

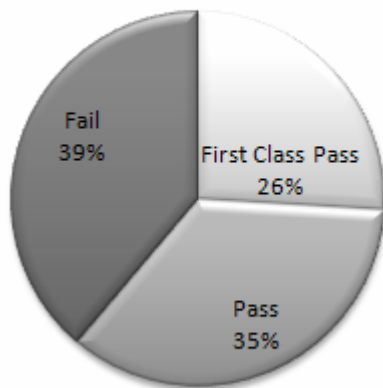
8960 English for Office Skills

General Observations

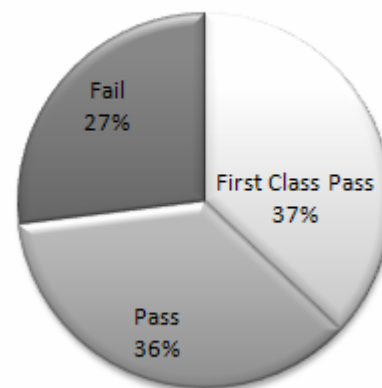
The English for Office Skills examinations are designed to meet the needs of organisations which value the accurate use of written English in their transactions. Typical candidates for these assessments are clerical or secretarial staff who may not have to draft original documents, but are certainly expected to prepare final drafts, or prepare documents for publication. The principal skills tested are linguistic accuracy (spelling, syntax, vocabulary and punctuation), comprehension (listening and reading) and proof-reading.

Standards overall are improving, especially, this year, at Level 1.

LEVEL ONE



LEVEL TWO



Areas of good performance

Most candidates completed all questions and demonstrated a reasonable level of understanding, with those obtaining a First Class Pass generally scoring well in all seven sections. It was pleasing to see further improvement in the spelling and comprehension exercises and generally good performance in the syntax, vocabulary and comparison proof-reading exercises.

Areas for development

The punctuation and final proof-reading exercise (without access to a correct version) continue to pose problems for many candidates, at both levels.

At Level 2, a significant number of candidates were unable to identify and/or correct the errors in the syntax section.

Recommendations

Candidates should practise exercises of the same type as those in the examinations. Past papers are available on the City & Guilds website www.cityandguilds.com/ieq. Whilst many candidates are able to spot syntactical errors, many are unable to supply the correction. Exercises in correcting syntactical errors should therefore prove advantageous. Practice in punctuating unpunctuated text is also to be recommended, with emphasis on the use of the apostrophe and the correct punctuation for indirect speech. It would also be useful for candidates to practise completing sentences grammatically, in order for them to cope better with the reading comprehension exercise.

Tips

- Make sure you can spell all the words in the spelling lists (available in the English for Office Skills Qualification Handbook – available on the City & Guilds website).
- Make sure you know (and can use correctly) all of the ‘similar words’ (eg access/excess) in the lists in the English for Office Skills Qualification Handbook.
- Practise summarising and adapting information in line with the requirements of the comprehension exercises.
- Make sure you fill in the gaps in the Reading Comprehension exercise so that the sentence is grammatically correct.
- Practise correcting syntactical errors.
- Use sample examination papers for practice available on the City & Guilds website.
- Make sure you understand the requirements of each part of the examination and follow the instructions given.
- Write answers clearly in the spaces provided.
- Check all your answers carefully.
- Do not leave blanks in your answer book – sometimes a sensible guess may give you an additional mark.
- Do not write in pencil.
- Do not ring more errors than stated in the instructions for the proof-reading exercises; doing so may result in a lower mark.
- Only use upper case characters where they are needed in the punctuation exercise.
- Write clearly (especially in the spelling, punctuation and vocabulary exercises). If your answer can't be read, it can't be marked as correct.

Additional comments

The English for Office Skills Qualification Handbook provides information for centres and candidates on the requirements of these examinations and is available, free of charge, along with a selection of sample papers, on the City & Guilds website. The Qualification Handbook includes lists of all the words that are used in both the spelling and vocabulary sections of the examinations.