

Office Practice syllabus

Every examinable topic area in WAEC Office Practice, in one place — with how the papers are structured and answers to common questions. Compiled by waeccbt.com; not an official WAEC document.

How the papers work: Paper 1: 50 multiple-choice objective questions, all answered within 1 hour for 50 marks. Paper 2: a compulsory question on a simple case study plus six essay questions of which candidates answer any four — 100 marks, lasting 2 hours 10 minutes. Both papers are composite and taken at one sitting. The syllabus covers the office and its departments, office equipment, the reception, office documents and correspondence, mail, filing, communication, meetings, report writing and information.

1. The Office and Departments in an Organization

- Definition and functions of the office; office layout
- Principles of office organization: span of control, unity of control, unity of function
- Office procedures and sections of the office
- Departments in an organization and the functions of each
- The organizational chart

2. Office Equipment

- Meaning and types of office equipment
- Manual equipment: typewriter, perforator, stapling machine, duplicating machine
- Electrical equipment: electric typewriter, photocopier, shredding machine, computer, scanner, facsimile machine
- Uses and care of office equipment

3. The Reception

- Meaning of the reception and duties of the receptionist
- Documents handled by a receptionist
- Qualities of a receptionist
- Procedures for handling telephone calls

4. Office Documents and Correspondence

- Meaning and types of office documents: administrative, sales, stores and purchasing documents
- Uses and preparation of office documents
- Office correspondence: memos, business letters, notices of meetings, minutes, reports and circulars

5. Mail and Filing

- Types of mail: personal, official, urgent, confidential; incoming and outgoing mail
- Procedures for handling incoming and outgoing mail
- Definition, purposes and steps of filing; filing equipment
- Systems of filing: vertical, lateral, electronic
- Classifications of filing: alphabetical, chronological, numerical, geographical, alpha-numerical, subject

6. Communication

- Definition and importance of communication
- Verbal (oral and written) and non-verbal (visual, audio, audio-visual) communication
- Media of communication: print (newspapers, magazines, directories, handbills, flyers) and electronic (radio, television, audio and video conferencing)
- Communication service providers: NIPOST, telecommunication operators, media houses, satellite stations, the internet, GSM

7. Meetings

- Definition and purpose of meetings
- Types: statutory, emergency, board, management, annual general, staff and committee meetings
- Procedure for conducting a meeting from opening to adjournment
- Meeting terminologies: agenda, adoption, AOB, adjournment, quorum, motion
- Roles of the chairman and secretary; writing the minutes

8. Report Writing and Information

- Meaning of a report; types of formal report: short, long, investigative, routine/periodic
- Parts of a report and the importance of report writing
- Definition, types, uses and sources of information
- Storage of information; qualities of good information: timeliness, accuracy, speed of delivery, usability

Frequently asked questions

How is WASSCE Office Practice examined?

Two composite papers at one sitting: Paper 1 has 50 objective questions in 1 hour (50 marks); Paper 2 has a compulsory case study question plus any four of six essay questions in 2 hours 10 minutes (100 marks).

What does the case study question look like?

A short description of an office situation — a receptionist handling a visitor, a poorly run meeting, a filing problem — followed by questions asking you to identify faults and apply the correct office procedure.

Which filing classifications must I know?

Alphabetical, chronological, numerical, geographical, alpha-numerical and subject classifications, plus the vertical, lateral and electronic filing systems and the equipment used for each.

What is the correct order of business at a meeting?

Opening prayer, agenda, chairman's opening remarks, reading of the last minutes, corrections, adoption of the minutes, matters arising, main business, any other business, chairman's closing remarks, adjournment and closing prayer.

Which office equipment is examined?

Manual items such as the typewriter, perforator, stapler and duplicator, and electrical items such as the photocopier, shredder, computer, scanner and fax machine — their uses and how to care for them.

How should incoming mail be handled?

Receive and sort it, open non-confidential mail, date-stamp it, record it in the inward mail register, attach enclosures, distribute to departments and file copies where required.

What makes a good report?

Clear parts in order — title, terms of reference, procedure, findings, conclusion and recommendations — written objectively in plain language, accurate, and delivered on time to the person who asked for it.

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