

THE WEST AFRICAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL



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

**THE WEST AFRICAN SENIOR SCHOOL
CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION**

**CONDUCTED IN
SIERRA LEONE**

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 SIERRA LEONE

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

(1) Statistics of Entries and Results

(a) Entry Figures

- Number of candidates that sat the examination = 16,165
- Number of Male candidates = 11,447
- Number of Female candidates = 4,718

(b) Subject Entries for Three Years (2004 - 2006)

(i) Table I: Subjects with Entry Figures of over 10,000 in the May/June 2004 - 2006 WASSCE in Sierra Leone

Subject	Entries			% Increase Over 2005
	2004	2005	2006	
English Language	11,712	13,375	16,165	20.86
Mathematics	11,705	13,340	16,140	20.99
Biology	9,812	11,082	13,587	22.60
Economics	8,926	10,425	12,453	19.45

(ii) Table II: Subjects with Entry Figures of between 1,000 and 10,000 in the May/June 2004 - 2006 WASSCE in Sierra Leone

Subject	Entries			% Increase Over 2005
	2004	2005	2006	
Literature-In-English	7,916	8,622	9,941	15.29
History	5,408	6,032	6,830	13.23
Agricultural Science	4,972	5,570	8,173	46.73
Government	4,770	5,406	6,150	13.76
Commerce	4,362	5,092	6,117	20.13
Business Management	4,245	4,823	5,914	22.62
Financial Accounting	3,868	4,480	5,654	26.21
Principles of Cost Accounting	3,409	4,036	4,983	23.46
Chemistry	2,914	3,326	4,204	26.39
Christian Religious Knowledge	2,662	2,960	3,369	13.82
Physics	2,475	2,867	3,518	22.71
Geography	2,165	2,643	4,303	62.81
Further Mathematics	1,717	1,857	2,157	16.16
Health Science	1,324	1,669	2,127	27.44
Islamic Studies	810	907	1,007	11.03

(iii) **Table III: Subjects with Entry Figures of between 100 and 1,000**

Subject	Entries			% Increase Over 2005
	2004	2005	2006	
Physical Education	460	577	870	50.78
Science (Core)	355	514	745	44.94
Home Management	427	463	827	78.62
French	288	372	283	(-23.92)
Foods & Nutrition	283	347	440	26.80
Engineering Science	287	328	389	18.59
Technical Drawing	167	178	205	15.17
Clothing & Textiles	122	154	230	49.35
Clerical Office Duties	104	104	119	14.42

(iv) **Table IV: Subjects with Entry Figures of less than 100**

Subject	Entries			% Increase Over 2005
	2004	2005	2006	
Shorthand	51	40	13	(-67.5)
Electronics	40	35	21	(-40.0)
Woodwork	26	35	37	5.71
Applied Electricity	28	21	24	14.29
Metalwork	26	17	29	70.59
Arabic	17	16	07	(-56.25)
Management-In-Living	25	15	24	60.0
Building Construction	18	14	07	(-50.0)
Visual Art	07	08	10	25.0
Typewriting	191	178	86	(-51.69)

(c) **Interpretation of Entry Statistics**

- (i) Overall entry figure increased steadily during the 3-year period.
- (ii) Subject entries increased in most cases but dropped in six subjects.
- (iii) Apart from English and Mathematics, the highest entry figures for the three-year period were recorded in Biology and Economics.
- (iv) The highest increase in entry figures in 2006 was recorded in Home Management, Metalwork, Geography, Management-in-Living and Physical Education.
- (v) Less than 10% of the candidates registered for the Technical and Vocational subjects.

- (vi) The lowest entry figure was recorded in Building Construction and Arabic.
- (vii) Shorthand, Arabic, Typewriting, Building Construction and Electronics recorded the highest percentage decrease in the 2006 entry figures relative to the 2005 figures.

(2) **Statistics of Results**

(a) **Table V: Three-Year Performance Trend in Eighteen (18) Popular Subjects in the May/June WASSCE in Sierra Leone**

Subject	% of Passes at Credit Level (Grades A1-C6)			% of Failure (Grade F9)		
	2004	2005	2006	2004	2005	2006
English Language	9.56	11.60	11.20	51.98	45.84	51.88
Mathematics	4.10	3.25	3.62	86.80	88.65	85.74
Biology	4.75	1.68	11.25	86.51	91.29	68.57
Economics	6.96	7.78	7.79	64.34	56.18	62.94
Literature-In-English	7.68	10.14	5.62	66.21	59.29	70.61
History	53.42	42.94	45.15	38.26	27.77	28.90
Agricultural Science	15.10	3.20	11.45	80.09	82.23	68.00
Government	29.16	47.93	47.66	43.10	28.86	25.90
Commerce	7.79	10.19	78.69	74.32	73.10	64.31
Business Management	13.55	9.39	44.93	69.07	73.09	33.53
Financial Accounting	25.67	11.65	10.58	44.62	57.99	57.48
Principles of Cost Accounting	9.86	12.64	15.41	76.03	70.94	66.21
Chemistry	9.37	4.51	8.42	74.98	88.54	79.21
Christian Religious Knowledge	6.95	22.20	10.69	74.61	50.74	71.56
Physics	22.67	5.13	10.46	53.90	81.06	70.98
Geography	9.38	9.50	16.17	59.63	66.59	58.28
Further Mathematics	3.96	4.63	2.87	83.63	83.14	74.92
Health Science	10.50	9.35	9.92	64.65	64.11	69.72

(b) **Candidates' overall Performance in the May/June 2006 WASSCE**

Candidates' overall performance in the May/June 2006 WASSCE did not show any significant improvement when compared to the previous year. Details of the number and percentage of candidates that passed in each grade per subject are as follows:-

(i) **Subjects in which at least 25% of the Candidates Obtained Grades A1-C6**

At least twenty-five per cent (25%) of the candidates obtained grades A1-C6 in the following subjects:-

Clothing & Textiles (61.30%) Metalwork (58.62%)

Physical Education (41.03%)	Government (47.66%)
Business Management (44.93%)	History (45.15%)
Building Construction (42.86%)	French (29.68%)
Engineering Science (35.48%)	Arabic (28.57%)
Foods & Nutrition (48.18%)	Science (Core) (59.33%)
Applied Electricity (50.00%)	
Home Management (41.84%)	

Clothing & Textiles, Science (Core) and Metalwork led the group with 61.30%, 59.33%, 58.62% respectively.

(ii) **Subjects in which less than 25% of the Candidates Obtained Grades A1-C6**

Less than twenty-five per cent of the candidates obtained grades A1-C6 in twenty-two subjects.

Management-In-Living (20.83%)	Physics (10.64%)
Clerical Office Duties (20.17%)	Visual Arts (20.00%)
Health Science (9.92%)	Commerce (18.69%)
Further Mathematics (9.32%)	Geography (16.17%)
Principles of Cost Accounting (15.41%)	Chemistry (8.42%)
Technical Drawing (11.71%)	Woodwork (8.11%)
Agricultural Science (11.45%)	Economics (7.77%)
English Language (11.20%)	Electronics (4.76%)
Christian Religious Knowledge (10.69%)	Mathematics (3.63%)
Financial Accounting (10.58%)	Islamic Studies (2.98%)
Literature-In-English (5.65%)	Shorthand (0.00%)

(iii) **Subjects in which more than 40% of Candidates Failed**

The following subjects recorded high failure rate with more than 40% of the candidates obtaining grade F9:-

Further Mathematics (74.92%)	Commerce (64.31%)
Financial Accounting (57.48%)	Mathematics (85.74%)
Principles of Cost Accounting (66.21%)	Biology (68.57%)
Agricultural Science (68.00%)	Shorthand (100.00%)
Christian Religious Knowledge (71.56%)	Typewriting (87.21%)
Health Science (69.72%)	Chemistry (79.21%)
Islamic Studies (80.73%)	Economics (62.94%)
Literature-In-English (70.61%)	Geography (58.28%)
English Language (51.88%)	Physics (70.98%)
Engineering Science (40.10%)	Electronics (57.14%)
Technical Drawing (70.24%)	Woodwork (75.68%)
Visual Arts (55.12%)	French (55.12%)

(c) **Interpretation of Performance Statistics**

- (i) On the average, less than 50% of candidates passed at credit level (A1-C6) in the three-year period;
- (ii) Less than 15% of the candidates passed at credit level in English Language, Mathematics and Economics in the three-year period;
- (iii) Between 5% and 15% of the candidates passed at credit level in the science subjects in the three-year period.

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

- (i) Access to education increased over the three-year period as shown by the increase in overall entry figures for the three-year period.
- (ii) 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.
- (iii) 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.
- (iv) The low level of performance in English Language and Mathematics over the three-year period calls for a **review of the strategies for the teaching and learning** of the two subjects.

(e) **Recommendations**

- (i) Government should address the declining entries in subjects like Electronics, French as well as the Technical and Vocational subjects.
- (ii) 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.
- (iii) Government and school authorities should **apply necessary intervention strategies for quality assurance** in education at the secondary level.
- (iv) 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.

- (v) Government and school authorities should engage the services of **qualified teachers** of English Language and Mathematics and provide **appropriate teaching/learning equipment/facilities**.
- (vi) 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.
- (vii) Government should take necessary steps to make **relevant books readily available and affordable** for students' use.

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2006 WASSCE (FOR PRIVATE CANDIDATES)

(1) **ENTRY FIGURES**

- Number of candidates that entered the examination = 5,739
- Number of Male candidates = 3,953
- Number of Female candidates = 1,786

(a) **Table I: Subject Entries 2006 (Private candidates) WASSCE**

There were twenty-nine subjects from which candidates made their subject choices. A summary of the subject entries on gender basis is as follows:-

Subject	Male	Female	Total
English Language	3,708 (69.36)	1,638 (30.64%)	5,346
Mathematics	2,620 (66.79%)	1,303 (33.21%)	3,923
Commerce	1,332 (67.68%)	636 (32.32%)	1,968
Business Management	1,124 (63.65%)	642 (36.35%)	1,766
Financial Accounting	1,178 (62.93%)	694 (37.07%)	1,872
Principles of Cost Accounting	969 (65.3%)	515 (34.70%)	1,484
Clerical Office Duties	12 (22.22%)	42 (77.78%)	54
Typewriting	1 (14.29%)	6 (86.71%)	7

Shorthand	0 (0.00%)	3 (100.00%)	3
Economics	2,631 (67.41%)	1,272 (32.59%)	3,903
Literature-In-English	1,127 (70.39%)	474 (29.61%)	1,601
Government	1,299 (73.64%)	465 (26.36%)	1,764

History	1,225 (74.83%)	412 (25.17%)	1,637
Christian Religious Knowledge	577 (67.41%)	279 (32.59%)	856
Geography	503 (87.02%)	75 (12.98%)	578
Islamic Studies	299 (87.94%)	41 (12.06%)	340
French	49 (64.47%)	27 (35.53%)	76
Arabic	9 (90.00%)	1 (10.00%)	10
Biology	1,365 (65.06%)	733 (34.94%)	2,098
Agricultural Science	1,137 (80.70%)	272 (19.30%)	1,409
Chemistry	812 (73.02%)	300 (26.98%)	1,112
Physics	672 (76.98%)	201(23.02%)	873
Health Science	269 (72.31%)	103 (27.69%)	372
Science (Core)	258 (79.63%)	66 (20.37%)	324
Physical Education	164 (78.47%)	458 (21.53%)	209
Further Mathematics	363 (86.84%)	55 (13.16%)	418

(b) **Interpretation of Entry Statistics**

- (i) Entries for Typewriting, Shorthand and Arabic and the Science subjects were very low.
- (ii) The overall entry figure for males was more than that of females.

- (iii) English Language, Mathematics and Economics recorded high entries.
- (iv) The lowest entry of less than 1% was recorded in Arabic, Shorthand and Typewriting.

(2) **Statistics of Performance**

(a) **Table II: Performance in Core Subjects**

Subject	Male		Female		Total	
	No. Sat	No. & % Pass A1-C6	No. Sat	No. & % Pass A1-C6	No. Sat	No. & % Pass A1-C6
English Language	3,708	572 (15.42)	1,638	226 (13.80)	5,346	798 (14.93)
Mathematics	2,620	389 (14.85)	1,303	79 (6.06)	3,923	468 (11.93)

(b) **Table III: Performance in Business Subjects**

Subject	Male		Female		Total	
	No. Sat	No. & % Pass A1-C6	No. Sat	No. & % Pass A1-C6	No. Sat	No. & % Pass A1-C6
Commerce	1,332	304 (22.82)	636	73 (11.48)	1,968	377 (19.16)
Business Management	1,124	533 (47.42)	642	182 (28.35)	1,766	715 (40.49)
Financial Accounting	1,178	212 (18.00)	694	55 (7.93)	1,872	267 (14.26)
Principles of Cost Accounting	969	358 (36.95)	515	94 (18.25)	1,484	452 (30.46)
Clerical Office Duties	12	5 (41.67)	42	22 (52.38)	54	27 (50.00)
Typewriting	1	0 (0.00)	6	1 (16.67)	7	1 (14.29)

(c) **Table IV: Performance in Arts Subjects**

Subject	Male		Female		Total	
	No. Sat	No. & % Pass A1-C6	No. Sat	No. & % Pass A1-C6	No. Sat	No. & % Pass A1-C6
Economics	2,631	470 (17.86)	1,272	124 (9.75)	3,903	594 (15.22)
Literature-In-English	1,127	153 (13.58)	474	38 (8.02)	1,601	191 (11.93)
Government	1,299	576 (44.34)	465	105 (22.58)	1,764	681 (38.61)
History	1,225	723 (59.02)	412	165 (40.05)	1,637	888 (54.25)
Christian Religious Knowledge	577	199 (34.49)	279	80 (28.67)	856	279 (32.59)
Geography	503	47 (9.34)	75	1 (1.33)	578	48 (8.30)
Islamic Studies	299	118 (39.46)	41	8 (19.51)	340	126 (37.06)

(d) **Table V: Performance in Language Subjects**

Subject	Male		Female		Total	
	No. Sat	No. & % Pass A1-C6	No. Sat	No. & % Pass A1-C6	No. Sat	No. & % Pass A1-C6
English Language	3,708	572 (15.43)	1,638	226 (13.80)	5,346	798 (14.93)
French	49	20 (40.82)	27	3 (11.11)	76	23 (30.26)
Arabic	9	2 (22.22)	1	1 (100.00)	10	3 (30.00)

(e) **Table VI: Performance in Science and Mathematical Subjects**

Subject	Male		Female		Total	
	No. Sat	No. & % Pass A1-C6	No. Sat	No. & % Pass A1-C6	No. Sat	No. & % Pass A1-C6
Mathematics	2,620	389 (14.85)	1,303	79 (6.06)	3,923	468 (11.93)

Biology	1,365	163 (11.94)	733	53 (7.23)	2,098	216 (10.30)
Agricultural Science	1,137	177 (15.57)	272	18 (6.62)	1,409	195 (13.84)
Chemistry	812	83 (10.22)	300	15 (5.00)	1,112	98 (8.81)
Physics	672	110 (16.37)	201	11 (5.47)	873	121 (13.86)
Health Science	269	71 (26.39)	103	21 (20.39)	372	92 (24.73)
Science (Core)	258	130 (50.39)	66	12 (18.18)	324	142 (43.83)
Physical Education	164	92 (56.10)	45	21 (46.67)	209	113 (54.07)
Further Mathematics	363	48 (13.22)	55	3 (5.45)	418	51 (12.20)

(f) **Interpretation of Performance Statistics**

- (i) Performance in the Core subjects - English Language and Mathematics - was poor. 14.93% of the candidates passed at credit level in English Language.
- (ii) Between 14% and 30% of the candidates passed at credit level in the Business subjects.
- (iii) Over 35% of the candidates passed at credit level in History, Christian Religious Knowledge and Islamic Studies.
- (iv) Between 8% and 13% of the candidates passed at credit level in Biology, Physics and Chemistry.

(g) **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 SIERRA LEONE**

(1) **Standard of the Papers**

The Chief Examiners reported that the papers compared favourably with those of previous years and that the Marking Schemes were comprehensive and adequate in the allocation of marks.

(2) **Performance of Candidates**

The Chief Examiners' reports indicated that candidates' performance varied from poor to good with occasional flashes of brilliance.

Candidates' performance were reported to be good in Business Management 2, Clerical Office Duties 2, Principles of Cost Accounting 2, Typewriting 2, Engineering Science 2, Woodwork 1, Applied Electricity 2 and Metalwork 1.

An improved performance was reported in Economics 2, Literature-In-English 3, Agricultural Science 1, Biology 1, Science 2, Physics 1 & 2, Physical Education 1, Management-In-Living 3, Clothing & Textiles 2 and Visual Arts 1.

Candidates' performance was reported to be poor in Financial Accounting 2, Shorthand, Christian Religious Knowledge 2, Geography 1 & 2, Literature-In-English 2, English Language 1, Mathematics 2, Agricultural Science 2, Biology 2, Chemistry 2, Health Science 2, Physical Education 2, Technical Drawing 2, Woodwork 1, 2 & 3, Metalwork 2, Home Management 2, Management-In-Living 2, Foods and Nutrition 2, Government 2, French 2 and Further Mathematics 2.

(3) **Candidates' Strengths**

The Chief Examiners' complimented the candidates for demonstrating the following strengths:

- (a) Mastery of the subject matter.
- (b) Adherence to rubrics.
- (c) Good communication skills

(4) **Candidates' Weaknesses**

The Chief Examiners' reported the following observed weaknesses in the candidates:

- (a) Inadequate knowledge of the subject matter.
- (b) Inadequate preparation.
- (c) Poor knowledge of grammar.
- (d) Poor time management.
- (e) Poor mathematical background.
- (f) Poor Handwriting
- (g) Non-adherence to Rubrics
- (h) Poor Diagrams and Illustrations
- (i) Inappropriate Apparatus/Materials

(5) **Suggested Remedies**

The Chief Examiners' proffered the following suggestions for improving candidates' performance:

- (a) Candidates should learn and understand command words to help them answer questions correctly.
- (b) Candidates should prepare adequately for the examination.
- (c) Candidates should adhere strictly to the rubrics.
- (d) Schools should endeavour to provide candidates with the correct Specimen/Apparatus.
- (e) Candidates should apportion their time appropriately and stop the use of preambles and lengthy introductions.
- (f) Candidates should limit their answers to the demands of the question.
- (g) Teachers should teach concepts and principles correctly.
- (h) Candidates should be exposed to practical work as early as SSS1 level.
- (i) Candidate should be taught how to express their ideas vividly in a variety of sentence patterns and structures.
- (j) Candidates should be taught the mechanics of English and French grammar.

4. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF CHIEF EXAMINERS' REPORTS ON THE NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2006 WASSCE**

(1) **Standard of the Papers**

Most of the Chief Examiners reported that the papers were of the required standard and compared favourably with those of previous years.

(2) **Performance of Candidates**

The performance of candidates was variously reported to have been average, below average and poor with occasional instances of good performance.

A fairly good performance was reported in Business Management 1, Typewriting 2, Christian Religious Knowledge 1 and Engineering Science 1.

A poor performance was reported in Clerical-Office-Duties 2, Commerce 2, Principles of Cost Accounting 2, Shorthand 2, Economics 2, Geography 1B & 2, Government 2, Literature-In-English 3, Mathematics 2, Further Mathematics, Agricultural Science 3, Biology 2 & 3, Chemistry 2 & 3, Financial Accounting 2 and Technical Drawing 1.

(3) **Candidates' Strengths**

The Chief Examiners commended the candidates for demonstrating the following strengths:

- (a) Adequate knowledge of the subject matter.
- (b) Adherence to rubrics.
- (b) Good oral and written expression.

(4) **Candidates' Weaknesses**

The Chief Examiners' reports on candidates' weaknesses were diverse. These were notably:-

- (a) Inadequate knowledge of the subject matter.
- (b) Poor knowledge of grammar/spellings.
- (c) Inadequate coverage of the syllabus.

(5) **Suggested Remedies**

The following remedies were suggested to improve candidates' performance:

- (a) Candidates should endeavour to complete the syllabus.
- (b) Candidates should improve on their oral and written expression, especially in French and English Language.
- (c) Candidates should be encouraged to acquire and use the prescribed texts.
- (d) The contact time between teachers and students should be improved upon.
- (e) Candidates should apportion their time appropriately when answering questions.