.

The Spectator.co.uk

1,787 words

QUESTION 4

CLOZE TEST

20 marks

Write the numbers 1-20 in your answer paper. Next to each give ONE word that will appropriately fill the corresponding gap in the text below.

Fires and worst drought in 100 years wake Australia up to the reality of climate change

By Kathy Marks in Sydney

Australia is confronting its worst drought in a century with rampant fires devastating agricultural areas, rivers drying [1], crops failing, and farmers forced to sell off their livestock.

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The bushfire season has begun months early and the government has pledged financial aid for despairing farmers, already laden with debt [2] five straight years of drought. Some may earn no income at all this year, and there are fears that the suicide [3] in the countryside, which is already high, will soar further.

The federal Treasurer, Peter Costello, said the countryside [4] facing a "rural recession".

[5] some politicians and environmental groups say that sympathetic words are [6] enough. They point to the increased frequency and severity of drought-causing El Niño weather patterns, attributed to global warming, and to Australia's leading role in poisoning the Earth's atmosphere with greenhouse gases.

Australians are among the world's biggest energy consumers, and the country is one of the top per capita producers of carbon dioxide emissions. Nonetheless, it is one of [7] two industrialised nations, along with the United States, that has refused to sign the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, arguing that it would harm the economy.

Now the economy looks likely to get a good shaking, as a result of the unseasonably [8] temperatures and pitifully low rainfall in recent months.

In New South Wales alone, 92 per cent of the state is officially in drought, and farmers [9] begun offloading stock before the hot, dry summer sets in, forcing them to buy feed and water. Sheep sales in the state are 70 per cent higher than last year, and at one saleyard last week, a record 67,000 sheep were sold in one day.

Agricultural economists, meanwhile, have slashed their winter crop forecasts by more than a third, and wheat exports have [10] suspended to meet domestic demand.

While some farmers are braced for their first total crop failure in half a century, consumers in urban areas are being warned to expect significantly [11] food bills.

The Prime Minister, John Howard, said the drought would almost certainly affect gross domestic product, which has been growing at an unprecedented rate for more than a decade. But he urged Australians to retain a [12] of perspective, saying that "the country overall is still doing very well".

Bushfires, meanwhile, were raging [13] south-eastern Australia yesterday, although summer does not officially start for more than six weeks, and fires of this ferocity are not normally seen until after Christmas.

With the vegetation tinder-dry after one of the driest winters on [14], hundreds of fires were burning across four states, fanned by high temperatures and strong winds. Much of the south-east was on an extreme fire danger alert. In Tasmania, scores of homes were threatened by fires advancing on the suburbs of Hobart, the state capital, this week.

Scientists warned the bushfire threat would [15] over coming decades, as climate change brought more frequent hot weather, accompanied by less rainfall.

Some scientists and environmental groups are predicting that the drought is here to stay, and are calling for [16] land and water management practices.

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Australia is one of the world's driest continents. But a national audit of water resources, released yesterday, found that dwindling water supplies were [17] wasted, despite restrictions imposed in six major cities, including Sydney.

Thanks to the drought, dams are drying up. One dam alone in New South Wales has lost a volume of water equivalent to Sydney Harbour, because of evaporation. River beds in bone-dry rural areas are empty and cracked. The National Climate Centre warned that [18] rain, the rivers will soon run dry.

The leader of the Green Party, Bob Brown, blamed government policies for helping to create the bushfires and droughts. He [19] Mr Howard's conservative government of encouraging Australian industries to burn coal, while starving renewable energy scientists of funding.

Greg Hunt, the parliamentary secretary to Ian Campbell, the Environment minister, said that Australia was [20] international targets for reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and investing in renewable energy and clean coal technology.

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