



KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS 2011/2012

SECOND SEMESTER EXAMINATION FOR THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

SCT 205: TECHNICAL WRITING

DATE: Tuesday 10th April, 2012

TIME: 2.00 p.m. – 4.00 p.m.

INSTRUCTIONS

Answer *Question One (1) and any other Two (2) questions*

QUESTION ONE

- (a) Technical writing is used in diverse fields such as robotics, chemistry, engineering, computer science and others:

REQUIRED

- i) Briefly describe two (2) other types of writings that are different from technical writing. (2 Marks)
- ii) Briefly outline two (2) personal characteristics of a good technical writer (2 Marks)
- iii) Outline two (2) characteristics that make technical writing different from other writings. (2 Marks)
- iv) Outline two (2) reasons that make technical writing, a very important components of a technical writers working life. (2 Marks)
- (b) Outline two (2) factors to consider while carrying out technical writing. (2 Marks)
- (c) Outline four (4) things that need to be done by a technical writer to achieve clarity. (2 Marks)

- (d) Briefly describe the three (3) steps of the writing process. (3 Marks)
- (e) For each step in (c) outline two (2) techniques for each that can be used to achieve them. (6 Marks)
- (f) One of the main types of graphics used in technical writing is icons. Briefly explain the consideration of creating an effective icon. (5 Marks)
- (g) Briefly explain four (4) things to consider when including hazard alert message in a formal instruction. (4 Marks)

QUESTION TWO

- a) Briefly explain why the following are important in a technical report: (6 Marks)
 - i) Quotations
 - ii) commas
 - iii) Semicolons
- (b) Outline four (4) areas where commas can be used in a technical report. (4 Marks)
- (c) Explain the condition that may occur to cause a “comma splice” in a sentence and four (4) ways to correct it. (5 Marks)
- (d) Given the following sentences, rewrite the sentences by placing the capitalization, quotations and commas in the correct places: (5 Marks)
 - i) the critic said this mess is the worst i have ever seen.
 - ii) but despite numerous setbacks we are making progress he said.
 - iii) many times we are our own toughest critics he mused.
 - iv) i received a note that my cv was being forwarded to dr wanjiku mwango of kakamega county.
 - v) on his first second and third interviews he wore the same suit with different socks shirts and ties.

QUESTION THREE

Reports are designed to convey and record information that will be of practical use to the reader. It is organized into discrete units of specific and highly visible information.

REQUIRED

- a) Briefly describe three (3) types of reports. (6 Marks)
- b) Outline four (4) sections of a typical report (4 Marks)
- c) Outline four (4) things that introduce linguistic noise into technical report. (4 Marks)
- d) Outline four (4) things that need to be done to preserve editorial modulation in a report. (4 Marks)
- e) Outline two (2) actions that need to be done to reduce noise in a written technical report. (2 Marks)

QUESTION FOUR

- (a) Briefly describe (4) elements of formal instructions. (4 Marks)
- (b) Outline four (4) advantages of using active voice in writing of formal instructions. (4 Marks)
- (c) Rewrite the following sentences in active voice: (4 Marks)
 - i) The car is started by turning the ignition key clockwise
 - ii) The computer was repaired by Shuntel.
 - iii) The advice given was followed by our clients.
 - iv) The form *must be signed* by the employee to authorize release of physician information to the insurance company.
- (d) Outline four (4) disadvantages of using passive voice in writing of formal instructions. (4 Marks)
- (e) Rewrite the following sentences in passive voice. (4 Marks)
 - i) Any modification may seriously impact our present transmission rate and/or our system production.
 - ii) We mailed the final proposal to the customer
 - iii) Push the enter key to start the process
 - iv) The spacecraft continues to take pictures in space

QUESTION FIVE

- (a) Briefly describe the stages of group development during the preparation and writing of technical reports. (5 Marks)
- (b) Briefly explain three (3) purposes of a CV and describe two (2) types of CV that one can write. (5 Marks)
- (c) Tables are types of visual aids belonging to the category of graphics that are usually included in formal report.

REQUIRED

- i) Outline the importance of a visual aid in a report. (2 Marks)
- ii) Briefly describe four (4) factors to consider in selection of a visual aid. (4 Marks)
- iii) Outline four (4) functions of a table within a formal report. (2 Marks)
- iv) Outline four (4) design considerations when including a table in a formal report. (2 Marks)

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