

Observations of Examiners on Performance of Candidates in CSS CE-2017: The Examiners have made the following observations on the candidates' performance in compulsory and optional papers opted in written part of the CSS Competitive Examination 2017.

Essay:

The standard Essay was examined on footing of argumentation, content, language and intellectual signifier. The quality and level of critical argumentation on the whole was very poor. Most of the candidates were unable to identify the dormant contention in topics. In most papers content were inadequate and irrelevant. Most worrying aspect of Essays was the wrong use of English language. The sentence structure was glaringly flawed. Moreover grammatical and spellings mistakes were rife. The intellectual level of essays was mediocre and candidates were unable to even grasp the topic of the essay.

English (P&C):

The general performance of candidates was sub-standard, lacking originality, relevance, presence of mind, knowledge of facts and even the basics of the question. It seems that they were ignorant about basic rules of English grammar, sentence structure, usage of verbs, nouns, adjectives, etc. The précis of the given text (440 words) was expected in 140 to 150 words, but many of them made précis either even in more than 600 words or fewer than 50 words. Answers were mere reproduction of sentences from the paragraph in the question papers. Hand writing, in most of the cases was not legible. The candidates should understand the demand of the question and must provide relevant, to the point and comprehensive answers. Trial and error method in answering questions should be avoided. There were very few candidates who appeared somewhat serious, relevant, to the point and really honest to their cause. Reading comprehension, writing a Précis, grammar needs attention and improvement.

Current Affairs:

Candidates' understanding of current geopolitical, strategic and geo-economic trends was not encouraging, as with the exception of a few candidates, understanding current issues for a significant majority was inadequate and could not merit their appointment to the Civil Service. Poor communication/writing skills were glaringly visible from the answer scripts level. Only 8-10 % of the candidates showed satisfactory knowledge of national and international issues.

Pakistan Affairs:

The answer scripts reflected that internet has become a readymade source of information for our new generation. Majority of the candidates had not prepared well for the examination. They lacked conceptual clarity and their expression was poor. A small number of candidates displayed critical thinking skills, were logical in their approach and lucid in expression. Pakistan Affairs is a very important subject and is directly related to the ideological foundations of the state and as such, greater emphasis needs to be placed on it.

Islamic Studies:

Most of the candidates possessed only superficial knowledge of our religion Islam and did not possess the ability to refer to original sources of Islam. It was evident that majority of candidates depended on guides books available in the market or notes provided by tuition centres. 95% candidates had no knowledge regarding important topics like inheritance of women (daughter/wife/mother), were

confused about Ijma, and lacked clarity relating to election of rightly guide caliphs. In some cases, Maulawi, Mosques and Mubaligh (preacher) were also included in Masarif-e-Zakat, which exhibits the level of ignorance of the candidates.

Comparative of Major Religions for Non Muslims:

Candidate's knowledge in Hindi literature, types and number of *puranas* was placid, insufficient and disappointing. The candidates exhibited insufficient knowledge about important topics like Judaism, ethical system of Buddhism, the Zionist movement (and historical reasons for its existence), protestant / catholic beliefs & their comparative differentiation and the golden age of Hazrat Umer (R.A.), his reforms and its benefits in the current age. Responses of a small minority of the candidates produced good answers while vast majority wrote irrelevant material instead of what was asked in the question. Overall performance of the candidates and their ability was not satisfactory.

Accountancy & Auditing Paper-II:

Overall standard was not quality based. Merit of the candidates remained satisfactory. It has been observed that majority of the candidates had a theoretical base but had less concern for practical work.

Agriculture and Forestry:

Majority of students thought that the subject was easy and did not require extensive preparation. Therefore, majority had no depth of understanding and were not able to comprehend what was being asked. 90% candidates were not able to recognize the role of on-farm water management or recently announced projects of federal and provincial governments. Deficiencies in attempting questions can be overcome by broadening knowledge base and accessing quality reading materials from other parts of the world. Columns/News paper editions are also helpful but the best source is research / reviewed articles.

Applied Mathematics:

Overall performance of the candidates was very poor. Mistakes and blunders showed that they were not capable of solving papers of Mathematics. Only a few candidates attempted remarkably well.

Arabic:

Examining the papers of the subject, candidates were sufficiently knowledgeable about the syllabus and well prepared for the examination. Deficiencies included poor writing skills and weakness in Arabic grammar, Arabic composition and sentence structure. Candidates studied properly but could not present properly due to lack of command on the medium of Arabic language and fluency in writing skills.

Anthropology:

A great majority of candidates delivered quality content while answering the questions. Some irrelevant or superfluous information was added to enhance the volume which should have been avoided. The subject, being a narrative science, provides space for explaining the concepts and causes some repetition which should be avoided. Care should be taken in explaining Anthropology jargon & concepts.

Botany:

Standard of answers was not according to the questions asked. Some candidates attempted plant physiology, plant molecular biology and evaluation related questions. Standard of English & grammar was also weak. Elaboration of answers was not according to the requirement of the questions and lacked suitable examples to explain each concept with the help of figure/diagrams.

British History

A small number of candidates attained good to high score. Majority of the scripts reflected that the students were neither serious nor prepared for the examination. The standard of written expression in English was quite acceptable but content was weak.

Business Administration

Performance of most of the candidates was not up to the required standard. Most of the candidates were not well prepared and wrote irrelevant answers. The commonality of content, same material and same mistakes were observed in many scripts indicating guidance/coaching at specific centres for exam preparation. Apart from lack of depth of technical information, the English language expression was also weak both in vocabulary and grammar. It is recommended that candidates should consult proper text/recommended books instead of relying on their own observations or analyses.

Chemistry-I:

As a whole the performance of the candidates was very poor. The answers given by the candidates were not satisfactory. Only few students were found to be serious with the subject.

Chemistry-II:

CSS candidates should be keen observers, be to the point in their approach and have good analytical & decision making power. Most of the candidates had written what they know, not what they have been asked. Papers showed selective study and book mostly followed was text book of organic chemistry of B.Sc level. The standard of English was unsatisfactory. The candidates must read the instructions carefully and follow the FPSC rules/syllabus as well as attempt the question in the manner in which it has been asked.

Computer Science Paper-I:

Majority attempted open ended questions which required their point of view in respect to the impact of using or limiting use of technology. Over-all candidates demonstrated sufficient programming skills and the capability to think of the repercussions of technologies but were unable to handle theoretical details pertaining to concepts within computer science. The candidates could not attempt all questions that indicate selective preparation of the exam. The large scale variation in results is due to strategy of making question paper from whole syllabus.

Computer Science Paper-II:

The paper covered the major concepts of computer architecture, operating systems, and computer networks. The application of the paper was of a technical nature at the level of BS. The failed candidates have no required knowledge and basic concepts of the topics covered in paper-II.

Constitutional Law:

The performance of the candidates was not up to the mark. In some cases candidates resorted to superficial and irrelevant answers. Few candidates attempted quite well but their answers were long while some others were quite short. Case law, the beauty of this paper, was extinct; only few candidates quoted cases in their answers. Poor English was common phenomena in majority of the candidates.

Economics Paper-I:

Performance evaluation of answer sheets lead to the observation that candidates must pay attention to marks allocated to each question to determine the time that should be spent on each question. This was

not focused upon and unnecessary irrelevant details were provided. Poor handwriting, improper diagrams, wrong formulas were the main problems of the candidates. Despite this, some answer sheets were very good and attempted accordingly.

Economics Paper-II:

Overall, the candidates performed well. Some students did not properly understand the questions. Question relating to 'Growth vs. Distribution' was not understood and students did not know what the examiner expected them to write. The candidates must have a clear concept and complete grasp of the subject. They are advised to provide 'to the point' answers rather than giving un-necessary details.

English Literature:

Candidates were poor in grammar, sentence structure/syntax and vocabulary that hinder them to expressing their thoughts with clarity and conciseness. The candidates have stuffed irrelevant, superfluous and superficial material into their answers clearly visible in most of their scripts. Crammed answers were abundance, lacking originality and depth. Candidates plunged into the examination without any good grooming of the relevant field that prevents them to get good scores. Most of the candidates went off the track and could not grapple with the question at all. That was the main cause of their failure.

European History:

Rather than answering the question, the candidates seek to recreate the responses they have memorized. The candidates were evidently under the impression that examiners will not actually read their answers so it is better to throw in splashes of color and headings, even if there is no meaningful content behind them. Reasoning ability is also very poor. Most have clearly prepared the paper from compilations of solved papers and handbooks, or invested time learning tricks from CSS academies. It is clear that with a handful of exceptions, candidates do not have a reading habit.

Environmental Sciences:

The calibre/competence of the candidates appearing for superior services was surprising. Paper attempting style was non-serious. Knowledge level of large majority was below satisfactory level. The subject is very technical and needs an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the problems/issues/phenomena/technologies related to the environment. Knowledge of the candidates was limited, they appear to be preparing by rote learning without paying much-needed attention to concept development. Candidates should be encouraged to follow different books and must also get latest information from the internet (free books are also available on net). Selection of questions also showed that candidates did not try to go through the syllabus thoroughly.

Gender Studies:

Overall the quality of answers was good. Many candidates tried to explain things within religious / theological perspective despite the subject being a social science. So it was expected from the candidates to make scientific and evidence based analyses instead of banking on religious thoughts/traditions/narratives. Another tendency among candidates is to make sweeping and strong but unverified statements. For social scientists, such 'intellectual extremism' is not acceptable. Candidates need to learn objectivity / scientific rationality in argumentation / analysis. Generally, such an objective and scholarly analysis was missing in the text produced by the candidates.

Geography:

After evaluation of papers, it was felt that knowledge of the candidates was very superficial and questions were partially answered. What has been asked has not been clearly understood and answers in the papers were based on journalistic information. In most cases the depositional land forms of glacier was not clear. The candidates mixed many things together. The answers were not systematically organized, contained very long irrelevant discussions, had mistakes in heading and sub-headings and employed poor language. It also seemed that recommended books were not properly consulted.

Governance and Public Policy:

Almost 50% answers were based on candidate's own analysis and recommendations and 50% on factual knowledge of the subject. Majority of the candidates were found deficient in factual knowledge of events, legal/philosophical aspects of the questions and analytical aspects. A sizable number of the candidates brought religion in every aspect of answers even where it was not required. Majority were driven by unfounded social media comments/discussions instead of reading books, well reputed journals and undertaking their own judgement after due analysis. They were weak in understanding action research and majority gave improvement planning points according to their level of knowledge hence majority did satisfactorily. Responses were well in relating to good and bad governance indicators. Overall it was satisfactory performance.

Geology:

Performance of majority of the candidates was poor and they appeared in CSS Examination without any proper preparation and guidance. Answers of many questions indicate that candidates have no idea of the subject. Apparently their answer scripts display nicely written full length answer, but all either were irrelevant or different from the asked question. Candidates show weakness in mineralogy and paleontology. Answers of some of the candidates show similarity, reflecting a common source of preparation.

History of Pakistan & India

In presentation of content, 90% of the candidates lacked the art of presenting and interpreting the information. It clearly shows that they lack the ability to comprehend and analyze content. Overall; the candidates are facing the "language dilemma". Their language is sloppy, lacking power of expression and fluency. A lot of hard work is required in both content and language, to be research-oriented with a sophisticated taste of reading primary sources or authentic sources on the subject.

History of USA:

The answers of the students to the required questions were nothing but compilation of some random information without any critical analysis. The students gave information which was identical not only in its letter and spirit but also in its grammatical and language skill. It shows that they got help in their preparation from some identical 'guides' easily available in the market.

International Law:

Overall performance of the candidates was not below the mark. Just a few scripts display quality information on the subject. Majority of the papers relied on the standard notes provided by the coaching institutions. Only a few scripts have displayed quality of information with proper assimilation and comprehension of the analytical points. Their answers and points were supported by the relevant charts and diagrams which undoubtedly show their well-planned and well-structured preparation. Mature, compact and flawless expression should be learned by the candidates.

International Relations Paper-I:

Large number of scripts made no sense, leading to think why such candidates sat for highly prestigious CSS examination in the first place. Students did not read books, relying on notes available in market and utilizing these to narrate their own banal thinking and writing. The inclination of candidates was highly journalistic rather than substantive. Understanding of global issues was informed by a tendency to write things without perspective and without an element of thought as to what they are penning on paper.

International Relations Paper-II:

The candidates were judged in their performance on the base of application of knowledge in different situations. Many of them were good in knowledge but lacked to apply in given situation. Mostly candidates were found non-serious, lacked the sense of outline, format to attempt the task assigned in questions. Stereo styles of thoughts written in guides were picked by the most of the candidates. Very rare candidates were able to present their sagacity in challenging situations.

Islamic History & Culture:

Most of the candidates failed to give satisfactory answers. Structure and sequence of answers was not focused and presented hotchpotch answers. Surprisingly, few candidates attempted paper in Urdu which were rejected as per policy & were awarded zero marks. Some candidates did not follow the instruction so they were unable to give correct number of question to answers.

Journalism & Mass Communication:

It can be concluded that knowledge, expression and presentation of candidates was good. They were able to understand the soul of the questions. Most of them gave proper response with facts, diagrams, logic and references. Some candidates have poor handwriting which restricted to understand the text. A few students produced original thoughts, ideas with good presentation that facilitate the evaluator to understand and read clearly.

Law:

Overall performance of the candidates was poor. Majority could not comprehend fundamentals of the questions, casually attempted without considering what is required from them in the questions with some exceptions. Law is technical and specialized subject and require preparation accordingly.

Muslim Law & Jurisprudence:

It has been observed that performance of candidates in their answers was unsatisfactory. Their answers reflected poor preparation for the examination and haphazard style. Using faulty language was a common issue. Majority did not answer according to the requirements and within the framework of a question. They produced irrelevant material in their answers without understanding and focusing on the requirements of a question. Candidates are advised to read books recommended by FPSC and have a grip/command on the subject.

Philosophy:

It seemed that majority of the candidates never touched any book at all. Most of the candidates have never studied philosophy as a subject in their academic career. Most candidates have no idea about syllabus and examination. Poet of East, Allama Muhammad Iqbal, whom we hold in high esteem is

least read and most misquoted thinker. Some strange and amazing assertions of the candidates are amusing.

Physics Paper-I:

The performance was poor. Answers were not exactly according to the question and not supported by good examples from daily life. The solutions of problems were not done accordingly and were not supported by proper labelled diagrams. Most of the matter given in answers was irrelevant. Candidates must go through books instead of relying on notes.

Physics Paper-II:

Candidates had low knowledge of the subject at the level of B.Sc Honours.

Political Science Paper-I:

The overall performance was poor but response of few candidates was excellent in their attempt. In majority cases, they failed to understand the question properly. They wrote whatever they knew about the topic and did not concentrate on the examiner's interest as to why the question was asked. In questions where the applied aspect of knowledge of the candidates was to be tested, it was taken very lightly. The conceptual questions were intermingled with opinion loaded questions resulting in failure in convincing the examiner that candidate is familiar with concept of political science.

Political Science Paper-II:

The candidates were supposed to present their answers in logical and analytical sequence but most of the candidates did not know the skill of presentation. The candidates gathered information but failed to refer basic theories or utilize models in support of their answers. The candidates were stronger in the area of Pakistan politics as compared with other parts of political science. The candidates must study latest foreign books and other supporting material and their communication skills must be more powerful and effective.

Psychology:

Candidates cannot write good answers or guess unless their concepts are clear. Those who attempted paper well with conceptual clarity obtained good marks. Conceptual clarity regarding specific concepts of reliability and validity of the test, IQ/EQ, etc. must be enhanced. Candidates may consider consulting readings by Anastasi for concepts of testing / psychological assessment and any book authored by Coleman for clinical psychology.

Public Administration:

After going through the examination scripts, it has been observed that general approach while attempting the paper was quite shallow on the part of candidates. Poor hand writing, spelling mistakes and grammatical errors were observed in many scripts. Most of the candidates were not aware about the concept of public service motivation.

Punjabi:

Majority of the candidates considered it an easy subject for their success and due to lack of understanding of the language and literature, sought short-cut. They relied on stereotypical style using guides and notes available in the market. Very few candidates displayed serious preparation, wisdom and hard work in their papers.

Pure Mathematics:

Overall performance was poor. Most of the candidates do not know the proof techniques and consequently, their performance was zero in theoretical questions. The candidates should emphasize on learning proof techniques and how to take theoretical proofs of the “if and only if” type. Similarly, the candidates should emphasize on practicing more problems of different types.

Pashto:

The impression over the outcome of checking in the paper was that most candidates have excellent approach in Pashto to English and same extent from English to Pashto translation. On the other hand, majority were found poor in understanding Pashto literature.

Sindhi:

It was noticed that candidates have been answering the questions vaguely. The answers showed the lack of seriousness among the candidates.

Sociology:

Deficiencies were observed while checking the answers of the questions. Majority of the candidates answered in a general way instead of understanding what specific knowledge was required for the question they were attempting. A detailed review of literature of subject was required but candidates used only one text book that hinders them from fully grasping the depth of the subject matter. Most of the candidates did mistakes in spelling, comprehension and blunders in sentence structuring.

Town Planning & Urban Management:

Performance of the candidates showed an inability of expressing as well as lack of basic understanding of the subject and its related technicalities. Answers were composed in a generalized and unprofessional manner. Candidates showed a tendency of writing long answers drifting away from issues that were asked in questions. Candidates must focus on structuring the answers in accordance to what was being asked and in required sequence.

Zoology:

Most of the candidates attempted the paper based on their general knowledge rather than specific approach. Poor hand writing, spelling mistakes and poor sentence structure were common in most of the papers. In few instances, it was extremely difficult to understand what is written. In many answer sheets, no clear concept was presented and candidates were beating about the bush.