

# UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

## DEPARTMENT OF ACADEMIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS

FIRST SEMESTER MAIN EXAMINATION, DECEMBER 2014

**TITLE OF PAPER:** ACADEMIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS: ENGLISH FOR  
ACADEMIC PURPOSES (EAP)

**COURSE NUMBER:** ACS 102

**TIME ALLOWED:** 2 HOURS

- INSTRUCTIONS:**
1. Write the name of your Faculty and Programme at the top of the cover of the answer folder.
  2. Answer both questions.
  3. This paper consists of **9 pages**, cover page included.

THIS EXAMINATION PAPER IS NOT TO BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION IS  
GIVEN BY THE INVIGILATOR.

**QUESTION 1:                      READING COMPREHENSION    [50 MARKS]**

**Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow. From questions 1-6, write the letter of the best answer, and then from 7-11 answer in full sentences.**

**1** No longer is asthma considered a condition with isolated, acute episodes of bronchospasm. Rather, asthma is now understood to be a chronic inflammatory disorder of the airways—that is, inflammation makes the airways chronically sensitive. When these hyper-responsive airways are irritated, airflow is limited, and attacks of coughing, wheezing, chest tightness and breathing difficulty occur.

**2** Asthma involves complex interactions among inflammatory cells, mediators, and the cells and tissues in the airways. The interactions result in airflow limitation from acute **bronchoconstriction**, swelling of the airway wall, increased mucus secretion, and airway remodelling. The inflammation **also** causes an increase in airway responsiveness. During an asthma attack, the patient attempts to compensate by breathing at a higher lung volume in order to keep the air flowing through the constricted airways, and the greater the airway limitation, the higher the lung volume must be to keep airways open. The **morphological changes** that occur in asthma include bronchial infiltration by inflammatory cells. Key effector cells in the inflammatory response are the mast cells, T lymphocytes, and eosinophils. Mast cells and eosinophils are also significant participants in allergic responses, hence the similarities between allergic reactions and asthma attacks. Other changes include mucus plugging of the airways, interstitial edema (oedema), and microvascular leakage. Destruction of bronchial epithelium and thickening of the subbasement membrane is also characteristic. In addition, there may be hypertrophy and hyperplasia of airway smooth muscle, increase in goblet cell number, and enlargement of submucous glands.

**3** Although causes of the initial tendency toward inflammation in the airways of patients with asthma are not yet certain, to date the strongest identified risk factor is atopy. **This** inherited

familial tendency to have allergic reactions includes increased sensitivity to allergens that are risk factors for developing asthma. Some of these allergens include domestic dust mites, animals with fur, cockroaches, pollens, and moulds. Additionally, asthma may be triggered by viral respiratory infections, especially in children. By avoiding these allergens and triggers, a person with asthma lowers his or her risk of irritating sensitive airways. A few avoidance techniques include: keeping the home clean and well ventilated, using an air conditioner in the summer months when pollen and mould counts are high, and getting an annual influenza vaccination. Of course, asthma sufferers should avoid tobacco smoke altogether. Cigar, cigarette, or pipe smoke is a trigger whether the patient smokes or inhales the smoke from others. Smoke increases the risk of allergic sensitization in children, increases the severity of symptoms, and may be fatal in children who already have asthma. Many of the risk factors for developing asthma may also provoke asthma attacks, and people with asthma may have one or more triggers, which vary from individual to individual. The risk can be further reduced by taking medications that decrease airway inflammation. Most **exacerbations** can be prevented by the combination of avoiding triggers and taking anti-inflammatory medications. An exception is physical activity, which is a common trigger of **exacerbations** in asthma patients. However, asthma patients should not necessarily avoid all physical exertion, because some types of activity have been proven to reduce symptoms. Rather, they should work in conjunction with a doctor to design a proper training regimen, which includes the use of medication.

4 In order to diagnose asthma, a healthcare professional must appreciate the underlying disorder that leads to asthma symptoms and understand how to recognize the condition through information gathered from the patient's history, physical examination, measurements of lung function, and allergic status. Because asthma symptoms vary throughout the day, the respiratory system may appear normal during physical examination. Clinical signs are more likely to be present when a patient is experiencing symptoms; however, the absence of symptoms upon examination does not exclude the diagnosis of asthma.

1. According to the passage, what is the name for the familial inclination to have hypersensitivity to certain allergens? [3]

- a. interstitial edema
- b. hyperplasia
- c. hypertrophy
- d. atopy

2. Why does a person suffering from an asthma attack attempt to inhale more air? [3]

- a. to prevent the loss of consciousness
- b. to keep air flowing through shrunken air passageways
- c. to prevent hyperplasia
- d. to compensate for weakened mast cells, T lymphocytes, and eosinophils

3. The passage suggests that in the past, asthma was regarded as which of the following? [3]

- a. a result of the overuse of tobacco products
- b. a hysterical condition
- c. mysterious, unrelated attacks affecting the lungs
- d. a chronic condition

4. The passage mentions all of the following bodily changes during an asthma attack except [3]

- a. severe cramping in the chest.
- b. heavy breathing.
- c. airways blocked by fluids.
- d. constricted airways.

5. Although it is surprising, which of the following triggers is mentioned in the passage as possibly reducing the symptoms of asthma in some patients? [3]

- a. using a fan instead of an air conditioner in summer months
- b. exposure to second-hand cigarette smoke

- c. the love of a family pet
  - d. performing physical exercise
6. Why might a patient with asthma have an apparently normal respiratory system during an examination by a doctor? [3]
- a. Asthma symptoms come and go throughout the day.
  - b. Severe asthma occurs only after strenuous physical exertion.
  - c. Doctor's offices are smoke free and very clean.
  - d. The pollen and mould count may be low that day.
7. In your own words, explain why children are at risk if they stay with parents who smoke. [5]
8. Explain the meaning of the following highlighted words and phrases as used in the passage:
- a) morphological changes (Par. 2, line 7) [3]
  - b) exacerbations (Par. 3, Line 6) [3]
  - c) broncho-constriction (Par 2., Line 3) [3]
9. Explain what the signal words are saying about the relationship between the sentence concerned and the rest of the paragraph.
- a) also (Par. 2, line 4) [5]
  - b) This (Par 3, Line 2) [5]
10. Who might be the most logical audience for this passage? Justify your answer. [5]
11. Give this passage a title that shows your understanding of its content. [3]

**Question 2:****SUMMARY****[50 MARKS]****Instruction**

**Read the following passage and in your own words write a summary of about 200 words on the key issues discussed.**

*Note: Marks will be awarded for clarity of expression and orderly presentation of ideas. Do not copy sentences from the passage.*

**MYSTERIES OF LIFE**

We, Africans have made it a habit that when someone does something detestable, it overshadows the good that person has done and as soon as soon as the person dies we sing eulogies but all in an effort to enhance acceptability in society. It is so difficult to believe that the human beings, created in the image of God, wake up to plot how to inflict unhappiness on others. For those who think they are infallible, to say "I am sorry" becomes so difficult, Sipho Nkosi-Dlamini writes.

In life I have found, especially among us Africans, that when someone does something wrong or detestable, we tend to be blind to the good things an individual sometimes does because those things are not sensational enough for a good pull-him down story to tell. Yet as soon as the person dies, we sing eulogies about the person, most of it to enhance our acceptability in society rather than to celebrate the life of the departed.....

Our journalistic fraternity has modified all the above. When they say anything good about someone alive they like supporting repetitive paraphrases and inverted comma quotes just to fatten the story; thus they remain the 'nice candidates' with whomever. Balance is virtually unknown: where it is tried, it tends to be interrogative rather than inquisitive in order to expand the mind of the reader to quest for more. I am no journalist but, in my years of grace, I enjoy reading various authors, especially those who are former journalists like Richard Quest of CNN, as one of them.

There are very good writers among our journalists in Swaziland. Unfortunately, the industry captains seem to prefer high school graduates who can write simply and are unable to lead the public out of ignorance in order to stimulate mental dexterity to arrive at informed decision making. Seemingly, in the mind of industry

controllers, the proletariat need only be informed enough to think dependently.

May I refer especially to the good report from the Editor's forum, that the Prime Minister disowned the Estate policy pronounced by the Minister of Justice: the PM had selflessly swallowed the bitter pill that a member of his team had ignored all protocol and made a rash decision, on a matter of such national importance, without due regard of the consequences. This was a commendable statement from the PM to disassociate the Executive from the Minister's pronouncement. With support of the public he can now focus on damage control – a spark of leadership, one may add.

Notwithstanding the above, let us understand that only those who work make mistakes; the others have no mental dexterity even to make mistakes.

Let me express a view, subject to correction, of why one may think the matter of Estate distribution to widows has always been controversial. It is because of the incompatibility of traditional and civil marriages. The Marriage Act of Swaziland recognizes this and thus prohibits mixing the two. Hence, if first a couple marries by traditional law, a second wife will be expected to join the 'home' in accordance with the rules of customary practice.

However, if the man considers marrying another wife by civil rights, the second marriage is null and void. The corollary is equally applicable; civil marriage does not

accept a second wife; that would be bigamy. The Marriage Act is unequivocal about any of these unlawful acts.

It is unfortunate that there are eminent people who have violated the statute, albeit with the silent consent and flattery of the society while still clamoring for rights of women and the girl child. The men have succeeded in dividing the womenfolk into economic dependents and feminists.

The Retirement and Pension Law has recognized the dilemma of *teka'ed* (traditionally wed) women after a civil first marriage. Hence they are now regarded to be dependents together with their offsprings, at least to avoid complete deprivation after the demise of the principal father. Otherwise, they would accordingly have been regarded as spoilers and accomplices to a crime of bigamy and therefore deserved no benefits.

Thus, the PM has recognized that the issue is much more complex to make a rash statement; it needs thorough examination taking into account most, if not all, the complexities of building a home, not just a house, in our unique society. This deserved complimentary comment from our journalists to balance the incongruities in the Minister's statement, which may have caused the minister to be indisposed to attend the editor's breakfast with cabinet. Estate distribution is one of several matters we need to clear so that everyone plays, irrespective of gender, a meaningful role in

our mission to reach 2022 as a peacefully united nation.

Another example is the question of security in the national context: how can we help ensure the security of the Swazi in the midst of security forces being involved in dicey relations with criminals: Riverstone Mall, disappearing dagga exhibits, lover homicides and consequent suicides, bribery to get positions, etc.? Is this participation in the business of football competitions advisable - who secures the nation when they are preparing for and playing competitive soccer? How do they maintain their judgment not to be blurred? Are the right qualities sought for security personnel or these have been surpassed by soccer skills? Could we be educated (led from ignorance) to help extirpate the prevalent corrupt practices during recruitment? Congratulations to Correctional Services for their exemplary effort.

Another is Education, not just absorption of old knowledge (learning), as a process, not an event, of being led out of ignorance. Is our education strategy a curriculum oriented towards first world status (still to be spelt out)? Primary (Fundamentally foundational) learning has been sacrificed, so it seems, to the altar of potential expediency. Learning from untrained university students, who have majored in History and African languages, hired to give foundational knowledge in mathematics and science at primary schools has stunted the intellectual growth of our children. Couching has replaced teaching.

When hired, the untrained educators are expected to teach all subjects; some of these teachers do not appreciate being guided by Diploma level foundational teaching specialists and head teachers because they have their degrees. They do not realize that degree certificates hang on the wall; they must deliver technologists and scientists for this country to reach 2022 unhampered by intellectual deficiencies/impediments. Some of these teachers cannot count with their fingers. How then can they give firm foundations in the basic language of technology - mathematics? In one of South Africa's new media, a report of a commission has found that some teachers' numeracy levels are below that of 12 year olds. May we do our own investigation of the state of our teachers/cheaters' numeracy levels? Our children are suffering from being frequently told "mathematics is difficult" by subject illiterates!

Let us get a cue from our First Servant of the People (Prime Minister) to avoid rash decisions. Exemplary and non-impulsive reaction to challenges does filter from the top and rationality develops among the populace and settles in the mind of the nation as a way of life!

Now is the time for conversation, consultation, consensus on concurrence and diversity, dialogue and formation of a common charter. If we all become throttlers and the throttled, what kind of a nation shall we become in 2022? Punitive action should be normally reserved for the

uneducable incorrigibles! No one is exclusively intelligent; from unity comes enviable national strength. What do you say? All views will lead us out of ignorance to avoid perishing because of lack of knowledge.

*Adapted from: **The Nation**, September 2014*