

**UNIVERSITY OF MALTA**

**THE MATRICULATION EXAMINATION  
SEC LEVEL**

**COMMERCE**

**MAY 2013**

**EXAMINERS' REPORT**

**MATRICULATION AND SECONDARY EDUCATION  
CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS BOARD**

**SEC COMMERCE  
MAY 2013 SESSION  
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**Part 1: Statistical Information**

The following comments summarize general weaknesses found, the rectification of which, will assist candidates when these areas are examined in future examinations.

**Table 1: Distribution of candidates' grades for Sec Commerce May 2012**

| Grades            | 1   | 2   | 3    | 4    | 5   | U   | Absent | Reg  | 4   | 5   | 6   | 7   | U   | Abs  | Reg  | Total |
|-------------------|-----|-----|------|------|-----|-----|--------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|-------|
| No. of candidates | 1   | 1   | 3    | 2    | 1   | 1   | 1      | 10   | 0   | 1   | 1   | 0   | 0   | 2    | 4    | 14    |
| Total %           | 7.1 | 7.1 | 21.4 | 14.3 | 7.1 | 7.1 | 7.1    | 71.4 | 0.0 | 7.1 | 7.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 14.3 | 28.6 | 100.0 |

**PAPER I**

**QUESTION 1**

For part (a) some satisfactory answers were given. Others mentioned the functions without explaining them, thus losing half of the marks. A few candidates wrote that the Central Bank lends to the general public. Parts (b), (d) and (e) were well-answered.

Satisfactory answers were given to given for part (c), however many candidates are of the opinion that the overdraft interest is lower than the loan interest.

**QUESTION 2**

In part (a) most of the candidates were only able to mention the fact that international trade is important for Malta only because we have limited resources, while failing to mention other important facts like having a better choice and being cheaper to buy goods from abroad rather than producing them locally.

Poor answers were given for parts (b) and (e). In part (c) not enough advantages and disadvantages were given for such an easy question. Part (d) was well-answered while a multitude of different figures were given for parts (f) and (g).

In part (h) candidates were only able to mention two or three advantages and some candidates stated that "we don't have to *translate* the money".

**QUESTION 3**

All candidates answered part (a) correctly. Parts (b), (c) and (f) were well-answered. Surprisingly, many candidates failed to gain full marks on parts (d) and (e) which were basic questions on the retailer and wholesaler.

**QUESTION 4**

Very poor answers were provided for parts (a) and (b). Some students start writing without stating which are the advantages and which the disadvantages! In part (c) only a few candidates managed to mention three ways by which the government could help local traders. However, as in the case of *E-Commerce* (question 3e above), students are well versed with the advantages of using mobile phones and internet and were also capable of applying these to the business world.

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**QUESTION 5**

As in the past years, about half the students mixed up public corporations with public companies, in part (a). Satisfactory answers were given for part (b) while very satisfactory answers were given for part (c).

**QUESTION 6**

On average the candidates obtain 50% of the marks in this question. Most of them had a good basic knowledge of the functions of the MFSA. Most were not very clear about the functions of the Consumer Claims Tribunal although they had a general idea of its main function. A substantial amount of candidates either left part (b) out or answered it incorrectly.

**PAPER IIA**

Overall the standard of response was very satisfactory. Candidates showed a sound knowledge of understanding of the topics examined. Most of the candidates were very well prepared and demonstrated a wide range of ability in completing the examination. In fact only 1 candidate scored less than 50%, the main reason being that only 3 questions were answered instead of 4 as required.

Question 4 was the most popular question with all the candidates attempting this question. Questions 2 and 7 were the least popular.

**QUESTION 1**

Only 50% of the candidates attempted this question. Half of the candidates answering this question did very well and scored high marks, whereas the other half encountered problems in part (b) since they misunderstood the question and their answer was out-of-point; and in part (d) where they confused the term employer's liability with the unlimited liability of a company.

**QUESTION 2**

Generally candidates who chose this question scored high marks. All candidates scored full marks in part (c) but the candidate who scored low marks left part (e) completely out.

**QUESTION 3**

This question was very well answered by most of the candidates. Some candidates failed miserably in part (c), where they confused the terms *balance of trade* and *balance of payments*.

**QUESTION 4**

This question was answered by all the candidates and the average mark was 70%. Marks were lost in part (d), whereas there were very good and current examples of:

- the services offered by commercial banks;
- the difference between investment in ordinary shares and debentures;
- companies listed on the stock exchange.

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**QUESTION 5**

Parts (a) and (c) were answered poorly by nearly all the candidates. The answers for parts (b) and (d) were quite satisfactory.

**QUESTION 6**

This question was very generally well answered by most of the candidates.

**QUESTION 7**

Candidates lost many marks in parts (b) and (e) of this question.

**PAPER II B**

Candidates sitting for this Paper were not prepared and they failed in all questions. They have not acquired the most basic and fundamental principles of business operations and commerce.

**QUESTION 1**

Candidates may have lost marks because they may have misunderstood the text possibly due to weak English language knowledge/understanding.

**QUESTION 2**

Most parts of this question were answered incorrectly.

**QUESTION 3**

Candidates were not sufficiently prepared to answer a question relating to accounting terms.

**QUESTION 4**

Candidates answered poorly these questions illustrating that they have not acquired the basic principles of the functions of money and the purpose of an insurance policy.

**QUESTION 5**

All aspects of this question were answered very poorly.

**QUESTION 6**

Very poor answers were given for this question.

**Chairperson  
Examiners' Panel 2013**