



## UNIVERSITY OF RUHUNA

### Faculty of Engineering

End-Semester 8 Examination in Engineering: September 2023

Module Number: IS8201    Module Name: English for the Professional World

[Three hours]

[Answer all questions, each question carries ten marks]

- Q1 a) Read the following passage and fill in blanks using the correct form of the verb in the brackets.

More than 11,000 people (1)..... (kill) and tens of thousands are missing following the catastrophic collapse of two dams in the eastern Libyan city of Derna. The dam collapse (2) ..... (come) after an extreme storm, Storm Daniel, (3) ..... (slam) into the north African country.

Dams (4) ..... (be) usually built to withstand heavy rainfall or drought. The design and construction of a dam (5) .....(take) into consideration all possible effects. All factors, including the type of building materials, the design of the foundation and the stability of a dam, as well as expected floods and earthquakes and even military action, (6) .....(take) into consideration when planning a dam.

Apart from how the dams (7) .....(be) constructed, there should be safety provisions in place. For instance, in cases of storms, the engineers should release the water to ensure that a dam's maximum carrying capacity (8) ..... (be not) exceeded.

In the Libyan case, I believe that the management of the dams was not good. The engineer responsible for the dam should (9) ..... (make) sure the water did not exceed the dam's upper carrying capacity. When he noticed that a huge volume of water was entering the reservoir, he should (10) .....(release) large quantities of water to keep its level lower than the upper limit.

Source: au-newsletter@theconversation.com

[5 Marks]

- b) Change the following sentences into passive voice.
- European countries award scholarships every year for post graduate studies.
  - Many scientists have discovered possible solutions to global warming.
  - The administration suspended Vipul for ragging a fresher.
  - A motorcyclist snatched Sithmi's gold chain while she was walking along the main road.
  - This electrical device switches on and off all the lights in the office.

[5 Marks]

Q2 Select one of the topics given below and write an essay. Your essay will be marked for the organisation, content and language. [250 words]

- i. Importance of nature friendly constructions
- ii. Contribution of Engineers for sustainable development of Sri Lanka
- iii. Possible solutions to economic and financial crisis faced by Sri Lanka
- iv. Global warming effects-Greenhouse gas and the earth's atmosphere.
- v. Is solar energy a solution to the energy crisis?

[10 Marks]

Q3 Refer to the advertisement given below and write...

- i. a covering letter and
- ii. a curriculum Vitae to apply for a post advertised.

[05 Marks]

[05 Marks]

### IMMEDIATE VACANCIES

#### POST OF PROJECT MANAGER

##### Required Qualification & Experience

- BSc(Eng.) degree from recognized university or equivalent, post graduate qualifications in project management is an added advantage
- Minimum 6 years' experience in large scale construction/Engineering project management
- Project management experience in Maldives will be an advantage
- Experience in M&E related work will be an added advantage
- Ability to work with AutoCAD/Primavera or any other similar technical software

#### POST OF CIVIL/MECHANICAL/ELECTRICAL ENGINEER (03 positions)

##### Required Qualification & Experience

- BSc(Eng.) degree from recognized university or equivalent
- Minimum 4 years' experience in construction projects
- Foreign experience is highly considered
- Ability to work with AutoCAD/Primavera or any other similar technical software

#### GENERAL

- Good command of English language
- Excellent Computer literacy

An attractive remuneration package along with food and accommodation, medical, insurance and other benefits will be on offer for the candidates.

CVs with contact number along with contact details of 02 non-related referees (at least 1 should be an ex-employer) should be able to [careers@edcc.lk](mailto:careers@edcc.lk) with the position applied for on the subject line of the email. Alternatively, CVs can be sent through post to the address specified below within 14 days.

HR Manager,  
ED & CC (Pvt) Ltd,  
145/A, 6th Mile Post, Kandy Road,  
Dalugama, Kelaniya, Sri Lanka.  
Telephone: +94 11 4469 449  
FAX: +94 11 291 7682

**EDCC**

Hotline: +94 768200128  
E-mail: [careers@edcc.lk](mailto:careers@edcc.lk) Web : [www.edcc.lk](http://www.edcc.lk)

- Q4 a) Write appropriate answers for the following questions asked in a job interview.
- i. Tell me about yourself.
  - ii. Can you describe a challenging project you worked on during your studies?
  - iii. Describe a time when a project didn't go as planned. How did you adapt?
  - iv. What engineering software tools are you familiar with?
  - v. What are your career goals in the next five years?

[5 Marks]

- b) You are the purchasing Manager of a reputed construction company. The company needs to buy ten computers for office use. Write a telephone conversation between the marketing executive of Softlogic Pvt. Ltd. and you (purchasing manager) inquiring about the brand, memory capacity, price etc... At least 05 exchanges per each should be included.

[5 Marks]

- Q5 Read the following passage and answer the questions.

#### Editorial

#### **Brain Drain and Global South's right to compensation**

During his speech to the G77 summit themed 'The Role of Science, Technology and Innovation', the President followed on the host Cuban President's reference to the 'Brain Drain' from the economically developing Global South to the affluent Global North and went one step further to call for compensation for the loss of "educated manpower". He said the poorer countries needed to meet the needs and challenges of the modern world but are faced with the disconcerting trend of the migration of youth and experts alike.

Implementation of development agendas is naturally exacerbated when there is a shortage of a skilled workforce whose primary and secondary education was funded by the domestic direct and indirect taxpayer, eventually benefiting better-off countries with no reparation for depriving the original provider of such skilled workers.

The 'Brain Drain' in Sri Lanka is not new. Even before independence, the British recruited many northern Sri Lankans to serve their administration in Singapore, Malaysia and other colonial outposts. Most became citizens of those countries and were lost to their motherland forever. Within a decade of independence, short-sighted policies and politics contributed to a regular cycle of citizens leaving the country, many for good. They ranged from those who felt they couldn't fit into the 1956 language policy to those who left in the 1970s due to stringent economic restrictions. Then the trickle turned into a flood with the 1983 race riots. And now, once again, economic factors have triggered another exodus.

Many Sri Lankans made adjustments along all these trials and tribulations. For instance, it was not only the minorities who suffered from the official language policy. Many public servants from all communities of that era, trained by the English in English, had to learn Sinhala and sit for proficiency tests in local languages. Millions also stuck it out during the economic crisis of the early 1970s.

At the 20th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Colombo in 1974, the Acting Prime Minister Maithripala Senanayake in his keynote address spoke of the "urgency of the problem of the Brain Drain". He mentioned the skilled manpower going mostly to the English-speaking Commonwealth countries and asked if the Commonwealth Secretariat could consider the establishment of a broad framework for the transfer of personnel among Commonwealth countries.

The Commonwealth Secretariat considered nothing of the sort for the simple reason that the richer Commonwealth countries that dominated the group of former British colonies preferred the status quo that was to their benefit.

And nearly 50 years later, Sri Lanka's President is echoing the same plea - calling on the international community to plug this leak of the 'Brain Drain'.

Last week, this newspaper had two separate news features side-by-side on the exodus of qualified personnel: the dearth of 40 Consultant Anaesthetists in state hospitals - and how, at the Norochcholai power plant, a large outflow of engineers in the electrical discipline has resulted in a request for foreign engineers to tide over the shortage. Today, the newspaper refers to the shortage of surgeons. This migration of professionals is seemingly endless.

There are various methods to stem the tide of the 'Brain Drain' and the related issue of the drain on foreign exchange. The Parliamentary Ways and Means Committee is looking into these questions to advise the Government. Take the case of the huge amount of dollars going out of the country for educational purposes as one example. Should not the Government set up a ranking system to provide forex only for courses in the top 100 universities abroad and not each and every degree- or doctorate-granting institution solely catering to the influx of foreign students, and their money? Some locals utilise foreign exchange under the guise of pursuing further studies solely to obtain residency abroad. Mediocre overseas universities set up campuses in Sri Lanka only to produce graduates who seek to migrate.

In post-independence India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru started tech universities from scratch. Their first batches of graduates migrated to the West, but are now returning to these universities that are attracting students from around the world.

In the post-1977 period, with the opening of the economy, some Sri Lankan professionals who had gone abroad returned. Even today, a few IT companies abroad set up by Sri Lankans see potential here and have returned for start-ups. The economic climate is key to reversing the 'Brain Drain'. But there is a contradiction in Government policy. Last year, it allowed public servants to go abroad for five years without losing their seniority if they returned. This was unfair by those who remained in tough times. Then, the decision was reversed.

The Foreign Employment Ministry and Bureau are actively pursuing employment opportunities abroad not just for construction workers and housemaids, but also for professionals. They have set targets and are canvassing foreign embassies in Colombo for quotas with the hope of getting brownie points for the numbers they send abroad, hopefully, to swell the national budget from remittances. Reliance on this strategy, however, is fraught with danger as the Covid pandemic proved when remittances plummeted.

Additionally, there are international covenants monitored by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to protect the Rights of Movement of people around the world (but not

the 'boat people' entering Europe). Unfortunately, the ILO is wearing blinkers when it comes to seeing how this one-way traffic of skilled manpower to the Global North is causing irreparable damage to those living in the Global South.

President Wickremesinghe's call for compensation may not fly at the end of the day, but the UN General Assembly next week is also expected to touch on this subject. The agenda for this year's sessions will revolve around the plight of developing countries navigating global economic headwinds. Such calls from the Global South are certain to fall on the deaf ears of the Global North.

Conversely, to expect a sense of patriotism from their own citizens is also expecting too much when the political leadership is corrupt. Half the crowd at ongoing cricket matches with the Lion flag wrapped around them, must be having a passport in their pocket to leave the country at the first opportunity.

Source- <https://www.sundaytimes.lk/230917/editorial/brain-drain-and-global-souths-right-to-compensation-533137.html>

- i. Economically developing countries in the world are facing many challenges at present. What is the issue discussed in the first paragraph? [1 Mark]
- ii. Write four situations (reasons) which Sri Lanka faced brain drain in the history. [1 Mark]
- iii. What does the writer mean by "Then the trickle turned into a flood"? [1 Mark]
- iv. At present our country is facing a dearth of professionals. Give three examples mentioned in the passage. [1 Mark]
- v. How does Sri Lanka lose foreign currency through the trends of higher education? [1 Mark]
- vi. Why is the writer critical about behaviour of The Foreign Employment Ministry and Bureau in Sri Lanka at present? [1 Mark]
- vii. Is the Sri Lankan government capable of finding a solution for the issue discussed? Give reasons.? [1 Mark]
- viii. Write grammatically correct sentences to bring out the meaning of the following words.
  - a. compensation
  - b. tribulations
  - c. covenants[3 Marks]