

PRINCIPAL EXAMINER'S REPORT



BOTSWANA
EXAMINATIONS
COUNCIL

BGCSE SOCIAL STUDIES 2025

PAPER 1: WRITTEN PAPER

General Comments

The overall performance is fairly good as there was a marked improvement in candidates' responses to Section A. The 2025 cohort exhibited similar competencies as the 2024 candidature in terms of their responses to most questions. Candidates across all Centres attempted most questions, even though there were some instances where candidates left some questions unattempted especially for question 4 and question 5. This is very worrisome as it shows lack of commitment on the part of the candidates, especially that this component was written as the last paper for the 2025 examination timetable.

Section A in 2025 was more accessible to candidates. For example, question 1, candidates seemed to easily relate with the cartoon which covered the topics of environment and global citizenry, however in question 1d most candidates failed to meet the demands of the question which expected them to use the skill of application and interpret the stimuli provided to come up with developments of points and their conclusions. Nonetheless, most candidates across all Centres were able to engage with the cartoon provided. Similarly, for question 2 candidates managed to engage with the extract provided. Candidates' performance for this item was generally better than for question 1.

It is recommended that Centres should ensure that prospective candidates practice more stimulus response questions, as some of the candidates ignored the stimulus and rather just used general knowledge. The overall performance on this section shows that candidates were able to interact with the stimulus provided, therefore Centres are advised to give prospective candidates adequate practice in this regard, through improving the quality of practice tests and exams. From the responses of candidates, they evidently do not know how to answer application questions which is a higher cognitive skill, hence Centres are advised to prepare candidates better so that they possess the requisite skills needed to answer Section A.

Section B, on the other hand, was less accessible to most candidates in the 2025 cohort. Many candidates were unable to meet the demands of questions, especially question 4: however, definitions of some concepts were poorly attempted across the two questions, that being 4a and 5a. Furthermore, most candidates did **not** do well in question 3(c), 4(b), 4(c), 5(b), 5(c) and 5(d), which demanded certain skills from candidates which they failed to portray and showed lack of knowledge/ content. Responses of candidates in the three questions showed lack of content on concepts such as "how corruption weakens economic development", "challenges faced by Botswana in international relations", and "the role of Opposition parties and IEC in promoting good governance"; hence most candidates failed to score maximum marks on these questions. Candidates also showed lack of knowledge to the concept of "voter apathy". Therefore, Centres are encouraged to teach prospective candidates the skill of properly meeting the demands of questions of higher cognitive domain, so that they get all the allocated marks. Centres are also encouraged to teach prospective candidates to differentiate between different command words according to Blooms taxonomy eg difference between describe and explain. Centres are also encouraged to motivate prospective candidates to read widely and improve their vocabulary, as well as improve their knowledge on current affairs to be better placed to attempt questions on the subject.



NB: Centres are also notified that for section B, alternative wording was used when marking definitions of concepts: i.e. candidates were not expected to define concepts word for word, but rather key words were looked for in a definition.

Comments on Individual Items

- 1 Generally, majority of candidates performed well on the question, as they scored above 60%. It was accessible to most candidates as shown by their ability to interpret the cartoon. However, some candidates had challenges of relating their answers to the cartoon.
 - (a) The question was accessible to majority of the candidates, as 99% performed above average on the question. The 1% of candidates who failed to get correct answers had written answers such as “natural disasters”, “warming”, “flooding and drought”. The expected answer was climate change / global warming answers.
 - (b) The question was accessible to majority of the candidates. Most of them performed fairly as they managed to state the role of the government in addressing global warming. However, some candidates failed to meet the demand of the question to specify the term “environmental”. The common wrong answers were policy, education and legislation. Some of the expected responses were Formation /enforcement of environmental/climate change laws/policies; Signing of international treaties on climate change; Infusion of climate change/global warming education on curriculum/ environmental education; Funding of environmental projects/activities/research.
 - (c) Most candidates performed fairly on this question as they were able to identify the negative effects of the activity on the environment but failed to expand it. Instead of linking it to global warming they related it to soil erosion, air pollution and/or deforestation. Some of the common wrong answers were flooding, mass migration and deforestation. Therefore, it means they failed to interpret the cartoon. The expected correct responses included Human induced veld-fires/wildfires: which causes global warming by producing high levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere; Industrial activities/Use of fossil fuels: this produces a lot of chlorine, fluorine-carbons thereby facilitating high (record) atmospheric temperatures.
 - (d) The question was fairly attempted by most candidates. Majority scored between 2 and 4 marks, and most managed to identify the effect shown by the cartoon but struggled to develop their points. Those who managed to get 6 marks, were able to identify a point, expand and conclude showing understanding and meeting the demand of the question. Some of the candidates that failed to meet the demand of the question gave answers that either gave 2 or more conclusions and some just gave expansions and failed to give identification of the point and conclusion. (They either just gave conclusions and developments). Some of the wrong answers that they gave were wildfires, lack of development, loss of habitats, destroying the beauty of the environment and financial constraints to the government. The expected correct answers were Flooding: (increased global temperatures alters the rain patterns by bringing too much rain increased temperatures may lead to melting ice glaciers/) *which result in submergence of settlements/loss of life/loss of property/rising sea level*; Drought: (intense drought is experienced, as some areas would receive less/no rains) *resulting in loss of life due to starvation/poor yields/decline in agricultural production/lack of food security*; Increased temperatures: (this facilitates heat waves) *leading to heat related illness or veld fires/ extinction of some species plants and animal species*; Increased

mercury emissions: (through veld fires the intense heat causes mercury to be introduced into the atmosphere as gas and fine particles) *leading to health risks for both people and aquatic plants and animals*/. extinction of some plants and animal species; Mass migration: (people will move away from flood prone areas to safer areas) *leading to depopulation/loss of culture/overpopulation in receiving areas/ can lead to spread of diseases*.

It is recommended that teachers give much practice on interpreting pictures as most candidates indicated lack of application and interpretation skills. Centres should put more emphasis on writing within the provided margins. A lot of their answers were excluded during the uploading process of their answer booklets

- 2** Generally, majority of candidates performed **well** on the question. Majority of Candidates scored above 60%. The question was accessible to most of the candidates as they managed to interpret the extract and derive the answers from it. However, candidates had a challenge of developing their ideas as was required by question 2b and 2C. The extract provided the candidates with enough content to draw from but some candidates failed to develop their ideas using information from the extract but instead they used their common knowledge on culture. Candidates should be given more practice on answering passage questions. However, the question was friendly as it started from low to high order thus helping candidates to have a good feel of the paper.
- (a) 80% of candidates performed above average on the question. Majority of candidates managed to give the correct economic activities. A few candidates failed to give correct answers from the passage but instead gave answers that were not showing the economic activities for example polygamy, rituals etc., some gave economic activities not stated in the passage such as mining, tourism, manufacturing while others gave careers like traders and farmers instead of economic activities like farming and trading. Expected answers were Pastoral farming, Arable farming, Mixed farming, Trade.
- (b) The question was accessible to majority of the candidates, as majority of them performed **fairly well (70%)**. Most candidates managed to identify the elements of culture in the extract but some failed to develop their points. Some candidates defined the elements of culture instead of describing them as used in the extract. For instance, they described dress as “clothes that are worn by people to be identified by” and describing the culture of other ethnic groups not mentioned in the extract instead of describing the dress code of *Bakalanga*. In addition, some candidates gave classification of elements of culture as material and non-material and described them. The expected responses were Religion: Bakalanga are an ethno-religious group which believes in God Mwali / engage in rain making / harvest thanksgiving rituals; Music and dance: they engage in various dances such as Hosanna, Mayile, Ndazula or Mazenge depending on nature and purpose of dance; Norms, values and practices: Bakalanga are polygamous society and arranged marriages as well as betrothal practices; Dress: they have certain dress codes for different activities such rain making rituals, weddings and healing.
- (c) 65% of candidates performed **fairly well** on the question as they were able to identify the changes from the extract. Majority of candidates were able to come up with two points from the extract i.e. polygamy and betrothal practices but only managed to give one development i.e. the coming of

missionaries decreased these practices hence scored **three** marks. Candidates however were credited for the same development for the two points, and this advantaged them. Some candidates gave cultural aspects from the extract which have not changed like dress, religion, music and dance etc. Correct responses included Polygamy: Christianity and other colonial influences have abruptly decreased issues of marrying many wives; Betrothal practices/ arranged marriages /**engagement of girls at young age**. Christianity and other colonial influences have abruptly decreased issues of betrothal practices.

It is recommended that teachers give prospective candidates more practice on how to interpret a passage/extract, as most candidates do not show any application skill but rather comprehension skills.

- 3 (a) The question tested **Knowledge & Understanding** skills. The question was accessible to most candidates. A significant majority of candidates attempted to answer the question, with most candidates scoring above 5 out of 10. But there were some instances where the candidates had no knowledge on the subject matter as demonstrated by awkward answers given (**below 4 out 10**). The following observations were made, per question Transport, Mining, Tourism, Manufacturing, Trade, Communication.

- (b) Majority of candidates were able to explain one way in which diamonds have helped Botswana's economic development. The candidates were able to identify and develop, as witnessed by most 2 out of 2 scores. Those who scored 1 mark, either managed to identify or develop the point. Some of the awkward responses given were **tourism, importation of diamonds, jewellery production**.

Majority of candidates came up with responses as source of employment, source of income, foreign exchange, infrastructure development: Some of the expected answers were; Lucrative diamond market prices: lure direct foreign investors and lead to more jobs; Diamonds produce skilled human resource/ helps in skills development: as more experts are needed in running the industry/ some Batswana are trained in specific mining skills which helps to improve production; Source of employment: engineers, drivers, cleaners which helps to improve their living standards; Diversified economy: the diamond industry helps to create other industries that create more jobs such as manufacturing/polishing and cutting of diamonds hence improving living standards of people; Improved infrastructure: roads/building schools and hospitals which helps in provision of services.

- (c) There was an average performance noted, with most candidates scoring 3 out of 6. This mark was made possible by candidates being able to identify and then failed to conclude as some failed to identify but managed to develop. Some candidates confused **corruption** and **stealing**, the expectation was to attach or **show self-gain/benefit** to the word "stealing". Some candidates repeated the question as their conclusion.

Some of the irrelevant responses given by the candidates were: **causing conflict and wars, stealing money, favouritism, nepotism, less / slow / delay developments, loss of natural resources, leads to poverty, diverts developments**. Some of the expected answers were It may lead to substandard products or services: (Contracts for tenders are awarded to undeserving bidders as corrupt officers take bribes when awarding tenders) which scares away potential

investors/ increased costs of maintenance/ delay in development projects; Demoralise the workforce: (since undeserving officers are promoted on the bases of bribes) thereby leading to low productivity at work /boycotts and frustration of workers; Delay of development projects: (companies that otherwise would not be qualified to win government contracts are often awarded projects as a result of bribery or kickbacks) leading to increased maintenance costs for government; Tarnishes the image of the country: (if the country has high levels of corruption and is ranked high in corruption indexes) this will scare away potential investors hence decline in economic activities; Collapse of economic sectors: (due to misuse/ inappropriate use of public funds) which escalates the costs of undertaking projects/ leading to ineffective goods and service delivery leading to increased costs of goods/products/services/delays economic growth; Widens the gap between the rich and the poor: those who have resources or connections are able to use them for bribery/ nepotism leading to increased dependency ratio/ dependency on government/ more social programs by government/ increased poverty levels in the country; It undermines the rule of law/it undermines the country's ability to collect tax: (high taxes are levied on fewer taxpayers) resulting in less money being generated in the country thus leading to poor standard of living/tarnishes the image of the country/leads to lawlessness.

- 4 The question was poorly accessible to the majority of candidates especially question 4(a)(ii) and (c). Quite a number of candidates left the question unattempted. The question was poorly done, with most candidates scoring 4 marks and below:
- (a) (i) The question was fairly done across all centres. Most of the candidates who got the question wrong used the word 'relations' to define the concept Bilateral relations. Some of the wrong answers given were: relationship between country and organisation / parties. However, some of the expected answers were The socio-cultural and political connections between two countries, Diplomatic and economic ties between two countries, Relationships / agreements / cooperation between two countries / interactions between two countries.
- (ii) The question was poorly done. Most candidates left the question unattempted, while those who did, defined sovereignty and left out the right to protect borders. Some of the wrong answers given by candidates included self-rule/how a country wants to be seen by other countries/whereby countries respect each other's territories. Other expected answers were It is the principle under international law where sovereign states have a right to protect their borders and all territory in them from another state, It is a country's right to protect its borders and territory / a country's right to maintain its borders and govern itself without external interference.
- (b) The question was fairly performed; a few candidates were able to score 1 out of 2 marks. Most candidates were able to come up with a point but failed to develop it. Some of the candidates came up with answers that were expected in 4 (c), such as spread of diseases/ brain drain/ increased crime. One of the wrong common answers given by candidates was corruption. Most common answers were 'Language barrier/ Unfair trade relations/Big brother attitude'.

Some of the expected answers were Botswana First policy (national interest) vs developed nations' big brother attitude: which tends to overlook our needs and dictate what Botswana must do in her

relations with those countries; Unfair trade relations: Botswana as a sovereign state is often faced with challenges of forming policies that balance accessing the international markets on equal footing with developed nations since we are a consumer country than a producer; Unfair international treaties / agreements: International treaties at times are rigid and makes Botswana vulnerable to foreign investor exploitation and in the process bottling the growth of local industries; Land locked country / Geographical location: non proximity or access to seaports make Botswana vulnerable to exploitation by countries that have harbours and even more expensive in trading with international communities.

- (c) This question was poorly done by most candidates as they managed to score 2 out of 6 marks. The candidates failed to meet the requirements of the question, they were able to write a point but failed to give a development and conclusion. Some concluded by repeating the point, e.g. loss of culture as a point and cultural erosion as a conclusion. Common wrong answers given by candidates were: - Over population/migration/inter marriages, death of plants/animals, loss of tourism etc. Some candidates were clueless about globalisation confusing it with global warming/crises.

Some of the expected answers included Human resource development / Skills development: (Batswana are able to go for further training abroad which results in the acquisition of local experts in various professions in Botswana) hence fast-tracking developments / improved productivity; Technology development: (Batswana can access technology as a result of this interaction and interdependence that facilitate bench marking, networking etc.) and this empowers Batswana economically / improved productivity/improved quality of goods; Exchange of culture: (Batswana may learn different cultures as they interact with foreigners) hence leading to cultural enrichment/tolerance; Increase in crime and social ills: (such a human trafficking, illicit drugs may be brought into the country or Batswana trafficked out of the country/fly by -night investors may swindle Batswana) leading to increased health risks such a mental health/ impoverishing addicts/ increased GBV / loss of family members; Increased market / trade: (Batswana can sell their goods outside the country) leading to them gaining foreign exchange which improves their living standards. / (Batswana can provide services externally or receive services from outside the country) which will improve their living standards; Employment opportunities: (Batswana can find jobs internationally or work in multi-national companies) which generates income and hence help improve their living standards; Cultural erosion / loss of culture: (As Batswana interact with foreigners, they may be influenced by their culture by copying some cultural aspects) leading to loss of identity; Leads to collapse of local businesses: (local businesses are unable to compete with international/ multinational companies because they are cheaper or of better quality) leading to loss of income by local businesses; Increased dependence on international goods: (some goods brought by foreigners in the country are of low quality and some are cheap) which results in impoverishing Batswana.

- 5 The performance of candidates was **slightly below average**. Majority of the candidates scored less as the concept of governance seemed to have been difficult to them. Most of the students left blank spaces/questions not attempted which led to them scoring less or **0** marks. Some who attempted were able to use their background knowledge and managed to score marks. The general observation is that

most candidates stated characteristics of good governance as roles of stakeholders in promoting good governance in questions 5 (c) and (d).

- (a) The question was **poorly done**. Most candidates gave the explanation of 'constitution' and some defined 'democracy' instead of constitutional democracy. The candidates were bringing only the aspect of democracy and omitting the element of the constitution. They were also using words like constituency instead of constitution.

Some of the common answers were "a system of government in which political authority lies in the constituency", A system of government where people choose their own leader in their constituency". Other expected answers were A system of government in which power is held by the elected representatives and exercised according to the constitution; Whereby leaders govern the country according to the laws stipulated in the constitution.

- (b) The question was **fairly performed/done/attempted**. Most of the candidates failed to state reasons for voter apathy as they confused it with the concept for voter education. They referred to voter apathy as a positive concept while in reality it has negative outcomes.

Commonly given responses by candidates were "to choose a good leader", Those who understood the concept left out important information on their answers which made them not to score full marks. For example, "lack of interest" instead of "lack of interest in politics" and "Lack of transport" instead of "Lack of transport to the polling stations".

Some of the expected answers were as follows, Political parties not appealing to voters, Expired/lost identity documents/ lost voting cards, Loss of confidence in politicians, Lack of interest in politics, Long queues at polling stations, Unfavourable day of elections, Lack of voter education.

- (c) This question was **fairly** done. Candidates were able to write correct points eg "promote accountability", (promote transparency" but failed to link their developments to the question. Some of the candidates even explained 'accountability or 'transparency' as their development. The general observation on this question is that candidates leave out the action verb when stating the role of opposition parties for example "transparency" instead of 'promote transparency'.

Some of the expected responses were Offer Constructive criticism of the government on national issues: thereby acting as checks and balances to the governing party; Facilitate voter education: through political debates/workshops and seminars etc, so that electorates can make informed decisions; Sustain stability and peace in the country: by availing themselves as alternatives to the governing party; Enhance transparency / accountability on the part of the government: through its membership in public accounts committees, both at council and parliamentary levels; Helps to reduce corruption: by exposing corrupt practices of the ruling party thereby keeping the ruling party on its toes.

- (d) The question was fairly done. Majority of the candidates' answers showed they had knowledge of the role of IEC. Even though they were able to write the roles, they failed to show how those roles were carried out. Most candidates repeated the same idea using different words, for example 'provide voter education' and develop it as 'they teach people the importance of voting and how it

is done'. Some candidates wrote that IEC ensures there is no corruption instead of stating that IEC does not allow cheating/corruption.

Some of the correct answers were; Promote knowledge of sound democratic and electoral processes/ **promote voter education:** (by establishing and maintaining liaison with parties / through media and workshops etc) *resulting in transparency and accountability in running of elections/ reduced voter apathy / helping citizens to make informed decisions;* Promote cooperation between different stakeholders: (for the achievement of its objective by adjudicating disputes that may arise from the organisation, administration or conducting of elections) *thereby creating a stable democratic nation;* Manage / conduct elections: (this ensures that elections conducted are free and fair by providing a conducive election environment) *leading to peace in the country post elections;* Compilation of voters' roll: (by registering eligible voters using data from both government and voters) *thereby aiding formation of an inclusive government;* Education/promotion of human rights: (by encouraging voter rights, freedom of association freedom of speech) *leading social stability and harmony in the country;* Promotes transparency / Promotes free and fair elections: by openly conducting all its processes such as voter registration, voters roll, availing names of contestants and airing political debates as well as open announcement of results) *this will ensure peace and harmony in the country;* Promotes liberal democracy: (by giving people a chance to elect their leaders during stipulated times eg every 5 years) *leading to facilitation of formation of government.*

NB: Most candidates used a lot of negative answering on the question; Centres should stress much on it as this makes candidates loose marks unnecessarily.

PAPER 2: WRITTEN PAPER

General Comments

The 2025 candidates showed a slight improvement on answering high order questions which are more demanding such as discuss. Generally, most candidates have mastered skills to address “discuss” questions as this is evidenced by the fact that candidates managed to address the 4 parts, i.e. point, 2 expansions and a conclusion.

Questions 1 (a), 1 (c), 2 (b), and 4 (c), were generally well answered by candidates. Candidates managed to identify points and generously expanded on the very well. Most of the responses showed high understanding of the questions and mostly met the demands of the describe and explain skills. Good marks were scored in 1 (a) and 2 (b) as candidates scored more than half of the marks.

Questions 1 (b), 3 (a), 3 (b), 5 (a), were fairly done as most candidates were able to identify the points but could only partially develop them. In most cases candidates lacked comprehension on the expectation of the questions. Most of their points lacked meaningful explanations.

Questions 2 (a), 2 (c), 3 (c), 4 (a), 4 (b), 5 (b) and 5 (c) were poorly answered as most candidates confused concepts. There was evidence of limited content knowledge on some concepts.

Comments on Individual Items

- 1 (a) The question was generally well answered. The majority of the candidates were able to meet the demands of the question. They were able to identify correct points and developed them correctly. There was however a lot of repetition in terms of expansions/developments. For example, soil erosion was used as an effect of most of the practices given making it repetition in most cases. Most answers centred around issues of deforestation, pollution, veld fires, leaving out practices such as urbanisation, development of slums out. All in all, the question was easily accessible to most candidates as they scored more than half.
- (b) The question was fairly answered. The candidates however repeated points on marriage, early marriage, polygamy as different points. Also, many candidates failed to provide point identification though they were able to give correct expansions. It is also worth noting that quite a number of candidates could not clearly justify how the cultural practice was discriminating as they were merely comparing what men and women did.
- (c) The question was well answered by most candidates. Candidates were able to identify points and fully develop them but failed to come up with meaningful conclusions that would also match their arguments. The most popular responses were environmental education and environmental policies/laws.
- 2 (a) The question was poorly done. Most candidates were confused by the word National Assembly and failed to answer the question well. Instead of focusing on the specific roles of the National Assembly, many concentrated on the general duties of the 3 branches of government i.e. Executive, Legislature and Judiciary. Most candidates did not know responsibilities of the National Assembly, showing limited content knowledge.

- (b) The question was well done by most candidates. The candidates had many points that were well articulated. The majority of the responses were relevant and well structured. However, there was a lot of repetition on the following: generate income, source of income, source of money, foreign exchange. To some candidates these meant different things.
- (c) The question was poorly done as most candidates failed to differentiate overuse of resources from pressure on facilities. So, this limited them to clearly expand their points and conclude well. Some wrote about ways of reducing population growth instead of focussing on problems on available resources that result from population expansion.
- 3 (a) The question was fairly done by majority of candidates. They were able to identify the main features of the Coat of Arms but were somehow limited as far as their importance to Nation Building. Most scored 3 out of 6 marks.
- (b) The question was fairly done although a significant number of candidates wrote about the benefits of Education in general instead of consumer education. Some of their responses were “education makes students to have a successful life; it helps people to be employed etc”. There was no link between these responses with the concept of consumer awareness. Most candidates also repeated the point on consumer rights or rather the responses were overlapping and mostly skewed towards consumer rights awareness and violations.
- (c) The question was poorly done. The candidates failed to give factual information. This clearly indicated limited/lack of knowledge on the objective. For example, some of their answers included “source of raw materials; protection from BSACO.; the need for land”. Candidates also confused the objective with that of the Dikgosi going to England in 1895. For example, one answer just kept on coming from most of the candidates was that one which said that Dikgosi went to Britain to protest the declaration. Candidates also mostly wrote about Cecil John Rhodes and his mineral adventures, an irrelevant aspect for this question. The point that was mainly articulated was protection of the Road to the North.
- 4 (a) The question was poorly performed by the majority of candidates. It was evident from the candidates’ responses that they were either confused or did not know the roles of Survival International. They instead wrote about the roles of other organisations such as Amnesty International, UN, Red Cross etc. For example, some of the answers were: “providing mediators to stop warring factions/countries; provide humanitarian aid such as food, clothes and shelter etc”. As a result, most candidates scored just 1 out of 6, for the point on protection of human rights so the question was dismally failed.
- (b) This question was also not accessible to many candidates and as such poorly done. Almost all the responses that candidates wrote centred around providing checks and balances; thus, the point was mainly repeated. Negative answering was also predominant hence candidates lost marks.
- (c) Most candidates did very well on this question. A great understanding of the objective was reflected as candidates had many points which were very well articulated especially on points such as “taking care of the disadvantaged people, provision of Guidance and Counselling services and

provision of family services. Most candidates scored between 5 and 8 marks, which indicates that it was accessible to most candidates.

- 5** (a) The question was fairly done by most candidates. A significant number of them showed understanding of what International Relations is. The candidates' responses were however limited to a few points such as "exchange of skills and technology; promote cooperation; opening trade routes; access to aid etc". Those were well explained. Other points lacked meaningful explanation development.
- (b) The question was poorly done, mainly because the candidates did not attempt the question or failed to meet the demands of the question. Majority of the candidates failed to contrast Democracy versus Dictatorship as they could not clearly show the differences between these two forms of government. Very few candidates who were able to identify characteristics such as consultation, accountability, leadership were however unable to contrast, thus Candidates failed to bring 2 parts of the argument, which is what contrast is calling for. Those candidates who tried to contrast ran short of expression to use.
- (c) This question was also poorly done. The candidates seemed not have understood the concept of Human Resource Development. The responses were very shallow. Most candidates also wrote or confused Human Resource Development with natural resources, and their responses were mainly about the role of NGOs in conserving natural resources, which was not what the objective demanded. So, most candidates failed dismally on this one.

PAPER 3: WRITTEN PAPER

General Comments

The 2025 paper was typical research paper just like the 2024 paper as such it was accessible to most candidates. The candidates were familiar with the scenario and stimuli used in both Q1 and Q2 as they addressed population census and road accidents. The candidates well in areas like formulating aims, naming institutions, stating the trend, problems encountered and designing a questionnaire. Most of them related to the issue of road accidents, its causes and solutions. Despite this improvement, the team observed that candidates are not abreast with their national current affairs as a significant number of them struggled to name departments that deal with population and it is an area that they should be encouraged to familiarise themselves as part of the Nature and scope of the subject. It was also observed that there were still some candidates who wrote the stem 'found out' when drawing conclusions and Centres are encouraged to continue to train candidates more on the difference between writing findings and conclusions.

This year the method of data presentation assessed in question 1i was a multiple bar graph and the general observation made was that a significant number of candidates had no clue of the structure of this data presentation method. Despite having limited knowledge of its structure, the candidates adequately demonstrated other skills of data presentation by writing the title, labelling the axis and providing the legend/key. Therefore, Centres are encouraged to emphasise the different types of bar graph and what each is used to present as well as providing a consistent and regular scale with thorough observation of the units of measurement used. In order to maximise attainment of marks, Furthermore, Centres are encouraged to provide adequate training to candidates' different data presentation methods because most candidates presented their data in a regular bar graph instead of the multiple bar graph.

The quality of work and presentation of candidates' work has improved across candidates as it was observed in the layout of answers on the spaces provided unlike in the past two years where it was common for candidates to cancel the responses in the space provided and write in the blank pages. The multiple bar graph drawn, the aims and findings as well as the questionnaire showed that candidates were aware of the standard practices of having a title, labelling and starting aims and findings with a stem. Candidates also displayed knowledge at their different capabilities on designing a questionnaire with regard to providing adequate components of bio data and constructing questions. However, Centres still need to encourage candidates to observe the standard way of writing a questionnaire that has **introduction, bio data** and its valid questions.

Comments on Individual Items

- 1 (a) Candidates were required to suggest a suitable title for a given quantitative scenario on trade in Botswana. Some candidates responded well by writing '**Botswana's external trade from August to October 2022**' which was precise and clearly reflecting the focus and scope of the study. However, most candidates had an idea on how to write a title, but mostly they left out some key information on the place of study, time frame like months (August, September, October) and the year 2022. This indicated inadequate understanding of how to construct specific and informative research title hence Centres are encouraged to guide candidates on how to develop research titles that are specific and reflect the focus of the study.

- (b) The majority of the candidates answered the question that required them to state the data presentation method used correctly. Most candidates were able to identify the data presentation methods used as a TABLE, however there were a few candidates that provided irrelevant responses like quantitative and other inappropriate terms which showed lack of clarity in differentiating between types of data and methods of presenting data. Centres are encouraged to provide candidates with adequate practice in identifying and using appropriate data presentation methods such as table, bar graphs, histograms etc.
- (c) Candidates were required to formulate aims of the study based on a given quantitative data set on Botswana's external trade, most candidates responded well to the demands of the question and were able to begin their aims with the stem 'TO FIND OUT'.. However, there was a lot of repetition, such as aims on the month with the highest or lowest trade, the trade items which traded more or less. Despite that, the question was fairly done, and Centres are encouraged to give candidates more practice on the different research components so that they can be able to differentiate between aims and findings.
- (d) The question required candidates to list the departments that could be visited to collect data and some candidates performed well by identifying relevant departments and ministries such as Ministry of Investment, Trade & Industry, Statistics Botswana and others. However, a significant number of candidates were unable to score marks here because they jumbled names of ministries which was inaccurate such as Ministry of Trade and foreign exchange, Statistics of Botswana. This suggested that candidates lack familiarity with current affairs and institutions responsible for trade in Botswana and Centres are encouraged to familiarise candidates with current affairs and to use local examples when teaching content relevant to socio-economic issues.
- (e) The candidates were required to describe the trend from the provided quantitative scenario and many of them struggled as the expectation was for them to state the trend as **fluctuating** and its description supported with data changes from the table. Some candidates just wrote 'it was increasing and decreasing, others wrote it was fluctuating then wrote it was increasing from August to September and decreased in October without supporting values. This limited their ability to score the complete score of two. Therefore, Centres are encouraged to give candidates more practice on quantitative scenarios to help the candidates to identify trends and provide precise data to support their answers. It was poorly done as most students could not understand or interpret the content or scenario given in the table.
- (f) Candidates had to give reasons for the trend mentioned in 1(e) and some were able to provide valid reasons such preference of customers/ demand for certain goods, the price of transport, devaluation of currencies etc., which demonstrated of factors that influence trade. Some candidates misunderstood the question and restated parts of the trend such as low imports or high imports instead of explaining the underlying factors for high or low imports which demonstrated inadequate reasoning hence low marks for that.
- (g) The question has become very familiar and accessible; most candidates were able to state the problems such as lack of transport, uncooperative respondents. These responses demonstrated that candidates have clear understanding of the challenges or limitations that may arise during

research. Centres are commended for these responses and encouraged to give candidates more exposure to research so that they can develop realistic challenges that may hinder data collection.

- (h) (i) The question on advantages of secondary data was fairly done with some candidates giving valid responses while others gave negative answers such as '**it is not time consuming; it does not cost**'. Other candidates wrote disadvantages in place of advantages which resulted in loss of marks.
- (ii) The question was a follow-up to (h)(i) and the same mistakes were repeated. The question was fairly done as candidates were able to give one of the disadvantages especially; 'the data maybe outdated' and other candidates seemed to interpret "disadvantages" as "problems faced when carrying out the study and their responses were centered on the problems rather than disadvantages of secondary data.
- (iii) The question required candidates to present data in a multiple bar graph showing the trade values for diamond and copper between August and October. The candidates attempted the task by drawing bar graphs **not** multiple bar graphs, they were able to write the title, label axis and the key. However, the candidates struggled to provide a scale with regular intervals, some omitted ZERO in their scale, others had an incomplete scale as it was lower than the highest value of diamonds (they stopped at 9000000). These observations indicate that the candidates had limited experience with some graphical presentation of data and Centres are encouraged to provide more practice on graphical presentations using diverse graphs so that candidates may have adequate exposure to presentation of data in any format with all components of graphs (**title, labelling axis, scale interval, correct plotting and key**) adhered to in order to improve accuracy

- 2 (a) Candidates were required to state two data collection methods, and the question was accessible for most candidates as most of them provided appropriate methods such as interviews, questionnaires, surveys, document study and others. These responses demonstrated a sound understanding and mastery of basic knowledge of common research methods. Only a small number of candidates gave incorrect responses like qualitative or quantitative which types of research rather than data collection methods. Centres are commended for the generally strong performance on this question as it suggests that the methods were adequately covered.
- (b) Candidates were required to outline two advantages of qualitative research and the overall performance of candidates on this question was generally satisfactory. Most candidates were able to identify at least one valid advantage of qualitative research, demonstrating a basic understanding of the approach. Stronger candidates clearly outlined two distinct advantages in a well-structured phrase.

On the other hand, weaker responses tended to list vague or generic phrases or one-word answers such as '**cheap or it is cheap**', '**allows formulation of hypothesis**', '**first-hand information**' which did not adequately address the specific advantages or without sufficient elaboration hence resulted in loss of marks. In summary, while most candidates demonstrated foundational knowledge, higher marks were achieved by those who clearly outlined two specific advantages relevant to qualitative research. Therefore, Centres are encouraged to expose candidates more to

qualitative and quantitative research methods so that they can differentiate between the two and their advantages and disadvantages.

- (c) The question required candidates to suggest participants for the study and candidates showed varying levels of understanding in identifying suitable participants. Most candidates were able to name at least one relevant participant such as **drivers, pedestrians, police officers and transport officers** among others which showed that they understood who would provide relevant information for the study. However, some candidates seemed confused as they were unable to recognise that Pitso city was the place of study and the City Mayor was the researcher hence they wrote the two as participants. Hence Centres are encouraged to expose candidates to various stimulus-based research questions which would help the candidates to distinguish between researchers and participants. High-performing candidates gave two specific and context-appropriate participants, demonstrating clear comprehension of participant selection. Lower-performing candidates either listed unrelated participants or failed to provide two distinct options as they stated **Pitso city and City Mayor as participants or researcher and respondent**.
- (d) The question was generally well answered as many candidates were able to identify accidents and provide valid and relevant reasons such as drunken driving, failure to obey road signs, fatigue, over speeding and reckless driving among the many causes. Fewer candidates provided weaker responses as there were instances where some candidates gave repetitive answers and an insignificant number gave effects of road and some added stem 'To find out' though with correct causes.
- (e) The question required candidates to state the findings of the study on road accidents in Pitso city, and most of the candidates performed well as they were able to correctly state relevant findings. They were able to begin their responses with '**Found out...**' However, several of them repeated findings under only one variable instead of stating findings across the variables, for instance on causes only, effects only etc. Some candidates failed to use the required opening stem 'Found out' which resulted in loss of marks. Centres are encouraged to provide candidates with adequate practice in identifying and stating findings from various scenarios with emphasis on distinguishing between aims and findings as a few candidates wrote aims instead of findings.
- (f) Overall performance of this item was satisfactory. Large proportions of candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the task and were able to come up with relevant and well-focused conclusions consistent with the findings of the study. However, a considerable number of candidates did not fully meet the demands of the question as some of them confused conclusion for recommendations by writing statements that suggested measures to reduce accidents rather than summarising the findings of the study. Others started their responses with the stem 'Found out' which indicated that they lacked understanding of the structure of a conclusion. A small number of candidates wrote general statements that were not linked to the study, or which were not actually addressing the issue of road accidents. Only a few candidates provided quantitative conclusions such as citing numerical data. e.g. About 300 cases of road accidents were recorded in 2025 or stating trend e.g. Road accidents increased over years.

Therefore, Centres are advised to encourage candidates to distinguish between findings, conclusions and recommendations and to ensure that they make conclusions that are directly derived from the study at hand.

- (g) **The question required candidates to provide two ways of reducing the number of road accidents in the city.** This was the only question in the paper that required an explanation and it posed noticeable challenge to the candidates. Key Observations made include the following:

The question was generally well attempted, and most candidates demonstrated a sound understanding of road accidents and were generally able to suggest relevant solutions. However, most of them failed to explain how those ways would be executed in order to deter drivers from causing road accident. This shows that the quality of responses candidates gave varied in the level of explanation provided. Stronger candidates clearly stated specific measures and explained how or why that action would reduce accidents, for example Mounting speed traps- explained how this would deter drivers from over speeding or help them to drive within the allowed speed, fining those who break the laws, maintaining roads etc.

The weaker responses included; by not drinking and driving, by not over speeding. The responses demonstrated that the candidates had awareness of road safety, but they merely stated general safety rules which did not provide actions that had to be taken and why they had to be taken. Therefore, Centres are encouraged to advice candidates to answer these types of questions using a point and expansion. Candidates should be trained to always link actions to the outcomes and to always observe the demands of the different command words.

- (h) The question required candidates to design a questionnaire for the collection of information for the mayor's research on road accidents. The question was attempted by most candidates but with mixed quality of responses. Many candidates showed an understanding of how to come up with relevant questions, but fewer demonstrated a full adherence to the structure and standard components of a questionnaire. There were candidates who showed clear understanding that a questionnaire is not just a list of questions and most of such candidates designed a tool that had introduction, bio data and questions that can ensure a reliable data collection. Regarding the components, observations were:

- **Introduction**

Most candidates were able to construct an appropriate introduction. The candidates' responses were at extremes it was either the candidate had a correct introduction or does not have an introduction at all. Responses tended to be polarised; candidates either wrote a correct introduction or none at all.

- **Bio Data-Section**

This section was highly accessible, with most candidates, who attempted it completing it correctly with information on age, gender, occupation. However, some candidates included name and surname in their bio data which is discouraged.



- **Questions**

There was a strong correlation between performance in item 2e, 2f and 2g those who got 2e and 2f correct were able to formulate well structured, clear and relevant questions for the questionnaire. They were able to avoid ambiguous or leading questions.

Candidates were able to craft open-ended questions perfectly but there was an issue with the close-ended question of either yes/no or true/false because the candidates tended to repeat what has already been asked in the open-ended questions. Some candidates wrote statement that lacked clarity or were poorly formulated. Fewer candidates just wrote statements with a question mark at the end which did not meet questionnaire standards for example statements like, causes of road accident? effects of road accident?