

- 1 **Preparation before the examination**
 - 1.1 Understand common practice
 - 1.2 Understand reasons behind common practice
 - 1.3 Understand deviations from common practice
 - 1.4 Understand reasons for deviations from common practice
 - 1.5 Distinguish good practice from bad practice
 - 1.6 Understand that office standard may not necessarily be reasonable practice or common practice
 - 1.7 Read more and read wide
 - 1.8 Read trade newsletters and journals
 - 1.9 Read general newspapers
 - 1.10 Watch out issues affecting the industry and the society
 - 1.11 Watch out new development in technology affecting the industry and the society
 - 1.12 Study real examples done by colleagues and others
 - 1.13 Study previous years’ papers and assessors notes where available
 - 1.14 Answers should be based on good practice and be practical
- 2 **Documents to bring into the examination hall**
 - 2.1 Suites of standard form of contracts and sub-contracts for both Building and Civil Works
 - 2.2 Standard Method of Measurement for both Building and Civil Works
 - 2.3 Sample cost estimates
 - 2.4 Sample bills of quantities complete with preliminaries and preambles
 - 2.5 Sample specification
 - 2.6 Sample financial reports
 - 2.7 Sample final accounts
 - 2.8 Sample insurance policies, bonds, warranties, guarantees
 - 2.9 Sample standard office letters/correspondences
 - 2.10 Usual reference books (citation of names of court cases would be impressive but not necessarily useful)
 - 2.11 HKIS Newsletters and Journals
- 3 **Understanding the questions**
 - 3.1 Identify the core of the questions
 - 3.2 Work out and write down the argumentative logics and thinking path
 - 3.3 Number of points being asked
 - 3.4 Any tricky points
 - 3.5 Any tricky words
 - 3.6 Be careful about the relative time and dates
 - 3.7 Re-read the question again after writing down the logics and path
- 4 **Understanding the marking scheme**
 - 4.1 Note different allocation of marks
 - 4.2 Note passing mark
 - 4.3 Credits for good presentation, clarity, tidiness, professional writing
- 5 **Time allocation**
 - 5.1 Answer all of the specified number of questions and sub-questions; one unanswered sub-question cannot easily be compensated by well answered sub-questions
 - 5.2 Length of answers should be proportional to the number of marks
 - 5.3 Do not write excessively long for sub-questions with very few marks
 - 5.4 Reserve time to proof read final answers
- 6 **Writing down brief points**
 - 6.1 Each point being asked should be addressed with a few points of answers
 - 6.2 When you are faced with something that you do not know or do not have experience, try to imagine similar situation, use common sense to judge
- 7 **Presentation**
 - 7.1 Present the answers in the form of a letter or a report as requested by the questions

- 7.2 Give date, addressee, project title, subject matter, greetings, signature, c.c., cover page, contents page, as appropriate
- 7.3 Answers are supposed to be written drafts ready for typing
- 7.4 Do not be afraid to use cut and paste, stapling, crossing out, etc. in order to catch up time
- 7.5 Do not use correction ink
- 8 **Calculations**
 - 8.1 Do not prepare a detailed cost estimate when a cost per m² estimate is suffice
 - 8.2 Rather than the accuracy of individual figures, assessors are looking for correct approach, format, formula, consistency in values, relative differentials
 - 8.3 Calculations must be arithmetically correct
- 9 **Expanding points**
 - 9.1 Set out the points logically, systematically
 - 9.2 Answers should be as concise and precise as possible (**A**ccurate, **B**rief, **C**oncise)
 - 9.3 Answers should be straight forward and relevant
 - 9.4 Answers should be fair and reasonable
 - 9.5 Watch out conflicting answers
 - 9.6 Do not write things that you do not really understand
 - 9.7 Say less rather than say wrongly
 - 9.8 Do not just list out all the points you remember from the text books
 - 9.9 Do not include information just to show your knowledge on contracts
 - 9.10 Do not just cite the name of court cases and give conclusion to the issue discussed
 - 9.11 Do not cause the assessors to check the casebooks
 - 9.12 Avoid putting in answers which are not realistic due to practical reasons or nature of project
 - 9.13 Do not be afraid to state reservations
- 10 **Tactfulness and sensitivity**
 - 10.1 Be diplomatic, avoid upsetting or creating embarrassment to your business partners in your answers
 - 10.2 When you are asked to give opinion on matters which are not entirely QS matters, do not simply say that this is outside your scope of work. Try to offer considered and helpful opinion but also qualify that the matters should also be reviewed by other more competent people, like architects, engineers, lawyers, insurance consultants, etc.
- 11 **Assumptions**
 - 11.1 Make reasonable assumptions
 - 11.2 State all necessary assumptions explicitly in the answers which are usually expected to be in the form of letters or faxes
 - 11.3 State that certain assumptions are subject to technical input or comments from other consultants (e.g. create back-up sheets for inquiries with engineer)
 - 11.4 Do not make assumptions just to make answers easy or avoid answering the real issues (Duck-outs)
- 12 **Backups**
 - 12.1 Do not repeat in the backups information that have been adequately covered in the front answers, assessors' task will be easier
 - 12.2 It will be fatal if the backups contain some points conflicting with the front answers, without valid argument
 - 12.3 Backups will be useful when the front answers only expect you to choose one answering option but you feel that there are also other answering options that you want to impress the assessors that you are really knowledgeable, however, a conclusion on why you chose a particular answering option should be given
- 13 **Giving conclusions**
 - 13.1 Give simple conclusions to various views or points expressed
- 14 **Giving recommendations**
 - 14.1 Do not just list out all the pros and cons

- 14.2 Give your recommendation to solve the problems posed to you
- 14.3 Give sensible recommendation
- 14.4 Give practical solutions
- 14.5 Things theoretically or contractually correct may not be practically good solutions
- 14.6 Give theoretically or contractually correct interpretation but at the same time do not be afraid to suggest practically good or commercially viable solutions
- 15 No "right" answer**
 - 15.1 Usually, there may not be absolutely black or white answers
 - 15.2 Demonstrate that you have considered different possible interpretation or courses of actions, and explain why you chose a particular one as your recommendation
- 16 What not to do**
 - 16.1 Do not give answers to defeat the purposes and use of the QS profession
 - 16.2 Do not collude
 - 16.3 Do not show the name of yourself or your company in the paper
- 17 Proof reading**
 - 17.1 Watch out conflicting views
 - 17.2 Watch out reversed meaning due to inclusion or omission of negative words like "no", "not", etc.
 - 17.3 Watch out empty spaces with missing words that you have blocked out by correction ink
- 18 English**
 - 18.1 Simple
 - 18.2 Correct tense
 - 18.3 Grammar
 - 18.4 Avoid usual errors
 - 18.5 Numbering sub-paragraphs for clarity
- 19 What and what not to enclose**
 - 19.1 Submission should enclose all front answers and backups to your answers
 - 19.2 State the standard form of contract and the method of measurement used and do not enclose them
 - 19.3 Arrange the front answers and backups systematically to show the flow of your thinking process and to assist the assessors to follow the logic of your answers
 - 19.4 Any special notes to assessors should be given at the front of your submission
 - 19.5 Only enclose relevant information
 - 19.6 Do not enclose irrelevant information for the sake of making your submissions look more informative
- 20 Attending interview**
 - 20.1 Assume the altitude as you are attending a meeting with your client
 - 20.2 Calm
 - 20.3 Smile
 - 20.4 Confident
 - 20.5 Clear expression
 - 20.6 Reasonable length of response
 - 20.7 Past experience
 - 20.8 Professional conduct
 - 20.9 Fair and reasonable