

THE WEST AFRICAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
OF ENTRIES, RESULTS AND CHIEF
EXAMINERS' REPORTS
ON THE

**WEST AFRICAN SENIOR SCHOOL
CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION
(WASSCE)**

CONDUCTED IN

THE GAMBIA

IN 2006

THE WEST AFRICAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF ENTRIES, RESULTS AND CHIEF EXAMINERS' REPORTS ON THE 2006 WEST AFRICAN SENIOR SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION (WASSCE) CONDUCTED IN THE GAMBIA

1. MAY/JUNE 2006 WASSCE (FOR SCHOOL CANDIDATES)

(1) Statistics of Entries and Results

(a) Entry Figures

- Number of candidates that sat the examination = 6,332
- Number of Male candidates = 3,665
- Number of Female candidates = 2,667

(i) Table I: Subjects with Entry Figures above Three Thousand (3,000) in the May/June 2004-2006 WASSCE In The Gambia

Subject	Entries			% Increase Over 2005
	2004	2005	2006	
English Language	4,730	5,597	6,358	11.97
Mathematics	4,730	5,597	6,358	11.97
Science (Core)	3,114	4,182	5,047	17.14
Agricultural Science	3,464	3,952	4,567	13.47
Economics	2,830	3,251	3,967	18.05
History	2,787	3,441	3,881	11.34
Islamic Studies	2,782	3,623	3,734	2.97
Geography	2,226	2,750	3,010	8.64

(ii) Table II: Subjects with Entry Figures Between 1,000 and 3,000 in the May/June 2004-2006 WASSCE in The Gambia

Subject	Entries			% Increase Over 2005
	2004	2005	2006	
Government	1,696	2,198	2611	15.82
Business Management	1,365	1,626	2107	22.83
Biology	1,849	1,968	1658	-18.70
Commerce	863	1,153	1657	30.42
Financial Accounting	1,265	1,429	1579	9.50
Literature-In-English	1,530	1,617	1493	-8.31
Visual Art	747	1,137	1376	17.37

(iii) **Table III: Subjects with Entry Figures Between 100 and 1,000 in the May/June 2004-2006 WASSCE in The Gambia**

Subject	Entries			% Change
	2004	2005	2006	
Foods & Nutrition	537	696	740	5.95
Chemistry	510	617	517	-19.34
Physics	436	482	439	-9.79
Technical Drawing	352	357	412	13.35
Christian Religious Studies	283	328	328	10.06
French	207	263	194	-35.57
Health Science	154	239	185	-29.19
Wood Work	166	226	182	-24.18
Physical Education	148	111	161	31.06
Further Mathematics	144	167	153	-9.15
Principles of Cost Accounting	90	88	136	35.29
Metal Work	150	157	112	-40.18

(iv) **Table IV: Subjects with Entry Figures less than 100 in the May/June 2004-2006 WASSCE**

Subject	Entries			% Change
	2004	2005	2006	
Home Management	100	100	93	-7.00
Clothing & Textiles	41	51	71	39.22
Applied Electricity	25	25	28	12.00
Auto Mechanics	21	20	26	30.00
Typewriting	16	18	19	5.56
Arabic	10	2	2	0.00
Engineering Science	-	2	2	0.00

(2) **Interpretation of Entry Statistics**

- (a) Overall entry figures increased within the 3-year period;
- (b) More males than females entered for the examination during the period;
- (c) Science subjects recorded fluctuating entries;
- (d) Most Vocational subjects recorded low entries which also fluctuated within the period;
- (e) Most Arts subjects recorded high entries which also increased steadily within the period.
- (f) The lowest entry figures in 2006 were recorded in Arabic and Engineering Science

(3) **Three-Year (2004-2006) Performance Statistics**

(a) **Table V: Subjects with Steady Rise in Performance**

Subject	% of Passes at Credit Level (Grades A1-C6)			% of Failure		
	2004	2005	2006	2004	2005	2006
Economics	5.32	9.58	9.88	73.51	17.63	68.74
Islamic Studies	11.55	20.59	24.16	57.03	35.42	55.58
Geography	15.45	20.37	27.35	57.65	53.72	51.32
Commerce	6.03	8.24	9.32	86.03	88.14	79.75
Chemistry	13.88	16.28	32.3	65.19	68.79	64.09
Physics	17.63	37.58	42.22	34.33	34.34	28.77
Further Mathematics	23.18	39.24	46.85	35.50	33.54	19.58
Applied Electricity	48.00	80.00	100.00	40.00	0.00	0.00

(b) **Table VI: Subjects with Fluctuations in Performance**

Subject	% of Passes at Credit Level (Grades A1-C6)			% of Failure		
	2004	2005	2006	2004	2005	2006
English Language	4.18	5.97	3.89	72.00	67.88	75.95
Science (Core)	17.35	19.06	10.86	56.15	62.27	68.02
Agricultural Science	18.98	5.14	7.67	24.77	62.05	18.72
Business Management	35.15	19.86	42.23	47.65	62.21	36.61
Biology	17.71	17.53	24.8	58.96	59.26	48.01
Financial Accounting	11.48	7.98	8.49	69.55	76.44	74.87
Foods & Nutrition	24.52	33.92	27.03	18.39	19.32	35.28
Technical Drawing	42.66	56.49	43.67	37.20	29.12	45.33
Christian Religious Studies	24.27	44.29	19.87	46.01	30.45	58.36
French	42.21	27.53	33.15	43.71	56.28	46.74
Health Science	61.07	31.14	36.52	11.40	28.95	24.74
Physical Education	18.88	1.92	4.49	48.25	79.81	75.64
Metal Work	41.09	38.78	60.00	43.15	40.14	7.27
Home Management	9.00	38.38	15.38	35.00	12.12	24.47
Clothing & Textiles	21.95	21.57	33.33	31.70	31.37	44.93
Arabic	10.00	100.00	50.00	50.00	0.00	0.00

(c) **Table VII: Subjects with Steady Fall in Performance**

Subject	% of Passes at Credit Level (Grades A1-C6)			% of Failure		
	2004	2005	2006	2004	2005	2006
Mathematics	3.63	3.25	3.07	91.38	90.27	88.93
History	61.74	43.43	36.72	28.56	64.02	35.18
Government	51.74	25.46	22.18	28.56	54.55	62.78
Literature-in-English	20.66	18.70	16.94	49.15	55.00	57.48
Visual Art	43.23	25.73	20.07	2.54	37.04	39.33
Cost Accounting	48.93	48.78	44.53	35.10	35.37	48.44
Typewriting	60.00	44.44	38.89	26.66	38.39	33.33

(4) **Interpretation of Performance Statistics**

- (a) On the average, less than 50% of candidates passed at credit level (A1-C6) in the three-year period;
- (b) Less than 10% of the candidates passed at credit level in English Language, Mathematics, Economics and Commerce;
- (c) Between 10% and 50% of the candidates passed at credit level in the sciences and most of the Vocational subjects;
- (d) Performance in English Language, Biology, Science Core and most of the vocational subjects fluctuated;
- (e) Performance in Mathematics, Cost Accounting, Typewriting and Visual Arts among others, dropped steadily within the period;
- (f) Performance in Chemistry, Physics, Further Mathematics, Economics and Geography among others improved steadily within the period.

(5) **Policy Implications of Statistics of Entries and performance**

- (a) Access to education increased over the three-year period as shown by the increase in overall entry figures for the three-year period.
- (b) Quality of education was poor over the three-year period as shown in the percentage of candidates that passed at credit level (A1-C6) in most subjects especially English Language, Mathematics, the Sciences as well as the Vocational subjects.
- (c) The generally poor performance of candidates over the three-year period is indicative of **poor (and perhaps, declining) quality of education** at the senior secondary school level.

- (d) The low level of performance in English Language and Mathematics (25% - 42%) over the three-year period calls for a **review of the strategies for the teaching and learning** of the two subjects.

(6) **Recommendations**

- (a) Government and school authorities should **identify the causative factors** for the poor (and in some cases steadily declining) performance level of school candidates at the senior secondary school level.
- (b) Government and school authorities should **apply necessary intervention strategies for quality assurance** in education at the secondary level.
- (c) Critical issues such as the **learning environment, appropriate infrastructure, required teaching aids and equipment, appropriate number and quality of teachers**, etc., should be addressed by the appropriate authorities in the education sector.
- (d) Government and school authorities should engage the services of **qualified teachers** of English Language and Mathematics and provide **appropriate teaching/learning equipment/facilities**.
- (e) Government and school authorities should encourage the **development of literary and debating societies and other subject-based societies** (especially in the Sciences, Mathematics and vocational/technical subjects), **sponsorship of intra-school and inter-school debates, quizzes and essay contests**, among others.
- (f) Government should take necessary steps to make **relevant books readily available and affordable** for students' use.

2. NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2006 WASSCE (FOR PRIVATE CANDIDATES)

(1) Statistics of Entries and Results

(a) Entry Figures for November/December 2006

- Number of candidates that sat the examination = 1,386
- Number of Male candidates = 961
- Number of Female candidates = 425

(b) Entry Figures

(i) Table I: Subjects with Entry Figures of over 400 in the Nov/Dec 2006 WASSCE in The Gambia

Subjects	Entries			%Increase Over 2005
	2004	2005	2006	
English Language	1514	1648	1320	-19.90
Mathematics	1014	1097	863	-21.33
Science	295	497	400	-24.25
Agricultural Science	574	525	460	-12.38

(ii) Table II: Subjects with Entry Figures of between 100 and 400 in the Nov/Dec 2006 WASSCE in The Gambia

Subjects	Entries			%Increase Over 2005
	2004	2005	2006	
Biology	506	338	263	-22.19
Business Management	214	297	229	-22.30
Commerce	270	209	193	-7.66
Financial Accounting	166	221	185	-16.29
Islamic Studies	556	516	298	-42.25
History	488	476	281	-40.97
Geography	180	194	154	-20.62
Government	424	437	247	-43.48
Economics	563	571	359	-37.13

Entries in all the above subjects dropped steadily. Entries in Islamic Studies, History and Government dropped by more than forty per cent (40%) below the previous year's figures.

(iii) **Table III: Subjects with Entry Figures of less than 100 in the Nov/Dec 2006 WASSCE in The Gambia**

Subjects	Entries			%Increase Over 2005
	2004	2005	2006	
Chemistry	83	72	88	22.22
Physics	57	53	66	0.25
Health Science	64	58	66	0.13
Further Mathematics	24	16	11	-0.31
Literature-In-English	80	115	84	-0.27
Cost Accounting	5	11	14	0.27
French	27	22	13	-0.41
Christian Religious Knowledge	21	18	24	33.33
Visual Arts	115	167	66	-0.60
Foods & Nutrition	29	35	30	-0.14
Technical Drawing	7	9	8	-0.11
Physical Education	13	8	4	-0.50
Home Management	8	3	7	1.33

(2) **Three-Year (2004-2006) Performance Statistics**

(a) **Table IV: Subjects with Steady Rise in Performance**

Subjects	% of Passes at Credit Level (Grades A1-C6)			% Failure		
	2004	2005	2006	2004	2005	2006
English Language	7.53	11.77	8.21	68.84	62.06	61.90
Mathematics	2.24	3.20	7.46	93.48	89.85	80.00

(b) **Table V: Subjects with Fluctuations in Performance**

Subjects	% of Passes at Credit Level (Grades A1-C6)			% Failure		
	2004	2005	2006	2004	2005	2006
Science Core	5.90	5.73	4.31	87.00	80.28	87.70
Physics	33.33	20.00	36.54	46.66	65.00	42.31
Agricultural Science	6.36	4.26	16.88	84.14	89.57	61.96
Health Science	33.89	40.82	38.18	35.59	26.53	32.73
Further Mathematics	23.03	45.45	12.50	30.76	27.27	50.00
Business Management	20.10	24.19	10.20	69.07	66.53	58.67
Literature-In-English	7.57	3.92	4.55	90.90	86.27	84.85
Christian Religious Studies	26.31	18.75	42.11	68.42	43.75	31.58
History	5.93	19.47	25.21	88.35	68.99	55.56
Foods & Nutrition	25.00	18.75	20.00	35.71	62.50	20.00

(c) **Table VI: Subjects with Steady Fall in Performance**

Subjects	% of Passes at Credit Level (Grades A1-C6)			% Failure		
	2004	2005	2006	2004	2005	2006
Financial Accounting	6.84	6.84	6.45	83.56	83.56	80.00
Physical Education	28.57	0.00	0.00	42.85	87.28	100.00

(3) **Interpretation of Performance Statistics**

- (a) On the average, candidates' overall performance was generally poor over the three-year period.
- (b) Although the core subjects - Mathematics and English Language - recorded an improved performance in 2006 over the 2005 level, less than 10% of the candidates passed each of the two subjects at credit level.
- (c) In most of the subjects in 2006, less than 30% of the candidates passed at credit level.

(2) **Implications of Entry and Result Statistics for Policy Formulation**

The statistics of entries and performance for the November/December WASSCE did not vary significantly in pattern from those of the May/June WASSCE. As such the comments under *Implications of Entry and Results Statistics for the May/June WASSCE* may also be applicable to the November/December WASSCE.

(3) **Recommendations**

The statistics of entries and performance for the November/December WASSCE did not vary significantly in pattern from those of the May/June WASSCE. As such, the *Recommendations* made for the May/June WASSCE may also be applicable to the November/December WASSCE.

3. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF CHIEF EXAMINERS' REPORTS ON THE MAY/JUNE 2006 WASSCE IN THE GAMBIA**

(1) **Standard of the Papers**

The Chief Examiners stated that the papers in the various subjects were equivalent in standard to those of previous years. The quality of the papers were also reported to be very high in terms of syllabus coverage, clarity of rubrics and unambiguity of questions. The Marking Schemes were also reported to be detailed.

(2) **Performance of Candidates**

The Chief Examiners reported that many of the candidates recorded a poor performance in subjects like Mathematics, Financial Accounting, Business Management, French and English Language. An improved performance was however reported in Further Mathematics, Literature-In-English and Geography.

In Biology, Chemistry, Health Science and Physics, the candidates recorded a generally poor performance.

(3) **Candidates' Strengths**

The Chief Examiners reported that some candidates did well.

They gave the following reasons for the good performance:-

- (a) Adherence to rubrics
- (b) Adequate knowledge of the subject matter.
- (c) Good illustrations and diagrams.

(4) **Candidates' Weaknesses**

The following weaknesses were highlighted by the Chief Examiners:

- (a) Misinterpretation of questions.
- (b) Poor command of the English Language as a result of poor competence level in the semantics of English. The candidates could not express themselves clearly. This deficiency had an adverse effect on their performance.
- (c) Inadequate preparation. The Chief Examiners reported in Literature-In-English 2, Mathematics 2, Physics 2, and Art 2, that there was evidence that the candidates did not prepare for the examination.
- (d) Poor knowledge of the subject matter. In the Sciences and Business subjects, candidates were unable to present their answers clearly and buttress their arguments with the required points.

(5) **Suggested Remedies**

The following suggestions were given by the Chief Examiners:-

- (a) Candidates should be adequately prepared for the examinations.
- (b) Teachers and candidates should work hard to cover the syllabus.
- (c) Regular assignments should be given to the candidates.
- (d) Candidates should read questions carefully and adhere to rubrics.
- (e) Candidates should buy/use recommended texts.
- (f) Candidates need to have a better understanding of the subject matter and the use of English Language.

4. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF CHIEF EXAMINERS' REPORTS ON THE NOV/DEC 2006 WASSCE FOR (PRIVATE CANDIDATES) IN THE GAMBIA**

(1) **Standard of the Papers**

The Chief Examiners report indicated that the standard of the papers in the various subjects were equivalent to those of past years. The papers adequately covered the syllabus and the questions were reported to be unambiguous, the rubrics were explicit and the Marking Schemes were detailed and adequately reflected the demands of the questions.

(2) **Performance of Candidates**

The performance of candidates was variously described as good, fair and poor by the Chief Examiners.

A poor performances was registered by a number of candidates in many of the subjects such as English Language, Visual Art, Literature-In-English and Mathematics.

About 50% of the candidates exhibited a poor knowledge of the English Language. The candidates showed lethargy in the mastery of grammar especially in French.

In Mathematics, less than 15% scored 50% and above. The candidates had difficulty in applying statistical and functional graphs to

solve problems. They lacked basic knowledge in indices, algebraic expressions, vectors, theory of logarithms, Venn diagram etc.

In the Science subjects, the Chief Examiners reported that performance in the Science papers were poor. In Biology 2, Agricultural Science 2, Physics 2, Science 1, and Chemistry 2, performance were described as unsatisfactory.

(3) **Candidates' Strengths**

In spite of the poor performance, some candidates were reported to have demonstrated some strengths.

- (a) Good knowledge of the subject matter.
- (b) Adherence to rubrics.
- (c) Clarity of work.
- (d) Knowledge of vocabulary and terms.

(4) **Candidates' Weaknesses**

The weaknesses exhibited by candidates accounted for their poor performance. These were namely:

- (a) Poor command of the English Language resulting in candidates' inability to understand questions and to express themselves adequately.
- (b) Poor knowledge of the subject matter.
- (c) Inadequate preparation.
- (d) Disregard of Rubrics.

(5) **Suggested Remedies**

The Chief Examiners made various recommendations for improving candidates' performance as follows:-

- (a) Candidates should read and understand the instructions before attempting the questions.
- (b) Candidates should acquaint themselves with the structure and scheme of the examination.
- (c) Candidates should be conversant with the syllabus for

the examination.

- (d) Candidates should possess basic text books.
- (e) Candidates should improve on their personal preparation through the development of a reading culture.
- (f) Candidates should endeavour to get appropriate tuition or assistance before attempting the examination.

WAEC HEADQUARTERS
ACCRA, 2008