MBEYA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



GUIDELINES FOR HANDLING EXAMINATIONS

PREPARED BY OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY VICE CHANCELLOR (ACADEMIC, RESEARCH AND CONSULTANCY)

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ABREVIATIONS

CA Coursework Assessment

DUS Director of Undergraduate Studies

DVC ARC Deputy Vice Chancellor - Academic, Research and Consultancy

EE External Examiner

EO Examination Officer

HoD Head of Department

IE Internal Examiner

IIE Independent Internal Examiner

MOP Moderation Panel

MUST Mbeya University of Science and Technology

PSRPC Postgraduate Studies Research and Publication Committee

QA Quality Assurance

SE Semester Examination

SIMS Students Information Management System

ToR Terms of Reference

UDSM University of Dar es Salaam

UGSC Undergraduate Studies Committee

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Handling of examinations is one of the most sensitive issues in any credible institution. At Mbeya University of Science and Technology (MUST), the way examinations are handled follows the prevailing instruments of governance including the Prospectus, Examination Regulations and other Senate-approved procedures. The objective of these Guidelines is to address some gaps observed in the prevailing instruments and have in place examination handling and administration procedures that will be more focused in order to guide academic units at all levels.

2.0 CURRENT EXAMINATION HANDLING PROCEDURES

Currently, the conduct of examinations is being governed by Examinations Regulations of 2017, 2018 and 2019. The Regulations set out overall framework of examination setting and administration. In addition to these Regulations, it has been necessary to develop these Guidelines to address issues which are not adequately covered therein. Some of the issues not adequately articulated include step-by-step procedures of handling examinations, modalities for examination moderation, criteria for appeal on examination re-marking and precautions against defaulting the procedures. Furthermore, the Guidelines are based on benchmarks sourced from other institutions of higher learning.

3.0 GUIDELINES FOR HANDLING EXAMINATIONS

3.1 General procedures for handling examinations

- a) An 'Instructor/Internal Examiner (IE) Head of Department centered model' - The examination handling responsibility should heavily be put on the course Instructor/IE, followed by the Head of the Department. The supervisory roles of Examination Officers may come into play only when the examinations are already sealed in envelopes and preferably after the examinations have been done.
- b) 'Seal and handover approach' Examination should, as a general rule, be transferred from one point to another in a *sealed* and *countersigned* envelope.

 Under no circumstances should any examination paper be sent by a second or

third party in an open form. They should be handed over *in person* by the responsible Instructor/Head of Department.

- c) Internal moderation The Head of Department should chair an internal Moderation Panel (MOP) comprising of a minimum of two and a maximum of four senior and/or experienced academic staff. Instructors of the courses being moderated should not be part of the panel moderating the examinations. However, they may be called in to clarify some ambiguous questions. The presealed examination papers should be opened in front of the panel and sealed after the moderation exercise. In a Department where senior staff are lacking, senior colleagues from other departments/colleges may be invited to constitute the panel. Such invitees should be time-compensated as per the prevailing rates. It is important that the MOP is availed with the course curricula/content and the Examination Marking Guide/Scheme. The Terms of Reference (ToR) for MOP are to:
 - (i) Ensure that there are general instructions on the front cover of the Examination Paper, including course code, name, time allocation, etc;
 - (ii) Pay attention to the general format of the examination to ascertain compliance to College-wide uniformity;
 - (iii) Ensure that there is a balance between the time allocated for the paper, the complexity or level of difficulty of the questions and marks allocated;
 - (iv) Ensure that special tables, formulae and other technical documents accompanying the Examination Paper are available as per assessment requirements;
 - (v) Pay attention to clarity and simplicity of language and correct spellings in the Examination Paper;
 - (vi) Edit and suggest improvements (if any) to the questions;
 - (vii) Check and suggest improvements to the model answers/marking schemes in case they do not adequately address the questions;
 - (viii) Consult IE in case there is a need for modifications, changes or even replacement of a question;
 - (ix) Check to ascertain whether each question reflects on the learning outcomes;

- (x) Strictly observe confidentiality in order to avoid chances of examination leakages;
- (xi) Check on the originality of the examination to avoid direct recycling of previous-year questions; and
- (xii) Check on the nature of the questions per Section to enforce compliance to *Bloom's Taxonomy* framework.
- d) **Out of bounds to non-academic staff** Office Attendants, Personal Secretaries, Administrative Officers and the like should not be involved in handling examinations. Where the situation dictates that they should take part, the Instructor/Head of Department should be held responsible for any irregularity that may arise.
- e) **Avoidance of internet/email/phone transmissions** As a rule, computers should be disconnected from the internet while processing examinations. Emails should not be used to send examination files, even if they are password encrypted. Telephone communication on examination-related matters should be strictly prohibited.
- f) Typing, printing, duplicating and photocopying Instructor's personal computer/laptops should be used. Where such facilities are lacking, the PC in the HoD's office should be used. Both the computer and examination files should be password-protected. Instructors should ensure that no file is permanently saved in a computer. Similarly, a designated printer should be used. Unwanted draft examination papers should be shredded, burnt or put in safe custody. In case of photocopying, it should be the rule that examinations not duplicated outside the University compound. The are Department's/College's or any other photocopier may be borrowed provided that the exercise is supervised by the Instructor or HoD in person. Where photocopying machine is borrowed from external service provider and brought to the College, it will be the responsibility of the HoD/Instructor to supervise the whole exercise and ensure that the Instructor/IE is the one responsible for handling the machine. After photocopying, the machine and surroundings

should be inspected to recover any leftover papers. In the long run, the College shall endeavor to plan and set aside a secured photocopying room and equip it with essential facilities.

- g) Storage of examinations Examination papers should be stored in secure places. Prior to duplications, the custodian of the examination is the Instructor/IE. After duplication, the Head of Department together with the Instructor should ensure safety of the storage facilities. Examination should be duplicated 1-2 days before they are done, depending on the class size. Sub-vote holders (College Principals) should ensure that they use funds allocated to them to procure cabinets and drawers with maximum security locks. Where the security of stored examinations is at risk, the responsible HoD should consult the College Principal to communicate to the DVC-ARC for advice on safer places to keep the examinations.
- h) Invigilation of examinations As a rule, instructors should not invigilate their own examinations. However, they should be in the examination room in the first ten minutes to provide clarifications on the examination questions, if any. The HoD should oversee the invigilation arrangements and be responsible for any discrepancies. The Examination Regulations stipulated in the MUST Undergraduate or Postgraduate Prospectus as well as these Guidelines should be followed to the letter. The Office of DVC-ARC will also issue circulars reminding heads of units on proper conduct of University Examinations. It is emphasized that:
 - Assessments (assignments, test and examinations) should not be administered to unregistered candidates. Invigilators should ensure that assessed students are the ones whose names are retrievable from SIMS in that particular Semester; and
 - Students' belongings (handbags, books and other personal effects) should not be admissible into the examination venues.
- i) **Reporting of examination irregularities** It is the responsibility of the Lead Invigilator to report any irregularity that may arise as a result of cheating or any

other form of dishonesty done by candidates. Special Irregularity Forms should be duly filled and countersigned by the candidate, witnesses and the invigilator who discovered the irregularity. Evidences should be immediately confiscated and handed over to the Head of Department for onward processing.

- j) Marking and submission of scripts and record sheets- Instructors/IEs should mark the examination scripts in good time as per the University Almanac and submit the marked scripts, question paper, marking scheme, attendance sheet and SIMS-generated internal marks (CA and SE) record sheet to the Head of Department. Signing by respective party should be done while collecting/submitting the unmarked/marked scripts and the enclosed documents.
- k) **Uploading Examination results into SIMS** It is the responsibility of the Instructor/IE to upload his/her course results into SIMS and make a SIMS printout to be submitted to the HoD as hard copy of the Internal Marks Record Sheet. Any discrepancies should immediately be reported to the HoD. Examination Officers and Heads of Departments are responsible to train new staff on how to compile and upload results into SIMS.
- l) Quality Assurance (QA) during examination handling and administration Throughout the examination process, the Directorate of Quality Assurance is charged with the responsibility of examinations QA monitoring by carrying out on-the-spot inspections and verifications audits to ensure that the right procedures are followed as per the required standards. All examination handlers should provide cooperation to QA officers. The QA office should devise a mechanism to assess the compliance of the IEs to the EE's comments.

3.2 Basic step-by-step procedures in handling examinations

a) The course Instructor/IE should set the examination paper himself/herself and type it in a password-protected computer file which is not connected to the internet. In cases where the course instructor does not possess a personal

- computer (PC) or laptop, he/she should use the Head of Department's computer to type the examination.
- b) The course Instructor/IE should hand over *in person* the examination questions (sealed in a paper envelope) to the Head of Department for internal moderation.
- c) The Head of Department should constitute and chair the meeting of a Moderation Panel (MOP) involving 2 4 senior/experienced academicians of unquestionable integrity.
- d) After moderation, the Head of Department should send back the examination papers (sealed in paper envelopes) to the course Instructors/IEs for corrections. The course Instructor shall keep the examinations papers in a secured place. Where secured environment is not guaranteed, after correction the Instructor/IE should hand over *in person* the sealed examinations papers back to the Head of Department for safe custody. *The HoD is duty bound to check and ensure that all MOP's suggestions have been effected.*
- e) Before the examination time, the course Instructor, in cooperation with the Head of Department should oversee the duplication of the examination papers.
- f) Under no circumstances should non-academic staff such as administrative officers, secretaries and office attendants, be directly involved in handling examinations papers. In a special circumstance where such staff is obliged to participate, the safety of the duplicated papers is still the responsibility of the Course Instructor/Head of Department as the case may dictate.
- g) For large classes, preparation of examinations papers should be made one day before the due time to avoid last minute rushes. In case of smaller classes where the examination is scheduled in the afternoon, the papers shall be duplicated 4 6 hours before the due time.

- h) Where photocopy services are limited or out of order, the Principal of the College should arrange for hired photocopying facility that should be brought to the College premises and be supervised by the in-charge person of a particular examination. *Under no circumstances should examinations be duplicated outside the University compound.*
- i) It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to nominate examination Invigilators.
- j) On the examination day, the course Instructors/IEs and Heads of Departments should be around to oversee the conduct of their unit's examinations.
- k) Preparation of examination rooms, reporting time and identification of examinees, and overall conduct of the examinations shall be in accordance with the University's *Examination Regulations*.
- l) Candidates should be made to write their registration numbers in specially prepared *Attendance Sheets* which shall be signed by the students as they *enter* and *leave* the examination rooms. All invigilators should also sign at the bottom of the Attendance Sheets.
- m) During examinations, any irregularity should be recorded in the special Forms provided, and signed by the student, invigilators and witnesses, and should be handed over to the Head of Department. Any unauthorized materials (as defined in the MUST *University Examination Regulations*) should be immediately confiscated and handed over to the head of unit/department as evidence.
- n) After the examinations are done, all the Examination Answer Booklets should be tallied with the Attendance Sheet register and handed over to HoD and later to course Instructor for marking immediately after the examination is done.
- o) Course instructors should, as per the Almanac, promptly mark the examination scripts and hand over to the Head of Department the Answer Booklets, signed

Attendance Sheets, questions papers, marking schemes and SIMS-generated printouts of the internal marks records sheets. The Head of Department shall countercheck the submitted materials and be responsible for their custody.

- p) Instructors should *in person* upload into SIMS the examination results. Under very special circumstances should the Head of Department, Examination Officer or Principal be responsible for uploading examination results into SIMS.
- q) The Examination Answer Booklets, arranged in sequence as per the students' registration numbers in the Marks Record Sheets, should be neatly rope-fastened and put into manila envelopes, sealed and submitted to the Head of Department for safe keeping before they are handed over to the Independent Internal Examiner (IIE) and External Examiner (EE) as per the Guidelines for Independent Internal Examiners and External Examiners (2020).
- r) In case where EE did not make physical visit to the Campus, post-examination papers should be sent to him/her in order to provide feedback on issues that may need remedial measures in subsequent examinations.
- s) As per MUST Examination Disposal Regulations, for reference/retrieval purposes, all the marked examination Answer Booklets and other marked scripts should be stored in a secured room for a minimum of 36 months after final decision of Senate on the examination concerned, before being destroyed.
- t) The general framework on handling and assessment of coursework should be followed as per the framework outlined in Figure 1.

3.3 Appeals

- a) All appeals should follow the procedures outlined in the Examination Regulations (2017, 2018, 2019).
- b) No appeal will be considered where:

- i) The candidate appeals for re-marking but fails to establish reasonable grounds for prejudice, incompetence, or lack of integrity on the part of the Internal Examiner;
- ii) It arises for the first-time issues concerning the supervision, teaching or coursework assessment. Such matters should only be considered if they have been raised by the student promptly and in writing, at the time they first arose; and
- iii) A student alleges illness or other factors although he/she had an opportunity to postpone studies or examinations(s) but voluntarily opted not to take that opportunity.

4.0 GENERAL PRECAUTIONS

The following general precautions should be taken to avoid leakage of examinations.

- a) Part-time Lecturers who are teaching courses of the same content in their host institutions should be advised to avoid offering the same examination questions at MUST.
- b) Any rumours related to examination leakages, staff misconduct including favouritism or intimate relationships with students should be reported in confidence to the HoD, Principal of College, QA Director and DUS who shall make a thorough investigation, gather evidence and take appropriate action including, but not limited to recommending to Senate cancellation of the said examination and subjecting the defaulter(s) to disciplinary proceedings as per prevailing regulations.
- c) Matters related to preparations of examination rooms and any other issues not covered in these Guidelines will follow MUST Examinations Regulations (2017, 2018 and 2019) as may be updated from time to time.
- d) Procedures for strengthening various aspects of students' assessments are given as Appendix 1.

5.0 LIABILITIES AND PUNISHMENTS IN CASE OF DEFAULT

The existing national and institutional instruments will be used to take disciplinary action against defaulters as follows:

- a) All cases of examination irregularities involving delays, no-shows, leakages and any other type of misconduct will be subjected to stern disciplinary actions as stipulated in the Students By-laws, MUST Prospectus, Staff Regulations (2012), Staff Code of Conduct (2012), Public Service Act (2002) and Regulations (2003), Employment and Labour Relations Act (2004) and Regulations (2007), Standing Orders for Public Service (2009), and any other relevant tool;
- b) Liable subjects will be summoned to appear before the Disciplinary Committees or/and Senate relevant Committees' proceedings;
- c) Punishments for convicted students may include written warnings, repeating an academic year or summary discontinuation from studies as the case may be as decided by the Senate; and
- d) Convicted staff will be punished as per the laid down Public Service Laws and Regulations including written warnings, suspensions or even summary dismissals depending on the gravity of the offence committed.

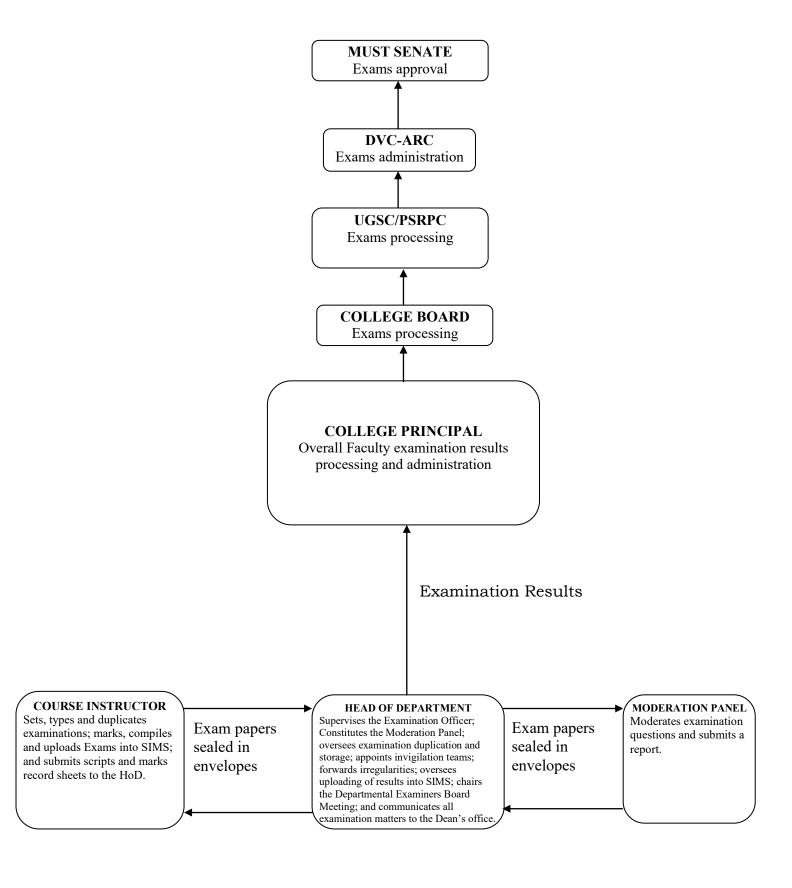


Figure 1. Schematic diagram of examination handling and administration

6.0 CONCLUSION

These Guidelines have been prepared in order to ensure high quality and integrity of University Examinations conducted at MUST. An 'Instructor/IE - Head of Department centered model' and 'seal and hand-over approach' are some of the strategies that have been recommended in order to minimize the number of individuals and offices handling examination questions. The Principals and other higher ranking officers and committees will continue to provide logistical and overall administrative support, especially during processing of examination results. The Guidelines further cautions about the impending disciplinary actions against the would-be defaulters. Heads of academic units are urged to avail these Guidelines to all on-post and part-time teaching staff. The Guidelines are by all means not exhaustive; they leave room for further improvements and will be subjected to review from time to time.

7.0 REFERENCES

Employment and Labor Relations Act (2004) and Regulations (2007).

MUST Examination Regulations (2017, 2018, 2019).

Guidelines for Independent Internal Examination and External Examiners (2020).

MUST Prospectus 2019/2020

Public Service Act (2002) and Regulations (2003).

Standing Orders for Public Service (2009).

UDSM Reviewed Regulations on External and Internal Examination Processes (2013)

8.0 APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

STRENGTHENING INTERNAL SYSTEMS OF QUALITY ASSURANCE IN EXAMINATIONS AT MUST

1. Coursework Assessment

- a) Similar coursework assessment system shall be used for the entire College or School or Institute.
- b) Continuous Assessment shall be constituted by a mixture of test and homeworks as prescribed by the College.
- c) In any case, a minimum of two assessments should constitute coursework.

In order to ensure the quality of coursework assessment, the following shall be observed:

- a) Course instructors shall avoid, as far as possible, immediate and direct recycling of questions or homework assignments.
- b) Tests shall be invigilated in a similar manner as the University Examination to avoid cheating and other irregularities.
- c) Large rooms shall be used for tests to avoid cheating and students copying from each other (some large rooms shall be available on booking to conduct Semester tests).
- d) Instructors shall be sensitized on the importance of quality assurance in handing CA.
- e) It is the responsibility of the Course Instructor in liaison with the HoD to make sure that tests are conducted in acceptable environment.

2. Setting Examination Papers

a) Setting of examinations shall be the responsibility of course instructors, including printing, photocopying and custody.

- b) Adopt same format and number of questing in exam papers in all courses in the College/School/Institute.
- c) An examination should cover the syllabus as much as possible.
- d) Exam papers should have more than one section: Section "A": Short answer questions; Section "B" (and "C", if applicable depending on the College's format): Long, skill-probing questions.
- e) All staff members involved in the examination process should maintain strict confidentiality;
- f) Examination papers should be set and typed by individual instructors. No other person, including secretaries should have access to the examination papers.
- g) Examinations should test knowledge, skills and understanding.
- h) Avoid as much as possible questions done in class and avoid recycling of questions from past papers.
- i) There should be a balance between theoretical and practical oriented questions to test understanding and not duplication.
- j) Ensure clarity in the language used in the examination.
- k) Course Instructors should prepare a comprehensive Marking Scheme/Guide.

3. Pre-Examination Moderation

- All examination papers shall be peer moderated by a panel of senior/experienced academic staff appointed by the Head of Department.
 The Moderation Panel (MOP) shall be chaired by the Head of Department (HoD);
- b) Depending on the size of Department and number of examinations, the MOP size should range between 2 and 4 members.
- c) Some MOP members could be appointed from outside the department/college where there is a shortage of qualified senior staff in the field of study.
- d) Each paper should be moderated by at least two members of staff other than the course instructor.

e) Where applicable, internal pre-examination moderation shall be done before question papers are sent to external examiners.

The ToR of the MOP shall be to:

- i) Ensure the examination paper covers the curricula as much as possible;
- ii) Ensure that the set examination is of required format and standard;
- iii) Ensure clarity and correctness of questions in relation to course objectives;
- iv) Ascertain that the examination can be done within the allocated time;
- v) Ensure that questions are not recycled. In this case it is recommended;

 Departments should *establish examination question banks*; and
- vi) Ensure fair distribution of marks.

4. Security of Examinations

- a) The security of any examination shall remain the responsibility of the course Instructor/IE and the Head of Department until the examination is administered.
- b) The HoD shall be entrusted with the responsibility of safe custody of the examination at the request of the course Instructor/IE.
- c) Course instructors should set and type the examinations; they should not be given to Secretaries for typing or handling.
- d) Production/photocopying of examinations should be strictly supervised by the course instructors and or HoDs.
- e) PCs used for typing examinations should not be connected to the computer network at the time of typing and printing examinations.
- f) Computer files with examinations should be deleted after printing the exam on computers used by more than one person.
- g) Passwords should be used on computers to typeset and process examinations.
- h) Always use a password to protect a computer file containing an examination.
- i) Shred or burn or put in safe custody draft examination papers.

- j) Course instructors/examiners and examination moderators should take primary responsibility to ensure confidentiality of examination.
- k) Any staff who causes examination leakage shall attract severe penalties, including dismissal.

5. Independent Internal Examiners

In the absence of External Examiners to assess student performance in examinations and fairness in marking at the end of each academic year, it is recommended to appoint Independent Internal Examiners (IIEs) to undertake thorough scrutiny and evaluation of student assessment and performance in each department. The appointment of IIE and their roles will be as per the prevailing MUST guidelines. The items to be submitted by HoD to the Independent Internal Examiners shall include but not limited to:

- a) Marked examination answer scripts arranged in a serial order as per the results sheets;
- b) Students' examination attendance sheets-signed by students and invigilators;
- c) Examination question paper;
- d) Detailed Marking Scheme/Guide;
- e) Course content/syllabus: and
- f) Examination results sheets signed by the instructor which should include the following:
 - i) Examination result sheet indicating scores for each attempted examination question and total marks;
 - ii) Combined CA and SE score sheet as generated by SIMS; and
 - iii) A brief statement by the Course Instructor on the performance of students.

Internal moderation of examination results shall normally be carried out in each semester before the results are tabled to the College Board. The IIEs and EEs shall be required to submit a comprehensive report to DVC-ARC on the overall assessment of student performance in the coursework assessment, examinations, and marking and grading students' scripts. Copies of the report shall be made available to the Principal and HoD, and shall be discussed at the relevant College/School/Institute Boards.

The External Examiner and Independent Internal Examiner shall be entitled to a modest MUST- approved remuneration package after submitting a satisfactory report.

MBEYA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY DIRECTORATE OF QUALITY ASSURANCE



EXAMINATION MODERATION FORM

NAME OF COLLEGE:	
NAME OF DEPARTMENT:	
COURSE NAME:	
COURSE CODE:	
NAME OF COURSE INSTRUCTOR:	
ACADEMIC YEAR:	
1.0 QUESTION PAPER	

1.1 General Notes

S/N	ITEM	NOTE
1	Type of Examination (e.g. Semester/Supplementary/Carry)	
2	PGD/Degree/Diploma/Certificates & Year of Study	
3	Number of Questions set	
4		
5	Marks allocated to each question	
	Number of Questions set Number of questions to be attempted	

2.0 The question paper									
2.1	All the questions are wit	hin the cou	rse conter	nt YES				NO	
2.2	2.2 Time allocated is Adequate/Appropriate			YES				NO	
2.3	. Adherence to College-v	vide format		YES				NO	
				QUESTIC	ON NUM	IBER			
5/N	ITEM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Comments
1	Do the questions cover the course content? (Yes/No)								
2	Do the questions reflect the Learning Outcomes adequately?								
3	Are the question marks fairly allocated?								
4	Are the questions clear?								
5	Do the questions provide adequate guidance to the examinee?								
6	Are the questions is challenging, allowing for creative responses from candidates?								
7	Are figures, tables, equations, etc. clear and correct?								
3.0	Overall Assessment	;							
3.1 Is the examination appropriate for the level it is set?									
Comments:									

3.2	Do the contents in the Examination sections (A,B,C) reflect Bloom's Taxonomy?
4.0 4.1	MARKING SCHEME/MODEL /ANSWERS Has a Marking Scheme covered all the examination items been asked?
	nents:
•••••	Does the Marking Scheme provide adequate details and directions to enable another examiner to mark the examination?
	nents:
4.3	Are the suggested answers/solutions appropriate?
Comn	nents:

•••••	
4.4	Do the answers/solutions match with questions asked?
Com	ments:
4.5	Is allocation of Marks fair and systematic?
Com	ments:
•••••	
4.6	List of proposed modifications/changes Questions:
•••••	
•••••	

5.0 Moderators' Declaration

We hereby declare that we have thoroughly read the Examination Question Paper and Marking Scheme and recommended it, subject effecting the suggested improvements.

Names of Moderator	Designation	Signature Date	Date		
1	HoD/Chairperson				
2	Member				
3	Member				
1	Mamhar				