

Guidelines for Examiners

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1. PURPOSE

These guidelines provide directions for and the expectations of the role of the Examiner.

Examiners are appointed by the Faculty Dean and/or Division Director, and are accountable to the Faculty Dean and/or Division Director as outlined below.

2. COURSE OUTLINES

The Examiner is required to prepare a course outline in the format approved by the Academic Board and in accordance with the Course Outline Policy (refer to point 5).

3. IN-TERM TESTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Feedback and Return of Assignments

The Examiner must provide feedback to the class on the assessment.

All assessment should be returned within three weeks of the submission date.

All internal assessment marks and feedback are to be made available to students **no less than five working days before the final examination in the course. Consistent late return of assessment marks and scripts will be referred to the Dean / Director, and may become a performance review matter.**

Information

The Examiner should ensure that sufficient information and resources are available to students before setting assignments, and clearly communicate the following information when an assignment is set and with reasonable notice:

- criteria by which work will be marked
- format recommended or required
- submission deadline, and penalty for late submissions
- where appropriate, the hypothesis or proposition to be examined.

Weighting

The assessment weighting of assignments should relate to the scale of the assignment, its complexity, and the proportion of the course material it covers.

Where the class marks of an assignment are to be published, the marks must be listed by student ID number and may make no reference to students' names.

In-Term Tests

In-term tests with a weighting greater than 20% of the total assessment should be held under examination conditions. The examiner has the responsibility for ensuring these conditions are complied with.

Where a class has 100 students or more, the Examiner may be granted assistance from the Examinations Office for up to two tests per semester.

4. GROUP WORK

An Examiner who wishes to count group project assessment as more than 40% of the final mark, in any course, must apply to the relevant Faculty / Division Teaching Committee for consent, justifying that proportion of group project assessment.

In considering requests to extend the contribution of group work beyond 40%, Faculty / Division Teaching administers five principles which should underlie all instances of group project assessment.

1. Students should be informed, in detail and in advance, of the basis for the assessment of a group project, including any techniques for rating the extent of individual contributions and how they are to be used.
2. If the group or its assessment places on students an obligation to exercise skills or judgements beyond those required for the course *per se* (such as, the obligation to assess their peers' contribution) then the Examiner should provide adequate structure, preparation and background in the exercise of that judgement.
3. Group projects should be included in the assessment schedule for a course only where the learning outcomes of the course suggest that this is an appropriate learning and assessment device.
4. If there is peer assessment of the relative contribution of students to a group project, then the process for collecting the ratings should be confidential, clear and simple to use and the process should include self-assessment as well as peer assessment.
5. Graded group project marks should not be assigned to all members of the groups without some moderation – either by the inclusion of an individual component used to moderate the collective component or by a rating of the contribution of individuals to the collective.

5. FORMAL EXAMINATION RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Examiner is responsible for preparing the examination according to the Examination Script Guidelines and ensuring the maintenance of security throughout the drafting and moderating processes.
- The Examiner is responsible for ensuring the examination script is moderated by the person nominated by the Faculty Dean / Division Director.
- The Examiner is responsible for meeting all deadlines and protocols relating to the preparation, submission and marking of the examination script.
- The Examiner is responsible for checking the Examinations Office copy of the examination script.
- The Examiner, or nominee, must be available in person or by telephone during the examination session for their course.

- The Examiner or nominee must attend the Faculty / Division Examination Meetings to present the course results and discuss any issues, etc.
- The Examiner is responsible for storing the examination scripts for six months after the date students are notified of their mark, and for the subsequent disposal of the scripts as confidential waste.

6. SCRUTINISING GRADE DISTRIBUTIONS OF EXAMINATIONS

Examiners are required to analyse the distribution of their grades as outlined in the Examiners' Meeting Manual available from the Academic Administration Committee.

Where there are variations from historic norms for comparable courses, or where distributions have changed significantly from the recent past, examiners should first attempt to determine the cause for the unexpected grade distribution. A check list has been prepared which identifies typical reasons for unusual grade distributions. This check list is set out in 5 below.

In determining whether or not a grade distribution is problematic, and hence may require further scrutiny, the examiner will:

- compare the grade distributions in that course with distributions in comparable courses;
- compare the grade distribution (available from Faculty/Division Administrative staff) in that course with the distribution in the same course over the previous three years.

This determination will involve comparison of:

- pass rates
- mean marks
- proportion of A grades.

Causes of unusual distributions

If the grade distribution proves to be unusual in that analysis, then the examiner and/or the Dean/Director should attempt to determine the cause or causes for the unusual distribution using the check list below.

Changes may have occurred as a result of:

- changes in the course content;
- a change in the course examiner;
- a change in the number of students enrolling in that course;
- a change in the entrance qualifications of students enrolled in that course;
- a change in the programme mix of students enrolled in that course;
- a change in the prerequisites;
- abnormal failure rates in the course in the previous year leading to an unusual pattern of repeats;
- a change in the degree structure affecting the enrolments in that course;
- external disruptive events.

Follow-up action

Having considered the possible causes of an unusual distribution, the examiner may decide:

- to make no change but be prepared to justify the unusual distribution to the Examiners' Meeting and/or the Dean/Director
- to remark on one or more the components of the examination to scale the grades.

7. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES / GUIDELINES

[Assessment Policy](#) [Assessment Guidelines](#) [Course Outline Policy](#) [Examination Script Guidelines](#)
[Examination Policy](#)

