

澳門科技大學
MACAU UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

DOCUMENTS FOR BOARDS OF EXAMINERS

February, 2016

OVERVIEW

Macau University of Science and Technology (M.U.S.T.) is committed to the highest quality of assessment and examinations, and this is reflected in discussions at Senate and other University Committees. In 2009 M.U.S.T. installed Boards of Examiners for all its degree programs. Since then some fourteen substantial papers have been produced which have provided guidance on the operations of Boards of Examiners, some of these in response to the request of the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee for further clarification of, and guidance for, the smooth, effective and efficient operations of such Boards. These are important for internal University development and support the University in its moves towards accreditation. The present document distills into a single document the key points from preceding documents, together with up-to-date advice and requirements that are designed to develop further the operations of Boards of Examiners, taking account of discussion at Senate and other committees.

On 18 November, 2014, the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee approved the document below, which sets out *requirements* and *guidance* thus:

REGULATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS (pages 1-15 of the document below)

1. Regulations for Boards of Examiners (in English and Chinese)
2. Procedures and Operations of Boards of Examiners

GUIDANCE FOR BOARDS OF EXAMINERS (pages 16-48 of the document below)

1. Examination papers and other assessments
2. Marking, grading and assessment
3. Reporting

The *Regulations and Requirements* set out the remit, scope, powers, duties and responsibilities of Boards of Examiners, their meetings and their consideration of special arrangements for, and circumstances of, students.

The *Guidance for Boards of Examiners* concerns, *inter alia*: giving practical advice on the setting and approval of examinations and assessments; the preparations and documentation required for meetings of Boards of Examiners; the effective and smooth conduct of meetings; handling special cases of students; the reporting of meetings and results (including the **required** report pro-forma forma); assessment rubrics; and moderation meetings and agreement trials.



澳門科技大學
MACAU UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY

BOARDS OF EXAMINERS

November 2014

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澳門科技大學
**MACAU UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE
AND TECHNOLOGY**

**UNIVERSITY LEVEL, PART ONE:
REGULATIONS FOR BOARDS OF
EXAMINERS**

November 2014

Article 1

1. Boards of Examiners, on behalf of the Faculty Board, are established to ensure that examinations, assessments and recommendations to Senate for awards are valid, reliable, accurate, transparent, explicit, equitable, efficient, monitored, undertaken by people with suitable expertise and competence, and support student learning. 'Examination' means any formal assessment, examination, and/or evaluation of performance which contributes to the grading of students in a course, major or program. 'Assessment' means the process of reaching a decision on the results/marks/grades to be awarded to students. It also includes the provision of formative and summative feedback to students where appropriate. An 'award' here is defined as the students' result in the degree/certificate/diploma, together with its classification (where appropriate).

Article 2

1. These Boards of Examiners Regulations apply to all programs offered by the Macau University of Science and Technology.

Article 3

1. Boards of Examiners operate for every program and its constituent majors/courses in the University.

Article 4

1. A Board of Examiners is appointed within a Faculty or, for cross-faculty programs, by the Faculties or other bodies responsible for the program(s) in question.

Article 5

1. Membership of a Board of Examiners comprises:
 - (a) the Chair of the Board of Examiners who is the Dean/Director or Associate/Assistant Dean/Vice-Dean/Deputy Dean/Assistant Director of the Faculty/Department/School/College/ Centre/Institute ('hereafter abbreviated to Faculty');
 - (b) *ex officio*, academic staff who are members of the Faculty which is responsible for the course(s), major(s) or program(s) being examined;
 - (c) appointed members from other Boards of Examiners (e.g. in respect of students who have relevant studies/courses in another Faculty of the University);
 - (d) External Examiner(s) for the course(s), major(s) or programs in question (where appropriate, as decided by the Chair);
 - (e) others (see (2)).
2. Nominations for membership of the Board of Examiners in the category 'others' must be made to the Chair of the Board of Examiners, who has the responsibility for approving such appointments.
3. Members of the Board of Examiners are appointed by the relevant Faculty Board.
4. Each Board of Examiners has a Chair and a Secretary.
5. If the Secretary to the Board of Examiners is not a member of the academic staff, then he/she does not have voting rights in the Board of Examiners.
6. The Chair of the Board of Examiners may appoint a Deputy Chair of the Board of Examiners.
7. Examiners from Boards of Examiners are not required or permitted to attend the meeting of other Boards of Examiners, except by special request and for special reasons and circumstances (e.g. if a student is being considered for an award by one Board of Examiners for a program, part of which was taken in another part of the university with its own Board of Examiners).
8. In any cases of conflict of interest, all examiners must declare to the Chair, in advance of any meeting of the Board of Examiners, any personal interest in, or relationship with, the student being assessed, and may be required to withdraw from any meeting when that student is being discussed. If the conflict of interest involves the Chair then the Chair's nominee may chair the meeting.
9. Substitutes for members of the Board of Examiners are only permitted in exceptional circumstances and must be approved by the Chair or Deputy Chair of the Board of Examiners.

Article 6

1. Boards of Examiners have their terms of reference, duties, powers, membership, tenure of office, quorum, procedures, operations, meeting schedules, voting rights, set out in formal documentation which is approved by the University.

2. Copies of the terms of reference must be given to each member of the Board of Examiners.
3. Boards of Examiners are responsible, on behalf of the Faculty Board, for (a) arranging the division of work of assessment; (b) receiving, considering and confirming the assessments, marks/grades/assessment outcomes and recommended awards of students who have studied in the Faculty in question and of those who are registered for programs/majors in other Faculties; (c) ensuring that the marking conventions and schemes are in accordance with the requirements of the program(s)/majors(s)/course(s) in question; (d) understanding and activating the principles and procedures in respect of special cases; (e) reporting to the Senate on its operations.

Article 7

1. Two thirds of the membership shall form a quorum at each meeting (rounded down to the nearest whole person). In the event that a meeting is or becomes inquorate, it may still continue though no voting may be conducted.

Article 8

1. Boards of Examiners may exercise discretion in special cases of students, which follow the procedures and requirements as set out in relevant documents of the University. They must ensure that their approach and judgments are equitable, transparent and minuted in respect of the reason for the exercise of discretion and the outcome of that exercise.
2. Boards of Examiners will consider any mitigating circumstances concerning students that have been brought to their notice, with evidence, prior to the meeting of the Board of Examiners, and which have been scrutinized in advance by a sub-group comprising, at minimum, the Chair, Secretary and other relevant members of the Board of Examiners as decided by the Chair.
3. Where there have been deemed to be special circumstances concerning students (e.g. extenuating and circumstances, concessions, medical evidence), members of the Board of Examiners must be apprised of the special circumstances (with respect to confidentiality and privacy, and within the regulations and approved procedures of the University).

Article 9

1. A Board of Examiners may not alter marks and may not overturn the decisions of, or the marks/grades awarded by, another Board of Examiners or by previous Boards of Examiners to the same program, major or course.
2. Boards of Examiners only examine the courses which are brought to them at the meeting(s).

Article 10

1. The Board of Examiners must meet to approve the marks, grades and awards made for the programs/majors/courses in its remit and to submit its recommendations for awards to the Senate.
2. Where marks, grades and awards are being made, each member of the Board of Examiners must be apprised of all the marks/grades and awards under consideration for every student.

Article 11

1. The Board of Examiners must meet a minimum of twice per semester (to approve examination papers, and to consider marks/awards), and more frequently as required. The Boards of Examiners may delegate to selected members the consideration of results of make-up examinations (i.e. rather than convening a full meeting).
2. Minutes must be taken, by the Secretary to the Board of Examiners, of all meetings of the Boards of Examiners.
3. All attendees and absentees from meetings of the Board of Examiners must be minuted.

Article 12

1. The Chair of the Board of Examiners must file a formal written report on each meeting of the Board of Examiners, using the University pro-forma.

Article 13

1. These Regulations are approved by the University Senate. Any changes and amendments must be approved by the Senate.



澳門科技大學 MACAU UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

大學層面 – 第一部分 考試委員會規章

2016年2月

第一條

1. 考試委員會的成立是（代表學院學術管理委員會）確保考試、評核，及上呈學術及教學委員會建議的學位授予具有效力、可靠、準確、具透明度、清晰、公正、高效、受監察，並由具適當專業知識及能力的人員負責，以及支援學生學習。「考試」指在科目、專業或學位課程中，用作評定學生成績的正規的評核、考試及/或評估。「評核」指完成給學生成績評分/評級的程序，同時還包括適時給學生進展性總結性的反饋。「授予」指學生按照取得學位/證書/文憑要求而得到的成績及其學位榮譽等級（如適用）。

第二條

1. 考試委員會規章適用於澳門科技大學開辦的所有學位課程。

第三條

1. 大學每一學位課程及其下設的專業/科目受考試委員會監管。

第四條

1. 考試委員會由學院為受審查的學位課程而設立；跨學院課程則由負責該課程的各學院或其他團體共同設立。

第五條

1. 考試委員會成員包括：
 - (a) 考試委員會主席：由學院/學部/中心/研究所（下稱「學院」）院長/所長或副院長、助理院長/助理所長擔任；
 - (b) 必然成員：由學院內負責受審查科目、專業或學位課程的教學人員擔任；

- (c) 來自其他考試委員會的指定成員（如，遇有學生在大學另一個學院學習/修讀相關科目）；
 - (d) 為受審查的科目、專業或學位課程而邀請的校外考試委員（如適用，並由主席決定）；
 - (e) 其他成員（見本條第二款）。
2. 上款「其他成員」類別的提名必須向考試委員會主席提出；主席負責批准此等任命。
 3. 考試委員會成員由相關的學院學術委員會任命。
 4. 每個考試委員會設有主席及秘書各一名。
 5. 如考試委員會秘書為非教學人員，則不具投票權。
 6. 考試委員會主席可任命一位考試委員會副主席。
 7. 考試委員會的成員無需出席或不被允許參加其他考試委員會的會議；遇特別要求、特殊理由及情況除外（如考試委員會正檢核學生可獲取的授予，而其修讀之學位課程，部分由大學的另一考試委員會負責）。
 8. 遇有利益衝突的情況，在任何考試委員會會議舉行之前，所有成員必須向主席聲明與被評核學生之間的利益或關係，該委員或需於討論相關學生的會議上避席。如利益衝突的情況涉及主席，則由其代理人主持會議。
 9. 僅在例外情況下，經考試委員會主席或副主席批准後方可替補成員。

第六條

1. 考試委員會的職權範圍、職責、權力、成員、任期、法定人數、程序、運作、會期、投票權載於大學核准的正式文獻中。
2. 考試委員會的職權範圍必須發給考試委員會的每一位成員。
3. 考試委員會代表學院學術管理委員會負責：**(a)** 安排評核工作的分工；**(b)** 接收、檢核及確認就讀於該學院或個別於其他學院註冊修讀學位課程/專業的學生之評核、分數/成績等級/評估結果及建議的授予；**(c)** 確保評分準則及評卷參考以受審查的學位課程/專業/科目的要求為依據；**(d)** 了解及啟動關於特殊情況的原則及程序；**(e)** 向學術及教學委員會匯報其運作情況。

第七條

1. 每次會議的法定人數（向下取整）必須達到全體成員人數的三分之二。倘若會議未達到法定人數或法定人數變為不足時，會議可以繼續，但不可進行投票。

第八條

1. 在特殊情況下，考試委員會可按照大學文本既定之相關程序及規定下行使酌情權，但必須確保其做法及判決公平、具透明度，並記錄行使酌情權的理由及結果。

2. 考試委員會將會按照預先呈交的證據考慮各種可減輕處分的情況，有關證據已預先由分委員會詳細審查。分委員會成員至少包括主席、秘書及由主席決定的其他相關成員。
3. 凡視為特殊情況（例如：情有可原、可酌情處理的情況、醫學證據），則必須（根據保密及私隱兩方面，並按照大學的規章及已核準之程序）通報考試委員會各成員。

第九條

1. 考試委員會不得修改分數，或推翻由另一個考試委員會或之前審查同一學位課程、專業或科目的考試委員會決定授予的分數/成績等級。
2. 考試委員會僅審查上呈其會議的科目。

第十條

1. 考試委員會必須根據其職權範圍開會通過學位課程/專業/科目的分數、成績等級及授予，並向學術及教學委員會上呈授予的建議。
2. 分數、成績等級及成績確定後，必須通報考試委員會的每一位成員關於每位學生的分數/等級及授予。

第十一條

1. 考試委員會須每學期最少舉行兩次會議（以批核試卷及檢核分數/授予），如有需要，可以舉行多次會議。考試委員會可揀選並授權部分成員檢核補考的結果（而無需舉行全體會議）。
2. 所有考試委員會會議必須作記錄，並由委員會秘書執行。
3. 所有出席及缺席會議的成員必須載於會議記錄中。

第十二條

1. 考試委員會主席必須將正式會議記錄報告存檔，該報告須使用大學規定之表格撰寫。

第十三條

1. 本規章由大學學術及教學委員會核准，任何更改或修訂必須呈學術及教學委員會批示。



澳門科技大學
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**UNIVERSITY LEVEL, PART TWO:
PROCEDURES AND OPERATIONS OF
BOARDS OF EXAMINERS**

**(A) POWERS, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD OF
EXAMINERS AND MEMBERS**

BOARD OF EXAMINERS

1. Boards of Examiners, with respect to students taking courses, majors and programs in their remit, are responsible for:
 - arranging for the division of work of assessment and examination;
 - approving the examination papers, re-sit/ make-up papers and any other form(s) of assessment that students have to undertake which contribute to course marks/grades/awards;
 - appointing proof readers for all examination papers;
 - receiving, checking, verifying, validating and approving the marks of students for courses taken in the program/major for which the Board of Examiners is responsible, taking into account other relevant information about the circumstances and situation of individual students (e.g. extenuating and mitigating circumstances);
 - ensuring that marking conventions are correct, including practices for second marking;
 - ensuring that assessment rubrics and marking schemes are acceptable;
 - assessing the performance of students in the courses, major and program under the remit of the Board;
 - ensuring the mechanisms and their operation for any required input from other Faculties;
 - understanding and applying procedures for the assessment and examination of special cases;

- considering evidence in respect of students whose performance may have been affected by particular circumstances, extenuating circumstances or mitigating factors, illness, absence or medical evidence;
 - convening meetings as required;
 - recommending the appointment of External Examiner(s) (where appropriate), and ensuring that the External Examiners are fully apprised of their role and discharge their duties fully;
 - approving the marks, grades and awards of students;
 - making recommendations on the classification of awards or failures;
 - making recommendations for which students may or may not proceed to the next stage of their programs/majors;
 - deciding any compensation that may be made in marking (e.g. discounting an outlying grade or mark, allowing a fail grade to be carried if one or more other grades are particularly high);
 - deciding which students must retake courses or make-ups;
 - deciding which students have 'sufficient cause' (see below) for special arrangements to be made for courses, marks, re-sits and/or make-ups, and what those arrangements will be;
 - deciding which students should, exceptionally, be given an opportunity for a second assessment or make-up;
 - recommending which students should have their programs/majors terminated;
 - exercising discretion in the consideration of marks, grades and awards;
 - providing reports to the university upon request;
 - ensuring that all the marks entered into the university system in the time frame required and that they are correct, if necessary making amendments to ensure that they are correct;
 - approving the release of marks, grades and awards to the Registry;
 - ensuring absolute confidentiality of their proceedings and adherence to data protection regulations.
2. The Board of Examiners must meet to approve the form and content of examination papers in the program/major/course in its remit, and to approve the marks, grades and awards made for the program/major/courses in its remit.
 3. Boards of Examiners are responsible for confirming the marks of students who have studied in the Faculty, whose programs/majors are in other Faculties or, where relevant, institutions (e.g. on exchanges programs).
 4. Boards of Examiners consider the exercise of discretion in special cases of students, which, by their individual nature, are not susceptible to set rules. However, Boards of Examiners should ensure that their approach and judgments are equitable and transparent, with minutes taken of the reason for the exercise of discretion and the outcome of that exercise.
 5. Boards of Examiners will consider any mitigating circumstances concerning students that have been brought to their notice, with evidence, prior to the meeting of the Board of Examiners, and which have been scrutinized in advance by a sub-group

comprising, at minimum, the Chair, Secretary and relevant members involved in the case, all of whom are members of the Board of Examiners.

6. A Board of Examiners may not alter marks except in very special cases, e.g. if a poor question has been included on an examination paper, such that it is considered equitable and important to compensate for this, raising the marks commensurately for all the students affected. In cases of extenuating circumstances of students, a degree class higher than that suggested by the marks profile may be recommended but the candidate's marks should not be changed to facilitate this.
7. A Board of Examiners may not overturn the decisions of, or the marks/grades awarded by, another Board of Examiners or by previous Boards of Examiners to the same program, major or course.
8. Boards of Examiners only examine the courses which are brought to them at the meeting(s) then.
9. Boards of Examiners must be appointed annually.
10. The work of Boards of Examiners is monitored, reviewed, evaluated and developed by the Faculty Board.

CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS

1. The Chair of the Board of Examiners is responsible for:
 - ensuring that the membership of the Board of Examiners is correct and is documented;
 - convening meetings of the Board of Examiners;
 - chairing meetings of the Board of Examiners;
 - ensuring that all the required and necessary arrangements are made for the setting and approval of examination papers;
 - ensuring that the University regulations, rules and procedures in respect of the conduct of Boards of Examiners and their meetings are in accordance with those University requirements.
 - ensuring that any External Examiner(s) (where relevant) is/are sent required information, documents and scripts as indicated in the university's 'Code of Practice for External Examining';
 - ensuring that discussion of students is fair, full and suitably complete.
 - providing the Registry with the approved marks and decisions;
 - ensuring that minutes are taken and held for each meeting of the Board of Examiners, together with any required additional reports, and in the time frame and format required by the Senate.
2. The Chair must ensure that each meeting of the Board of Examiners is quorate. All members of the Board of Examiners are expected to attend all meetings of the Board of Examiners. Members of the Board of Examiners who are unable to attend meetings of the Board of Examiners must provide the Chair with written evidence of 'sufficient cause' for non-attendance.

(B) MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS

1. Where marks, grades and awards are being made, each member of the Board of Examiners must have a copy of all the marks/grades and awards under consideration for every student.
2. Where there have been deemed to be special circumstances (e.g. extenuating and circumstances, concessions, medical evidence), members of the Board of Examiners must be apprised of the special circumstances (with respect to confidentiality and privacy: material on extenuating and mitigating circumstances, concessions, illness, absence and medical evidence is presented below).
3. Minutes must be taken, by the Secretary to the Board of Examiners, of all meetings of the Boards of Examiners.
4. All attendees and absentees from meetings of the Board of Examiners must be minuted.
5. For a meeting of the Board of Examiners to be quorate, there must be present: the Chair, the Secretary, and the internal examiners, in total two thirds of the membership of the Board of Examiners, rounded down to the nearest whole number.
6. Once the Board of Examiners has approved the marks/grades/awards to be given, the Chair of the Board of Examiners and the Dean of the Faculty (if the Dean is not the Chair of the Board of Examiners) signs the mark/ grade/award sheet(s) and the data are passed to Registry for notification to the students.
7. The meeting of the Board of Examiners to approve the marks/grades/awards must normally take place no later than ten working days after the final day of the examination period in question.
8. Appeals by students may only be made once the marks/grades/awards have been approved by the Board of Examiners and released by the Registry.

(C) SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS AND CIRCUMSTANCES

Special Arrangements for Examinations

1. Special arrangements might include, for example, extra time for the examination (e.g. 15 minutes per hour), rest breaks (e.g. 15 minutes per hour), having another person take a dictated text (a scribe/amanuensis), having a reader, papers written or set in different format (e.g. large print or on audio equipment), the presence of a personal care assistant, having a different location. In the case of hearing-impaired students a maximum of 15 minutes reading time and some extra writing time may normally be given, the time to be at the discretion of the Board of Examiners. For visually impaired students an additional 25 per cent maximum of the examination time may normally be given. For dyslexic students a maximum of 25 per cent of writing time may normally be given. In cases where more than this normal time allowance is requested, an approved medical certificate is required in advance of the examination. In the case of long-term medical conditions or disabilities a single approved medical certificate may be granted for the whole period of the student's registration. If the condition is likely to vary over time, then a new concession must be sought each academic year.
2. Special consideration will be given to students with physical writing disabilities, subject to evidence provided.

Consideration of Extenuating and Mitigating Circumstances

1. Consideration will be given by the Board of Examiners of evidence brought before it in respect of special circumstances that might have affected the student's performance, attendance at or absence from an examination and which constitute 'sufficient cause' for special consideration of, and arrangements for, the student. In the case of consideration of extenuating circumstances of students, these should normally be considered by a sub-group of the Board of Examiners (comprising, at minimum, the Chair, Secretary and tutor(s) involved in the case, all of whom are members of the Board of Examiners), prior to the main meeting of the Board of Examiners, so that recommendations can be made to the Board of Examiners and so that confidential information can remain confidential unless strictly necessary at the full meeting of the Board of Examiners (see documents on extenuating and mitigating circumstances, concessions, illness and medical evidence). This may not be possible in the case of small Boards of Examiners, in which case the full Board shall hear the evidence.
2. 'Sufficient cause' is defined as the demonstrable presence of circumstances under which it would be unreasonable to expect a candidate to have attempted an examination. On the basis of evidence provided and recommendation by relevant parties, the Board of Examiners will determine whether 'sufficient cause' exists. It is normally the responsibility of students to inform the Faculty, prior to the meeting of

the Board of Examiners, and where possible, of extenuating circumstances that might constitute 'sufficient cause'.

3. A student who misses an examination with 'sufficient cause', as defined above, may be offered an opportunity to take that examination if practicable, the timing and form of this to be at the discretion of the Dean of the Faculty in consultation with the relevant tutor(s) and subject to the approval of the Board of Examiners. Such an assessment/ examination/evaluation of performance will be regarded as the first assessment/examination/evaluation of performance.
4. A student may be also regarded as missing an examination with 'sufficient cause' if he/she has attempted the examination under circumstances that would constitute 'sufficient cause' as defined above.
5. Students who miss an examination without 'sufficient cause' will be awarded an 'AF' grade in that assessment/examination.
6. Boards of Examiners will consider any mitigating circumstances that have been brought to its notice, with evidence, prior to the meeting of the Board of Examiners, and which have been scrutinized in advance by a group whose composition is set out above.
7. In considering mitigating and extenuating circumstances the sub-group of the Board of Examiners will consider not only the evidence presented but the impact of the mitigating or extenuating circumstances on the assessment, and will report such impact in accordance with reference to the following:
 - *Either* the evidence presented does not indicate that the extenuating or mitigating circumstances had any adverse effect on the student's performance at the assessment in question, *or* the matter has already been sufficiently mitigated or taken into account through the granting of a concession.
 - The evidence presented indicates that the extenuating or mitigating circumstances are likely to have had a small adverse effect on the student's performance at the assessment in question.
 - The evidence presented indicates that the extenuating or mitigating circumstances are likely to have had a significant adverse effect on the student's performance at the assessment in question.
 - The evidence presented indicates that the extenuating or mitigating circumstances are not only severe but are also likely to have had a very significant effect on the student's performance at the assessment in question.
8. The sub-group of the Board of Examiners will also report the duration of the impact (with details of dates). A copy of this report should be presented to the Board of Examiners, which will consider it and its implications in reaching a decision on marks, grades and awards made and which, in turn, will be minuted.

Applying for Consideration of Extenuating and Mitigating Circumstances

1. Students who wish to apply for consideration of extenuating and/or mitigating circumstances must use the application form, which must be accompanied by supporting evidence and all given to the Chair of the Board of Examiners.
2. Applications for consideration of extenuating and/or mitigating circumstances must normally be submitted no later than three days after the assessment/examination of any piece of work, and three days before the meeting of the Board of Examiners. The Board of Examiners retains the right to reject any applications received outside these time frames and also to reject any applications received, once the results have been formally published.
3. The Academic Affairs Office must inform students in advance of the assessment/examination procedures and how to apply for extenuating or mitigating circumstances.
4. Any application must indicate the date(s) and time frame/duration of the circumstances and the effect that these have had on the student's studies/examination/assessment.
5. Evidence of illness must be accompanied by an approved medical certificate or other approved medical documentation, which must be dated, written on headed paper and signed by the author. The production of a retrospective medical certificate or documentation (e.g. where a student tells the doctor that he/she was ill at a particular time) will not be accepted or approved unless there remain residual symptoms at the time of the doctor's diagnosis such that the doctor can verify the illness. A professional medical judgment cannot be made on a past illness and will not be accepted by the University. The medical doctor's decision as to whether a medical certificate is appropriate will be taken as the final decision, within the regulations of the University.
6. On the application for consideration of extenuating and mitigating circumstances form the student must indicate to whom he/she would be prepared for the circumstances to be disclosed, or whether there is anyone to whom the matter must not be disclosed. Whilst the University is sensitive to the nature of extenuating and mitigating circumstances, and will keep them as confidential as possible, it will be necessary, in the student's own interests, to share information given in order that the circumstances can be considered on an informed basis.
7. The form contains an option which allows the student to request the Board of Examiners to be informed only partially as to the nature of the student's circumstances. In this event, the Board of Examiners will consider the mitigating circumstances and make recommendations accordingly without disclosing the nature of the circumstances. Disclosure of information to the Board of Examiners will comply with Data Protection laws.



澳門科技大學
MACAU UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY

**GUIDANCE FOR BOARDS OF
EXAMINERS**

PART ONE: EXAMINATION PAPERS AND OTHER ASSESSMENTS

(A) APPROVAL OF EXAMINATION PAPERS AND OTHER ASSESSMENTS

1. The Board of Examiners must approve the form and content of examination papers, re-sit/make-up papers and any other form(s) of assessment that students have to undertake which contribute to course marks/grades/awards in the program/major/course in its remit. This can be done in a formal meeting or, much more likely, by the Board of Examiners devolving its role to named academic staff, with the Chair of the Board of Examiners signing off the examination papers and assessment proposals when the named academic staff members have approved them on behalf of the Board. The following pages apply when the Board of Examiners convenes in a meeting to give such considerations/approvals.
2. Some of the work of Boards of Examiners takes place *after* marks have been received and examinations have been completed, but there is a significant task for the Board of Examiners, which is to peruse, scrutinize and approve examination papers and assessment requirements for programs, majors and courses *before* students are examined and assessed. This document addresses the latter, for the Board of Examiners in each semester to ensure that all examination papers and assessments have been scrutinized in advance of the examinations/assessments.
3. The process of re-marking may be too late in the system, and there is a need for 'upstream' *ante hoc* moderation, agreement trials and preparation to be undertaken to build in consistency, i.e. to avoid any problems arising in the first place, rather than 'downstream' *post hoc* adjustment. Guiding principles for the work of Boards of Examiners are transparency, understood criteria, validity and reliability in all matters concerning examinations and assessments, and this document addresses the implications of these in practice.
4. It is expected that all the proposals for assessments will have been discussed and agreed by the specific tutors involved in the course prior to the meeting of the Board of Examiners.

5. In reaching its decisions on proposed assessments/examinations, the Board of Examiners will need to consider any aspect relevant to the appropriateness, effectiveness and consistency of proposed assessments and examinations, including, for example:
 - The clarity of the task(s);
 - The level and difficulty of the task(s);
 - The relevance to, and coverage of, the learning outcomes that are being assessed;
 - The appropriateness and suitability of the tasks to the types and modes of learning of the students;
 - Any possible overlap with other assessments;
 - The clarity and appropriateness of the assessment criteria;
 - The appropriateness of the marking schemes, any model answers and the ability of the assessment to discriminate between different levels of performance and attainment;
 - The relevance and relationship of the assessment to the course;
 - The range and variation of assessment topics over time.
6. Boards of Examiners will need to consider the balance of different kinds of assessments within a course, and ensure that the assessments conform to the university-approved statements of assessment in the course in question.
7. All proposals must include the assessment task, the learning outcomes being assessed, the relevant assessment criteria and the coverage of the course.
8. Accompanying information that is given to students must also be included, e.g. marking schemes and criteria, project proposals and briefs and any other guidance to students on the assessment.
9. Unless educationally appropriate, assessments must not be re-used from one year to the next. The Board of Examiners must ensure that assessments differ so that the effects of practice can be minimized where relevant. Exceptions to this include, for example, projects or where the focus of the assessment is on the student's own work and organization.
10. In the event of any disagreement over the proposed examination/assessment, the tutor concerned with the specific assessment should clarify the nature of the disagreement; if the disagreement cannot be resolved then a third party (e.g. another expert in the field/Chair of the Board of Examiners) may be asked to adjudicate.
11. Where relevant, the views of External Examiners must also be sought on the examinations/ assessments before the meeting of the Board of Examiners to approve these.
12. It is expected that all the proposals for assessments will have been discussed and agreed by the specific tutors involved in the course prior to the meeting of the Board of Examiners.
13. In reaching its decisions about proposed assessments/examinations, the Board of Examiners will need to consider any aspect relevant to the appropriateness,

effectiveness and consistency of proposed assessments and examinations, including, for example:

- The level and difficulty of the task(s);
- The *item difficulty* of the examination (are the items too easy, too difficult);
- The *item discriminability* of the examination (those students who have a lot of the required ability/knowledge must have this reflected in their high score, and those who have only a little of the require quality must have this reflected in their low score. An item on which everyone scores highly or poorly has little discriminability, and must be rejected).
- The anticipated distribution of marks in the assessment (to follow the University guidance on this);
- The relevance to, and coverage of, the course learning outcomes;
- The coverage and representativeness of course content, and the contents of the examination/assessment;
- The number of items for each particular area;
- The length of the test/the number of items in total;
- The options (number and nature e.g.: which are compulsory and which are optional) in the test/examination/assessment;
- The number of operations/parts required within each item;
- The clarity and unambiguity of the each item;
- The independence of each item (where the influence of other items in the test on the item in question is minimal and where successful completion of one item is not dependent on successful completion of another);
- Presentation, operation, outcome modes:
 - i. how the task items will be introduced (e.g. oral, written, pictorial, computer, practical demonstration);
 - ii. what the students will be doing when they are working on the test (e.g. mental computation, practical work, oral work, written); and
 - iii. what the outcome(s) will be – how they will show achievement and present the outcomes (e.g.: choosing one item from a multiple choice question; completing a sentence; true-false items; writing a short response; open-ended writing; essays; oral; practical outcome; computer output etc.);
- The appropriateness and suitability of the tasks to the types and modes of learning of the students;
- Any possible overlap with other assessments;
- The clarity and appropriateness of the assessment criteria;
- The format of the examination paper/assessment (e.g. the question types, readability, layout);
- Assessment rubrics and marking criteria, schemes and conventions, how these will be agreed and implemented by all tutors who teach on a course, and how they agree with those on other courses;

- The appropriateness of the marking schemes, any model answers and the ability of the assessment to discriminate between different levels of performance and attainment;
 - The weightings of the marks *within* an item and *across* items;
 - An indication to students (e.g. on the examination paper) of how the marks are distributed;
 - Instructions for tutors;
 - Instructions for students for the examination/assessment (included on the examination paper);
 - Duration of the examination/assessment;
 - The range and variation of assessment topics over time (i.e. to avoid direct replication each time the course is offered, and to avoid unacceptable practice effects);
 - The coverage of a course by course work and/or by examination, and their complementarity.
14. All proposals must include the assessment/examination task(s), the learning outcomes being assessed, the relevant assessment/examination rubrics and marking criteria and the coverage of the course. Assessment rubrics and marking schemes must be acceptable, appropriate, inclusive, and comprehensive.
 15. Accompanying information that is given to students must also be included, e.g. assessment rubrics, marking schemes and criteria, project proposals and briefs and any other guidance to students on the assessment/examination.
 16. Unless educationally appropriate, assessments/examinations must not be re-used from one year to the next. The Board of Examiners must ensure that assessments/examinations differ so that the effects of practice can be minimized where relevant. Exceptions to this include, for example, projects or where the focus of the assessment is on the student's own work and organization.
 17. In the event of any disagreement over the examination/assessment, the tutor concerned with the specific assessment should clarify the nature of the disagreement; if the disagreement cannot be resolved then another party may be asked to adjudicate.
 18. Ensuring that marking conventions are correct, including practices for second marking and, if necessary, third marking.
 19. Ensuring that practical examinations, where performance is immediate and *in situ*, are attended by more than one examiner.
 20. Ensuring the mechanisms and their operation for any required input from other Faculties is in place and is satisfactory.
 21. The Chair of the Board of Examiners must sign off each proposed assessment/examination paper.

(B) GUIDANCE ON PLANNED MARK DISTRIBUTIONS

1. The University policy is to award marks in percentages rather than grades (for those parts of a program which do not simply use a Pass/Fail scheme).
2. The University has approved guidelines for the proportions of undergraduate students at Grade A level (see below: Summary of Overall Guidance for Boards of Examiners, para. 22).
3. The University has approved a guidance document on the distributions of marks.

(C) BEFORE A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS TO CONSIDER EXAMINATION PAPERS AND ASSESSMENTS

For each course:

1. Each course must have prepared documents to bring to the Board, with copies made available before the meeting to afford members of the Board the opportunity to scrutinize them in advance (with appropriate arrangements for security, e.g. signing out and signing in confidential documents such as examination papers, or restricting access to on-site, supervised viewing). These documents should include:
 - Course documentation given to students concerning assessment and examinations;
 - Draft examination papers;
 - Draft assessment rubrics, marking criteria, schemes, conventions and scoring;
 - Planned guidelines on grade distributions for the examination/assessment;
 - Instructions to examiners.
 - Agenda for the meeting of the Board of Examiners.
 - Minutes of the previous meeting of the Board of Examiners.
 - Any other relevant documentation from any member(s) of the Board.
2. The Chair of the Board of Examiners should have reviewed the documentation to provide guidance for the members of the Board of Examiners.
3. The Secretary of the Board of Examiners should have ensured that all members of the Board have had the opportunity to review all the papers for the meeting.

PART TWO: MARKING, GRADING AND ASSESSMENT

(A) SUMMARY OF OVERALL GUIDANCE FOR BOARDS OF EXAMINERS

1. Boards of Examiners need to ask whether marks, markers and marking are too inconsistent, too harsh, too generous.
2. Boards of Examiners should interrogate reasons for unusually high/low/widely dispersed/ homogeneous/skewed/non-normal distributions of marks.
3. Boards of Examiners should consider the fact that there is variation in marking/assessing dissertations/theses across M.U.S.T.: some Faculties use a letter grade, others a pass/fail. GPAs are affected more by the thesis on a grading system than on a pass/fail system.
4. Boards of Examiners should address the issue that high reliance is placed on end-of-semester and mid-term examinations rather than on other forms of assessment.
5. Boards of Examiners should consider how many teachers/markers there are for a particular course and whether moderation has been conducted if there is more than one marker.
6. Boards of Examiners should hold moderation meetings to ensure consistency/acceptability/fairness/accuracy/parity of marking and grades awarded.
7. Boards of Examiners should require re-marking if there are queries about unusually high/low marks overall, outliers, variation in marks across a course/markers.
8. Boards of Examiners should require second marking of all or a sample of scripts across the mark range.
9. Boards of Examiners should encourage markers to use the full range of marks available to them.
10. Boards of Examiners should check if there has been blind marking and blind second marking.
11. Boards of Examiners should be able to exercise discretion at the grade boundaries.
12. Boards of Examiners should look at each student's overall profile.
13. Boards of Examiners should consider requiring students to be held back or to withdraw if their GPA is too low (as set out in the University Handbooks).
14. Boards of Examiners should consider students' mitigating/extenuating circumstances.
15. Boards of Examiners can use initial GPAs to identify students at risk of poor or under-achievement, for early intervention and support.
16. A Board of Examiners must not adjust marks, nor is one Board of Examiners allowed to adjust the marks from another Board of Examiners or from a previous decision of its own Board of Examiners, be that of a *previous* Board of Examiners (e.g. in considering a Year 4 undergraduate student, a Board of Examiners cannot overturn the decision of the Board of Examiners in respect of marks awarded when the student was a Year 2 student) or a *concomitant* Board of Examiners (e.g. if a student is taking a course provided by another Faculty. Boards of Examiners must have

mechanisms for handling the results of other Boards of Examiners and appropriate input from other departments.

17. For graduating or failing students, meetings of the Boards of Examiners should include discussion of students' profiles and course marking and then the Board of Examiners decides on the honors classification to be awarded; discretion is available to the Board of Examiners in respect of students at the borderlines of degree classifications to request re-marking.
18. Boards of Examiners should pay particular attention to the marks of students whose overall GPA places him/her on the upper or lower borderline of a degree classification, for example to examine the overall profile of a student, to consider the marks and courses which may have led to the high/low borderline position and to consider re-marking.
19. Boards of Examiners should exercise the power already invested in them to require re-marking of assessments (e.g. if the profile of marks for a course is significantly discrepant from that of other courses and/or if the profile of marks for a student is significantly inconsistent). In other words, Boards of Examiners should increase their moderation functions. This must be taken together with the next point.
20. Each course convenor should submit to the Board of Examiners a short report to indicate why the marking is at it is (e.g. why is so high, low, varied), so that the Board of Examiners can come to an informed decision on whether to accept and confirm the marks or to require re-marking.
21. A paper of February 2013, from the Quality Assurance Office, indicated that at undergraduate level there were significant differences between the scores and GPAs of males and females at MUST (females typically outperforming males), and between students from Mainland China and Macau (students from Mainland China typically outperforming those from Macau). The report noted that 'gender and country of origin play a small part in influencing student performance . . . with country of origin increasing its effect over time' (p. 10). Hence Boards of Examiners may wish to consider not only students' overall marks by course but break down performance data into four groups, and examine their differences:
 - Male students from Mainland China;
 - Female students from Mainland China;
 - Male students from Macau;
 - Female students from Macau.
22. The Senate accepted the guidance paper, which indicated that between 10 and 20 per cent of students should obtain a grade A, the ramifications of which for a normal curve of distribution (N.B. the Senate-approved guidance document does not require a normal curve of distribution, and it is for each faculty to decide the proportions at each grade level) for the percentages in each other class are shown in the three columns in the three right hand columns below.

FIRST CLASS DEGREE (GPA 3.40-4.00)	2(i) DEGREE (3.00-3.39)	2(ii) DEGREE (2.50-2.99)	THIRD CLASS DEGREE OR BELOW (≤ 2.49)
10%	40%	40%	10%
11%	39%	39%	11%
12%	38%	38%	12%
13%	37%	37%	13%
14%	36%	36%	14%
15%	35%	35%	15%
16%	34%	34%	16%
17%	33%	33%	17%
18%	32%	32%	18%
19%	31%	31%	19%
20%	30%	30%	20%

In terms of marks, the implications of a normal curve are as follows (N.B. the Senate-approved guidance document does not require a normal curve of distribution):

- (a) The mean mark is 73.75%.
- (b) Between 10% and 20% of students should obtain a mark of 85% in an overall assessment;
- (c) Between 40% and 30% of students should obtain a mark of between 75% and 84% in an overall assessment;
- (d) Between 40% and 30% of students should obtain a mark of between 62.5% and 74% in an overall assessment;
- (e) Between 10% and 20% of students should obtain a mark lower than 62.5% in an overall assessment;
- (f) Some 44% of students should obtain a mark of between 68.75% and 78.75%.

(B) SUMMARY OF WHAT TO LOOK FOR BY THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS

Within a course

1. Are the mean and median high/low/around the middle? Is this justified? Which gives a fairer picture: the mean or the median (see the comments later on skewness)? Where are there large differences between the means and medians?
2. Are the marks generally high, low, around the middle? Are there outliers? What numbers are proportions are there in each grade? Are these defensible?
3. Is there a wide or narrow range of marks? Is this defensible?
4. Are markers using an acceptable range of marks?
5. Are the scores bunched close together (low standard deviation)? If so is this justified, and if they are not, is this justified?
6. Are the scores widely dispersed (high standard deviation)? If so, is this justified, and if they are not, is this justified?
7. Are the distributions skewed? If so, is this justified, and if not, is this justified?
8. Are the distributions normal, leptokurtic or platykurtic; and is the distribution defensible?
9. How many students have very higher grades (A+, A, A-) and how many have failed? Are the numbers in each defensible?
10. If there is more than one lecturer marking the course, is there consistency across different markers within a course, in terms of means, medians, standard deviations, range, kurtosis, skewness? Does some work need to be remarked by one or more lecturers?
11. Are there any noticeable trends in differences between: (a) males and females; and (b) student from Mainland China and Macau; (c) the four combinations of (a) and (b).

Across courses

1. Are the means and medians, standard deviations, ranges, kurtosis and skewness similar/different within and across courses? Are similarities and differences here justified and defensible?
2. Are some courses marking consistently higher/lower than others (in terms of means, medians and range)? Is this defensible?
3. Are some courses using a wider/narrower range of marks than others? If so, is this defensible?
4. Does one course use only the upper portions of the full possible range of marks whilst another course use only the lower portion of the full possible range of marks? Is this defensible?
5. Are some standard deviations noticeable high and noticeably low? Is this defensible?
6. Do some courses have larger/smaller standard deviations than others? If so, is this defensible?

7. Do some courses have different kurtosis and skewness than other? If so, if this defensible?
8. Do some course award zero fail grades whilst others award some or several? If so, is this justified?
9. Are some courses more generous than others in their awards of very high grades (e.g. A+, A. A-)? If so, is this justified?
10. Are some courses avoiding very high and very low grades, particularly in comparison to others? If so, is this justified?
11. Are some courses awarding large numbers of 'F', 'T', 'O' and 'AF' grades in comparison to others? Is this defensible?
12. Which courses have very high positive kurtosis (leptokurtic), very high negative kurtosis (platykurtic), very high positive skewness and very high negative skewness? Are these defensible?
13. Which courses seem markedly 'out of step' with the majority of courses in terms of marks and grades awarded, means, medians, standard deviations, range, kurtosis and skewness?
14. Which markers/lecturers seem markedly out of step with the majority of others (e.g. too harsh, too generous, too low or high a range of marks, too low or high a standard deviation, too high a positive or negative kurtosis, too high a positive or negative skewness? Is this defensible?
15. Does some work clearly need to be remarked because of being too discrepant from other courses?
16. Are there any noticeable trends in differences between: (a) males and females; and (b) student from Mainland China and Macau; (c) the four combinations of (a) and (b).

(C) BEFORE THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS TO CONSIDER MARKING, GRADING AND ASSESSMENT

DRAFT AGENDA FOR THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS FOR THE UNDERGRADUATE/POSTGRADUATE PROGRAM IN

1. Welcome by the Chair of the Board of Examiners.
2. Apologies for absence.
3. Confirm the Membership List of the Board of Examiners.
4. Opening remarks from the Chair.
5. Minutes of the previous meeting.
6. Matters arising from the minutes.
7. To receive, consider and approve, require revisions to, the arrangements for and contents of assessments and examinations for Semester XXX for the students, including consideration of any special arrangements that have to be made for specific students.
8. Any other business.
9. Date and time of next meeting (or arrangements for circulation of these).

FOR EACH COURSE

1. If the course has several tutors, check that the tutors have undertaken **moderation procedures** for that course, so that, for example, there is no risk of one tutor having marked too generously, or another too harshly, i.e. that the marking is equitable and consistent across tutors. This may mean having work second marked or having a set of papers/scripts that are at agreed levels, to which tutors can refer when marking, so that they know the levels at which to award marks. It might also require the means, medians and standard deviations for each of the several tutors' marking should be examined and, if there are differences across tutors, for these to be defensible against a challenge or appeal.
2. Check that the appropriate **range** of marks is being used by all the tutors on the course, to avoid the situation of some tutors only using a narrow range of marks whilst others use a much wider range of marks, i.e. to ensure consistency of practice. This will probably mean having some work second marked, particularly if there is work at the borderline of grade equivalents (e.g. a student for whom one tutor might award 87 per cent (an A- grade) might be awarded 88 per cent (an A grade) by another tutor, and this should be avoided. If the range of marks is very narrow or, indeed, if it is very wide, then this needs to be justified.
3. If the **distribution** of marks for courses are either positively skewed (more marks at the lower end of the scale of marks) or negatively skewed (more marks at the upper end of the scale of marks), or the distributions are leptokurtic (bunched together close to the mean, with a small standard deviation) or platykurtic (marks widely

spread around the mean, with a large standard deviation), or very high, or very low, check that this is appropriate (it is not necessarily to require courses to adjust marks, but to be able to defend their marking in the event of a challenge or appeal).

4. If there are **outliers**, whether these are justified. What constitutes an outlier is debatable, but a rule of thumb might be a mark that is extremely low or extremely high or very different from most of the other marks (if the data are bunched), or – as some guides suggest – either some noticeable distance from its neighbours, or more than ten per cent lower than the next lowest mark or ten per cent higher than the next highest mark, or more than 1.5 times further from the median in the interquartile range, (but these are very rough-and-ready guides only and discretion should be exercised). The point here is to look for unusual scores and check that these are intended.
5. Check that all the marks are correct, with no unjustified blanks.
6. Check that unusual or surprising/unexpected distributions of marks are justified; they may signify an error somewhere!

If there are any problems here then the Chair of the Board of Examiners may require re-marking or some other adjustments or checks to be made.

FOR EACH PROGRAM/MAJOR

1. Check that the contributing **courses** have undertaken moderation procedures, so that, for example, there is no risk of one course generally having been marked too generously, or another too harshly, i.e. that the marking is equitable and consistent across courses. This will require the means, medians and standard deviations, range, kurtosis and skewness for each course to be examined and, if there are differences across courses, for these to be defensible against a challenge or appeal.
2. Check that the appropriate **range** of marks is being used consistently across courses, to avoid the situation of some courses only using a narrow range of marks whilst others use a much wider range of marks, i.e. to ensure consistency of practice across courses. If some courses use a narrow or very wide range whilst other do not, or if there is inconsistency in the range of marks used across courses, then this should be justifiable, and the Board of Examiners needs to raise questions about this to satisfy itself that justice has been done, and both transparently and equitably.
3. If the distribution of marks for courses are either positively skewed (more marks at the lower end of the scale of marks) or negatively skewed (more marks at the upper end of the scale of marks), or the distributions are leptokurtic (bunched together close to the mean, with a small standard deviation) or platykurtic (marks widely spread around the mean, with a large standard deviation), or very high, or very low, check that this is appropriate (it is not necessarily to require courses to adjust marks, but to be able to defend their marking in the event of a challenge or appeal).
4. If there are outliers, whether these are justified. As before, what constitutes an outlier is debatable. Look for unusual scores and check that these are intended and fair.

5. Check that all the marks are correct, with no unjustified blanks.
6. Check that unusual or surprising/unexpected distributions of marks are justified; they may signify an error somewhere!

Boards of Examiners cannot adjust marks; they can request and/or require re-marking. The process of adjusting marks may be too late in the system, and there is a need for 'upstream' *ante hoc* moderation, agreement trials and preparations to be undertaken to build in consistency, i.e. to avoid any problems arising in the first place, rather than 'downstream' *post hoc* adjustment.

(D) PAPERS TO PREPARE FOR THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS FOR EACH PROGRAM/MAJOR

(See relevant draft agenda)

FOR UNDERGRADUATE YEAR ONE, YEAR TWO AND YEAR THREE STUDENTS:

1. A sheet that contains a summary of courses, including, for each course, the mean, median, standard deviation, range, kurtosis, skewness, and the grade distributions (the number of students in each grade point (A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+ etc.)). Excel can produce all of these straightforwardly. A sheet may be laid out thus:

Course Code	Course title	Mean	Median	Standard deviation	Range: Min.	Range: Max.	Kurtosis	Skewness	A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D	F	O	T	AF	P	NP
ABC101	Understanding Assessment	72.73	75.5	16.47	35	96	-0.38	-0.58	3	4	2	4	4	2	4	1	2	1	2	1				
XYZ102	Profiling Achievement	69.77	70	13.53	43	92	-0.83	-0.22	2	3	5	5	2	4	2	4	1	2						

Here rows indicate the courses (two courses included on the example) and columns indicate the grade distributions, mean, median, standard deviations, range, kurtosis, skewness), with data inserted in each cell. This enables **courses** to be compared, to look for similarities and differences across course, for example: are there big differences across courses in the means, standard deviations, medians, range, skewness, kurtosis, grade distributions, normal/non-normal distributions.

2. A sheet that sets out the profile of each student, laid out thus:

	Course Code									
Student	ABC101	ABD102	ACG104	ARK203	BCG321	ALT109	PRI302	ERF117	NRT432	EDS213
Chan Chi Hou	78	81	85	76		90	86	77	84	89
Chan Ka Lai	64	67	68	70	66	75		66	71	76
Chan Kwok Bun	72		T	69	77	71	80	79	AF	69
Chan Lok Lok	89	95	90		86	89	93		87	91

Here rows indicate the student and the columns indicate the courses taken (blanks indicate where a student has not taken the course). The courses included are only those that come to the present Board of Examiners. This enables the Board of Examiners to look at the profile of each **student** to see whether, for example, there are outlier marks, the overall profile, marks at the borderlines of grades.

3. A completed course report pro-forma for every course coming to the meeting of the Board of Examiners (see Course Report Pro-forma below).
4. A list of those who students (if any) who are being considered for being held back because of the failure to make sufficient progress.

N.B. Several courses will have had more than one tutor teaching on those courses; the consideration of the marking (i.e. moderation to ensure equity across tutors) by several tutors teaching on a single course should have been undertaken *before* the marks are submitted.

FOR UNDERGRADUATE YEAR FOUR/FINAL YEAR STUDENTS:

1. A sheet that contains a summary of *courses*, including, for each course, the mean, median, standard deviation, range, kurtosis, skewness, and the grade distributions (the number of students in each grade point (A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+ etc.)) (as for (1) above).
2. A sheet that sets out the profile of each *student* (as for (2) above), with the overall GPA and recommended degree award classification inserted as the final columns in the Excel files exemplified above, e.g.:

	Course Code											
Student	ABC101	ABD102	ACG104	ARK203	BCG321	ALT109	PRI302	ERF117	NRT432	EDS213	GPA	Degree
Chan Chi Hou	78	81	85	76		90	86	77	84	89	3.61	I
Chan Ka Lai	64	67	68	70	66	75		66	71	76	3.26	II(1)
Chan Kwok Bun	72		T	69	77	71	80	79	AF	69	2.83	II(2)
Chan Lok Lok	89	95	90		86	89	93		87	91	3.74	I
Chan Shen Kiu	64	67	59	66	63			61	70	69	2.38	III

3. A completed course report pro-forma for every course coming to the meeting of the Board of Examiners (see Course Report Pro-forma).
4. A list of the recommended degree award classification for each student. This can be inserted as the final column in the Excel files exemplified above.

N.B. Several courses will have had more than one tutor teaching on those courses; the consideration of the marking (i.e. moderation to ensure equity across tutors) by several tutors teaching on a single course should be undertaken *before* the marks are submitted.

FOR MASTER’S AND DOCTORATE STUDENTS WHO ARE COMPLETING TAUGHT COURSES:

1. A list of all the courses followed (rows indicate the courses and columns indicate the grade distributions, mean, median, standard deviations, range, kurtosis, skewness), and the grade distributions (the number of students in each grade point (A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+ etc.)) (as for (1) above).
2. A completed course report pro-forma for every course coming to the meeting of the Board of Examiners (see Course Report Pro-forma).
3. Where the student is completing the degree, a list of the recommended degree award for each student. This can be inserted as the final column in the Excel files exemplified above (a Pass/Fail may replace the grading classification here).

N.B. Some courses may have had more than one tutor teaching them; the consideration of the marking (i.e. moderation to ensure equity across tutors) by several tutors teaching on a single course should be undertaken *before* the marks are submitted.

COURSE REPORT PRO-FORMA

(Layout of the final section here is adjusted to fit the present page)

Semester:	Course Code:
Course Title:	
Course Co-ordinator:	
Other staff involved:	

Number of students registered at the start of the course	Number:	
Number of students finishing the course and the percentage of those who registered at the start of the course	Number:	%
Number of students passing the course and the percentage of those who finished the course	Number:	%
Overall average mark and standard deviation (SD)	Mark:	SD:

Distribution of grades (number and percentage of students)						
Grade	Number	%		Grade	Number	%
A+				F		
A				T		
A-				AF		
B+				P		
B-				NP		
C+				DX		
C				X		
C-				S		
D				W		

Question analysis (examination only): please indicate the number of students attempting each question (add rows/question numbers where necessary).						
Question	Number	%		Question	Number	%
Q1				Q6		
Q2				Q7		
Q3				Q8		
Q4				Q9		
Q5				Q10		

Please comment on the running of the course and the above statistics, highlighting and evaluating any trends (e.g. differences by gender and by local/Mainland China students).

(E) CONSIDERATION OF EXTENUATING AND MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES, AND MEDICAL EVIDENCE AT THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS' MEETING

1. Some examples of extenuating and mitigating circumstances, together with the standard of evidence required, are:
 - a. *Long-term illness*: approved medical certification and documentation such that, inter alia, it is clear what the likely impact is that this will have had on the student's ability to undertake or perform adequately in the assessment/examination;
 - b. *Short-term illness*: approved medical certification and documentation such that, inter alia, it is clear what the likely impact is that this will have had on the student's ability to undertake or perform adequately in the assessment/examination. Short-term illness that has no medical evidence will not be sufficient for an application for extenuating or mitigating circumstances;
 - c. *Bereavement*: the evidence must indicate the close relationship between the student and the deceased, together with a death certificate or the formal death certificate issued by the government, or a letter signed by a person who is not a member of the family, and whose contact details have been included;
 - d. *Acute personal, relationship or emotional circumstances*: approved medical certification and documentation such that, inter alia, it is clear what the likely impact is that this will have had on the student's ability to undertake or perform adequately in the assessment/examination
 - e. *Hospitalization*: approved medical certification and documentation such that, inter alia, it is clear what the likely impact is that this will have had on the student's ability to undertake or perform adequately in the assessment/examination;
 - f. *Victim of crime*: documentation from the police and/or written statement of events, including a crime reference number and/or approved medical certification and documentation such that, inter alia, it is clear what the likely impact is that this will have had on the student's ability to undertake or perform adequately in the assessment/examination;
 - g. *Representing the University at a significant event or involvement in some other significant event*: a letter of confirmation from the Dean of the Faculty or organizing body, together with a written statement from the student indicating the significance of the event;
 - h. *Religious observance*: a completed 'religious observance' form; it may not be possible to alter the arrangements for the examinations, given the logistical arrangements for examining large numbers of students.
2. Annual holidays, pre-booked holidays, transport problems, failure of own IT equipment, holiday requests, examination stress, mild illness (where no medical

evidence has been provided), accommodation problems, misreading of the examination timetable, voluntary work, paid employment (in term time and holiday periods) are not accepted as extenuating or mitigating circumstances.

3. In the case of consideration of extenuating and mitigating circumstances of students, these should normally be considered by the Board of Examiners (comprising, at a minimum, the Chair, Secretary and tutor(s) involved in the case, all of whom are members of the Board of Examiners, hereafter termed the 'sub-group'), prior to the main meeting of the Board of Examiners, so that recommendations can be made to the Board of Examiners and so that confidential information can remain confidential unless strictly necessary at the full meeting of the Board of Examiners. This may not be possible in the case of small Boards of Examiners, in which case the full Board shall hear the evidence.
4. The sub-group of the Board of Examiners will report such impact in accordance with reference to the following considerations: (a) *Either*: The evidence presented does not indicate that the extenuating or mitigating circumstances had any adverse effect on the student's performance at the assessment in question; *Or*: The matter has already been sufficiently mitigated or taken into account through the granting of a concession; (b) the evidence presented indicates that the extenuating or mitigating circumstances are likely to have had a small adverse effect on the student's performance at the assessment in question; (c) The evidence presented indicates that the extenuating or mitigating circumstances are likely to have had a significant adverse effect on the student's performance at the assessment in question; (d) The evidence presented indicates that the extenuating or mitigating circumstances are not only severe but are also likely to have had a very significant effect on the student's performance at the assessment in question.
5. The sub-group of the Board of Examiners will also report the duration of the impact (with details of dates). A copy of this report should be presented to the Board of Examiners, which will consider it and its implications in reaching a decision on marks, grades and awards made and which, in turn, will be minuted.

(F) AFTER THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS

1. If there is work to be remarked then this may require a further meeting of the Board of Examiners to approve the revised marks, or the revisions may be accepted on Chair's action.
2. Marks are signed off by the Chair on behalf of the Board of Examiners and sent to the Registry.
3. Students who take make-up examinations will need to have their marks considered by the Board of Examiners, but, given the very small number of students involved, the Board may decide to refer this to Chair's action.
4. If there examination papers or assessment rubrics/proposals/arrangements that need to be revised then this may require a further meeting of the Board of Examiners to approve these revisions marks, or the revisions may be approved by Chair's action.
5. Minutes are prepared.
6. The Chair of the Board of Examiners completes and submits the required pro-forma for the record of the meeting to the Faculty Board and the Quality Assurance Office.

(G) CONSIDERING MARKS BY BOARDS OF EXAMINERS

Marks are important. These guidance notes for Boards of Examiners are designed to help to ensure that the marks awarded are fair, equitable, consistent, defensible, valid and reliable, within and across courses. These guidance notes have been prepared to support the work of Boards of Examiners.

The example below gives a sample of way of presenting data, and subsequent pages provide guidance on how Boards of Examiners may wish to review these data. The example indicates that some of the marking and consistency across markers are questionable. The example is of a data sheet for Boards of Examiners, and it includes details of courses, grades awarded, and then some simple statistics which are explained in this document. The example presents aggregated data by course, lecturer, Faculty and class.

Firstly, the sample sheet is given. Then key terms are explained: mean, median, standard deviation, range, kurtosis and skewness. Guidance is given in respect of what Boards of Examiners might do with reference to these key terms. The sample sheet of data is presented, with comments made about what it suggests, and then offers a series of questions which Boards of Examiners may wish to consider in interrogating the data.

COURSE IDENTIFIERS					GRADES AWARDED													DATA ON DISTRIBUTIONS																			
Course Intake	Faculty Code	Course Code	Course Title	Class Code	Lecturer	A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D	P	Total passed students			F	O	T	A	F	NP	Total failed students			DX	Students with Blank Grade	Mean	Median	S.D.	Range MIN	Range MAX	Kurtosis	Skewness
1009	TS	DE004	FULL TITLE	D1	Name	4	0	3	4	6	0	3	2	1	3	0	26	2	2	0	2	0	2	0	6	0	0	64.64	72.23	24.86	0	98.5	1.2	-1.12			
1009	FI	DE004	FULL TITLE	D2	Name	2	2	4	4	3	2	1	0	7	0	0	25	3	0	0	1	0	4	0	0	67.83	72	19.74	0	95.9	3.55	-1.38					
1009	FI	CD002	FULL TITLE	D1	Name	4	2	3	3	4	4	6	2	7	10	0	45	0	3	0	2	0	5	0	0	62.12	63	20.81	0	99	1.67	-0.8					
1009	FI	CN005	FULL TITLE	D1	Name	2	4	0	2	3	1	7	3	1	1	0	24	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	68.44	65	18.51	19.5	99	1.15	-0.71					
1009	IN	CX007	FULL TITLE	D1	Name	0	1	3	2	2	4	3	2	3	10	0	30	4	6	0	5	0	15	0	0	50.54	51	23.49	0	89	0.34	-0.73					
1009	IN	CX008	FULL TITLE	D1	Name	3	1	2	4	2	3	4	4	1	1	0	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	73.71	70.95	13.01	52	98.1	-0.9	0.27					
1009	IN	CR001	FULL TITLE	D1	Name	4	4	3	1	4	4	6	5	7	4	0	42	3	4	0	0	0	7	0	0	64.21	62.97	18.78	8.45	98.19	0.4	-0.33					
1009	IN	CR001	FULL TITLE	D2	Name	3	3	3	2	7	2	3	7	11	9	0	50	1	3	0	2	0	6	0	0	61.24	59.35	19.42	0	95.16	2.11	-0.79					
1009	FI	SS002	FULL TITLE	D1	Name	3	1	7	2	4	5	3	6	1	0	0	32	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	73.18	72	12.54	40.3	95	-0.06	-0.22					
1009	FI	SS002	FULL TITLE	D2	Name	6	7	8	6	5	2	6	4	1	0	0	45	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	77.67	81.35	16.34	0	96	10.3	-2.45					
1009	FI	PR004	FULL TITLE	D1	Name	0	0	5	1	1	0	1	3	2	3	0	16	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	64	61.5	16.62	35	85	-1.07	-0.16					
1009	H	FR001	FULL TITLE	D1	Name	4	4	3	3	3	1	3	2	2	1	0	26	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	75.78	81	18.72	17	100	2.21	-1.18					
1009	H	FR001	FULL TITLE	D2	Name	7	6	1	7	1	0	5	1	0	2	0	30	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	78.03	82	19.98	0	100	6.76	-2.15					
1009	P	NP006	FULL TITLE	D1	Name	2	4	1	5	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	80.41	82	11.02	53	92.5	1.4	-1.25					
1009	PI	NP006	FULL TITLE	D2	Name	3	1	3	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	78.8	81.5	19.52	15	94.7	10.3	-3					
1009	PI	DR101	FULL TITLE	D1	Name	0	1	5	3	5	1	4	1	4	1	0	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	71.29	72.8	11.88	50.7	90.4	-1.17	-0.16					
1009	PI	DR101	FULL TITLE	D2	Name	0	0	4	9	5	13	4	2	0	0	0	37	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	73.75	71.3	7.179	61.5	86.7	-1.06	0.18					

MEAN

The mean is the average score. It is useful if the data are normally distributed (see below: skewness), i.e. most students obtain a Grade C, fewer obtain a Grade B, and far fewer obtain a Grade A, or most students obtain a Grade C, fewer obtain a Grade D, and far fewer obtain a Grade F. (The University has guidance on the proportions at each grade).

The Board of Examiners will need to see if the data are skewed, and if they are not (discussed below) then the mean is a useful guide to the middle score. If the data are not widely dispersed (i.e. the range and the standard deviation (discussed below) are small, then the mean is a useful guide to the middle score.

The Board of Examiners can then decide if the mean is generally high, low or moderate for the marks awarded, and if this is justified. If a course has more than one lecturer, then the means of the different lecturers should be close to each other. If they are not, then the work may need to be re-marked to ensure greater evenness of the marking.

The Board of Examiners will also need to satisfy itself that the means of different courses have parity (i.e. that one course has not marked too generously or too harshly in comparison to another; the mean is a useful guide here).

MEDIAN

The median is the score of the middle person in a list of scores that is arranged in a list that is ordered from high to low. It is useful if the data are skewed (see below: skewness), as, in these circumstances, it gives a fairer picture of the central tendency (the middle score in a range of scores) than the mean.

The Board of Examiners will need to see if the data are skewed, and if they are not (discussed below) then the mean is a useful guide to the score of the middle score. If the marks are skewed, or if the marks have a wide range (from high to low), and/or if there are outliers (a few very extreme scores) then the Board of Examiners may wish to use the median rather than the mean, as this gives a fairer picture of the middle score. The Board of Examiners can then decide if the median is generally high, low or moderate for the marks awarded, and if this is justified.

If a course has more than one lecturer, then the medians of the different lecturers should be close to each other. If they are not, then the work may need to be re-marked to ensure greater evenness of the marking.

The Board of Examiners will also need to satisfy itself that the medians of different courses have parity (i.e. that one course has not marked too generously or too harshly in comparison to another; the median is a useful guide here).

RANGE

The distance from the lowest to the highest marks awarded is the range. The Board of Examiners will need to satisfy itself that the range of marks used in a course: (a) is sufficiently wide or narrow; (b) compares fairly to the range of other courses (e.g. do courses use the same range of marks, and, if not, why not); and (c) that, where a course has more than one lecturer, the range used by each of lecturer is close.

The Board of Examiners will also need to satisfy itself that, where there are appreciable differences observed between the ranges of marks awarded in different courses, these are justified.

STANDARD DEVIATION

The standard deviation is the average distance that each score is from the mean, i.e. the average difference between each score and the mean, and how much, the scores, as a group, deviate from the mean. It is a standardized measure of dispersal. If the standard deviation is high then the scores are widely dispersed; this is a platykurtic distribution (see below: kurtosis). If the standard deviation is low then the scores are bunched closely together; this is a leptokurtic distribution (see below: kurtosis).

The Board of Examiners will need to satisfy itself that: (a) the dispersal of marks awarded is justified; (b) if the standard deviation is low, for example between 0 and 10 (though this is a very rough guide only), i.e. if the scores are tightly bunched together, then this is justified; (c) if the standard deviation is high, for example more than 10 (though this is a very rough guide only), i.e. if the scores are widely dispersed, then this is justified.

The Board of Examiners will need to satisfy itself that, where there are appreciable differences observed between the standard deviations of different courses, then these are justified.

REVIEWING MEANS, MEDIANS, RANGE AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS TOGETHER

The Board of Examiners must consider the means, medians, range and standard deviations separately and together. For example:

- if the means and medians are low and the standard deviations and range are low then this indicates that the scores are bunched together at the lower end of the scale of marks (i.e. most students have performed badly) then this needs to be justified (e.g. was the examination too difficult; was the examination fair; were the students insufficiently diligent in their studies; were the students simply low ability students; was the marking too harsh);

- if the means and medians are high and the standard deviations are low (i.e. most students have performed well), then this needs to be justified (e.g. was the examination too easy; was the examination fair; were the students diligent in their studies; were the students high ability students; was the marking too generous);
- if the means and medians are around the middle (say, for example Grade C), and the standard deviations and range are low, then the scores are bunched together around the Grade C, then this needs to be justified (e.g. most students are middle ability, the exam is neither too difficult nor too easy, the students were moderate in their effort on the course);
- if the means and medians are low and the standard deviation and range are high (i.e. a few students have scored highly, then this needs to be justified);
- if the means and medians are high and the standard deviation and range are high (i.e. a few students have scored very low, then this needs to be justified, and so on).

The combination of means/medians and standard deviations/range provides different profiles of marks and their distributions, and this needs to be justified to the satisfaction of the Board of Examiners: (a) within a course that has a single lecturer; (b) within a course if there is more than one lecturer; (c) across courses. For example, if there have been two lecturers on a course then the means, medians, standard deviations and range should be similar for both, otherwise it suggests that the two markers have been marking differently. The same can be investigated across courses.

KURTOSIS

Kurtosis is a measure of the steepness of the curve of distribution of scores, principally whether the curve is more peaked than the normal curve of distribution, with steep sides, or flatter than the normal curve of distribution. High kurtosis indicates a sharper peak and scores close to each other and close to the mean (small standard deviation): a leptokurtic distribution. Low kurtosis indicates a flatter-than-normal distribution, with scores spread out and some distance from the mean (large standard deviation): a platykurtic distribution.

A normal distribution has a figure of 0 in the column labelled 'kurtosis'. If the figure is higher than this (e.g. 1.12) then the curve of distribution is leptokurtic. If the figure is lower than this (a negative figure, e.g. -1.05) then the curve of distribution is platykurtic.

If the distribution is leptokurtic then the scores will be bunched together close to the mean, and the standard deviation will probably be small. This suggests that a narrow range of marks has been used, and the Board of Examiners will need to satisfy itself on the defensibility of this. If the distribution is platykurtic then the scores will be widely dispersed around the mean and the standard deviation will probably be large. This

suggests that a wide range of marks has been used, and the Board of Examiners will need to satisfy itself on the defensibility of this.

The Board of Examiners will have to satisfy itself that the distributions are safe. For example if there has been more than one lecturer on a course then the levels of kurtosis (the figure given in the column) for each of the lecturers, should be very similar, otherwise it suggests that the two markers have been marking differently. The same can be studied across courses.

SKEWNESS

The mean (average) is often used in reporting aggregated data. However if the data are skewed, it is more advisable to use the median.

Skewness is where most of the scores are bunched at one end of a distribution (e.g. more low scores, or more high scores), and with a long tail of fewer scores in one direction or the other.

In a positive skew, most of the scores are bunched together towards the lower end of the scale, with a long tail of fewer scores going to the higher end of the scale. A positive skew will have a positive figure in the column marked 'skewness'. If the positive figure is over 1.00 then this suggests high skewness. In a positive skew the mean is higher than the median, and the median may give a fairer picture of the marks.

In a negative skew, most of the scores are bunched together towards the higher end of the scale, with a long tail of fewer scores going to the lower end of the scale. A negative skew will have a negative figure in the column marked 'skewness'. If the negative figure is greater than -1.00 then this suggests high skewness. In a negative skew the mean is lower than the median, and the median may give a fairer picture of the marks.

Boards of Examiners will need to see if the data are skewed, and, if so, whether the marks generally are high or low; here the median score - the score of the middle person in a list of scores arranged from high to low - may be useful in considering this. If they find that, for a course which has more than one lecturer, there are gross differences in the skewness figure, then this suggests that the work has been marked differently, and the work may need to be re-marked so that the lecturers' marks are more even in their distributions (i.e. even if the marks are skewed, the skewness of the marks is almost the same across the lecturers).

Generally, if the marks are skewed, or if the marks are normally distributed, the Board of Examiners will need to satisfy itself that these marks are fair. The Board of Examiners will need to satisfy itself that the distributions (including skewness), both within and across courses, are defensible.

COURSE IDENTIFIERS					GRADES AWARDED														DATA ON DISTRIBUTIONS													
Course Intake Faculty Code	Course Code	Course Title	Class Code	Lecturer	A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D	P	Total passed students	F	O	T	A	F	NP	Total failed students	DX	Students' Blank Grade	Mean	Median	S.D.	Range MIN	Range MAX	Kurtosis	Skewness
1009	TS	DE004	FULL TITLE	D1 Name	4	0	3	4	6	0	3	2	1	3	0	26	2	2	0	2	0	6	0	0	0	64.64	72.23	24.86	0	98.5	1.2	-1.12
1009	FI	DE004	FULL TITLE	D2 Name	2	2	4	4	3	2	1	0	7	0	0	25	3	0	0	1	0	4	0	0	67.83	72	19.74	0	95.9	3.55	-1.38	
1009	FI	CD002	FULL TITLE	D1 Name	4	2	3	3	4	4	6	2	7	10	0	45	0	3	0	2	0	5	0	0	62.12	63	20.81	0	99	1.67	-0.8	
1009	FI	CN005	FULL TITLE	D1 Name	2	4	0	2	3	1	7	3	1	1	0	24	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	68.44	65	18.51	19.5	99	1.15	-0.71	
1009	IN	CX007	FULL TITLE	D1 Name	0	1	3	2	2	4	3	2	3	10	0	30	4	6	0	5	0	15	0	0	50.54	51	23.49	0	89	0.34	-0.73	
1009	IN	CX008	FULL TITLE	D1 Name	3	1	2	4	2	3	4	4	1	1	0	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	73.71	70.95	13.01	52	98.1	-0.9	0.27	
1009	IN	CR001	FULL TITLE	D1 Name	4	4	3	1	4	4	6	5	7	4	0	42	3	4	0	0	0	7	0	0	64.21	62.97	18.78	8.45	98.19	0.4	-0.33	
1009	IN	CR001	FULL TITLE	D2 Name	3	3	3	2	7	2	3	7	11	9	0	50	1	3	0	2	0	6	0	0	61.24	59.35	19.42	0	95.16	2.11	-0.79	
1009	FI	SS002	FULL TITLE	D1 Name	3	1	7	2	4	5	3	6	1	0	0	32	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	73.18	72	12.54	40.3	95	-0.06	-0.22	
1009	FI	SS002	FULL TITLE	D2 Name	6	7	8	6	5	2	6	4	1	0	0	45	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	77.67	81.35	16.34	0	96	10.3	-2.45	
1009	FI	PR004	FULL TITLE	D1 Name	0	0	5	1	1	0	1	3	2	3	0	16	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	64	61.5	16.62	35	85	-1.07	-0.16	
1009	H	FR001	FULL TITLE	D1 Name	4	4	3	3	3	1	3	2	2	1	0	26	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	75.78	81	18.72	17	100	2.21	-1.18	
1009	H	FR001	FULL TITLE	D2 Name	7	6	1	7	1	0	5	1	0	2	0	30	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	78.03	82	19.98	0	100	6.76	-2.15	
1009	P	NP006	FULL TITLE	D1 Name	2	4	1	5	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	80.41	82	11.02	53	92.5	1.4	-1.25	
1009	PI	NP006	FULL TITLE	D2 Name	3	1	3	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	78.8	81.5	19.52	15	94.7	10.3	-3	
1009	PI	DR101	FULL TITLE	D1 Name	0	1	5	3	5	1	4	1	4	1	0	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	71.29	72.8	11.88	50.7	90.4	-1.17	-0.16	
1009	PI	DR101	FULL TITLE	D2 Name	0	0	4	9	5	13	4	2	0	0	0	37	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	73.75	71.3	7.179	61.5	86.7	-1.06	0.18	

On this sample sheet, in the first two of the shaded rows (Course Code DE004, taught by two lecturers D1 and D2), one can see that:

- whilst their means and medians are close, their standard deviations are not (lecturer D1 has spread out his/her marks much more than lecturer D2) (S.D. of 24.86 for lecturer D1 and S. D. of 19.74 for lecturer D2);
- whilst lecturer D1 has a curve of distribution that is only a little leptokurtic (1.2), lecturer D2 has a curve of distribution that is more leptokurtic (3.55); (c) lecturer D1 has a small negative skew on his/her scores (-1.12), lecturer D2 has a stronger negative skew on his/her scores (-1.38).

We can see similar discrepancies in respect of the other two shaded blocks (Courses SS002 and FR001), and, indeed for SS002 there is a gross difference in the range of marks used by the two markers. This suggests that the two markers need to review or even adjust their marks.

The grade distributions enable the Board of Examiners to see where the Grades are awarded to the highest numbers of students, the general patterns and configurations of distributions, what is the modal Grade (the Grade gained by the most number of students) within a course, and, indeed, across courses, to see if there is consistency or inconsistency and to identify whether some courses seem to be more generous than others (also referring to means/medians). There are gross differences in the grade

distributions for different courses (e.g. between SS002 and CX007); the Board of Examiners will have to satisfy itself that these are defensible.

One can see also that:

- Some medians and means are very high (SS002), whilst others are very low (CX007);
- For some courses the mean and median are close (CD002) whilst for others they are very different (DE004, SS002, FR001). In cases where the means and medians are noticeably different, one can observe that the level of skewness is high, so, in these cases, the median is probably the more reliable figure;
- Some standard deviations are very large (CT005: 24.96) whilst others are much smaller (NP006: 11.02);
- Some courses use a wide range of marks (CD002) whilst others use a much narrower range of marks (DR101);
- Some courses use only the upper range of marks (DR101) whilst other use the lower range of marks (CX007);
- Some courses have large skewness (NP006) whilst others have very little (PR004);
- Some distributions have high kurtosis (leptokurtic) (SS002) whilst others are more platykurtic (DR101);
- Some grade distributions are spread out over several grades (FR001), others use far fewer grades (NP006), others follow a more-or-less normal curve of distribution (DR101), others have more of the higher grades (FR001), other have more of the lower grades (CX007, CR001), others have no failures (DR101), others have high numbers and high proportions of failures (CX007). The Board of Examiners will need to satisfy itself that these differences are defensible.

The Board of Examiners will have to satisfy itself that differences observed within and across courses are defensible, i.e. that markers have been marking consistently and reliably. If necessary the markers will have to review or even adjust their marks.

(H) AGREEMENT TRIALS

1. Agreement trials normally take place between the meeting of the Board of Examiners to consider the proposals/draft papers for examinations/assessments and the subsequent meeting of the Board of Examiners which considers the actual completed marks from scripts/assessments by students.
2. Agreement trials are run to ensure that marking within and across courses is consistent and reliable. These may be conducted within courses, if there are several tutors on a single course, and between courses in a program/major.
3. Agreement trials are designed to ensure that marking of scripts and assessments will be fair, in accordance with the criteria which are consistently applied by all parties involved, and that any inconsistencies are prevented from arising in the marking of scripts and assessments.
4. An agreement trial is where markers:
 - Take samples/examples of examination scripts/assessments and, by applying the agreed marking criteria, mark those scripts/assessments and then compare their marks and marking to see where there are differences between the markers, so that such differences can be minimized for the sake of consistency in marking the actual examination scripts.
 - Take samples/examples of examination scripts/assessments that have been kept on file/portfolios of sample scripts which have already- agreed marks awarded at such-and-such a level (e.g. in the percentage distributions/range), and then tutors refer to them in marking other scripts, using these reference examples for guidance on marks to be awarded. Then they compare the results of their marking against these already-agreed samples, to look for consistency.
5. An agreement trial is not the same as agreeing in advance how many marks should be allocated (which is the *marking scheme*); rather, an agreement trial is *applying* the existing marking scheme to samples of work/examination scripts to ensure that the marking criteria are agreed and are applied consistently across markers, i.e. it *applies* the agreed marking scheme and ensures that it is being applied consistently and correctly so that marks are awarded consistently and fairly and that equal recognition of performance is given by *different* markers of scripts and by the *same* marker of scripts, i.e. consistency within and between markers ('inter-rater reliability').
6. Agreement trials often work with previous examination/assessment scripts, but they need not be confined to these; they may work on new scripts.
7. Agreement trials should be undertaken between tutors, to ensure parity of marking. This means: (a) double blind marking of sample scripts (i.e. the marker does not know whose scripts are being marked and the marks awarded by other markers); (b) agreement on marks to be awarded for sample scripts which will become referents for subsequent marking.
8. The Board of Examiners does not normally conduct agreement trials itself; they are conducted outside the Board of Examiners. However, each Board of Examiners

must receive and consider reports of those agreement trials, to satisfy itself that they have been conducted properly.

9. An agreement trial often has three stages:
 - A preparation stage in which tutors meet together to be briefed on the marking criteria and how to apply them, maybe with reference to sample scripts;
 - A sample marking stage, in which tutors receive and apply the marking criteria to sample or actual scripts, marking them privately and without discussion with other markers;
 - A final stage, in which tutors come together to share their marking and discuss differences/similarities etc, so that the marking criteria are applied in an agreed and consistent manner for examination scripts/assessments.
10. Subsequent to the agreement trial, the examiners will mark the real examination scripts/assessments and meet together to review the marks and the marking before the marks are submitted to the Board of Examiners.

(I) ASSESSMENT RUBRICS

Boards of Examiners should satisfy themselves that assessment rubrics have been provided for each course that comes to the Board. Assessment rubrics also operate at the program/major level, and there should be an alignment between the program/major-level rubrics and the course-level rubrics.

Assessment rubrics set out, usually in summary form, the basis on which judgments of students' learning and assessment are based. They specify the criteria and standards used for making judgments of assessed work and assessment of students. This makes for transparency in the assessment.

Assessment rubrics for each course can be used for marking assignments, essays, projects, class participation etc. They should be given to students at the commencement of each course, so that they know what is required of them in order to obtain different marks and grade points (e.g. what is required for an A grade, B grade and so on). They will specify what the students need to demonstrate in their assessed work. This serves both learning and assessment functions. The assessment rubrics should be discussed with the students, with examples at each level.

There are two main types of rubrics: holistic and analytical. Holistic rubrics group together several different assessment criteria and classify them under grade headings to give an overall grade. Analytic rubrics set out different assessment criteria and provide specific descriptors. Analytic rubrics are used for specific assignments/assessments; they can be set out in a matrix, with the dimension (the aspect of the work being assessed) being the row and the grade level being the column. For example, in marking an essay, the row dimensions might be: the logic of the argument; the progression of ideas; the evidence of reading; the coverage of the content; the ability to draw conclusions. The column heading might be 'Grade A', 'Grade B', 'Grade C', 'Grade D', 'Fail', and the cells in the matrix will contain the descriptors – the criteria – for judgment at each grade point.

PART THREE: REPORTING

(A) REPORT BY THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS

1. The Chair of the Board of Examiners must include the following in the report of the meeting of the Board of Examiners in the academic year:
 - The date and time of the meeting.
 - The title(s) of the program/major and courses assessed at the meeting.
 - The minutes of the meeting, signed by the Chair, which must include:
 - those in attendance and those absent;
 - any special features of the setting or arrangements for the examination of students;
 - arrangements for oral, practical and/or viva voce examinations;
 - arrangements for marking;
 - decisions reached by the Board of Examiners;
 - consideration of evidence other than that of academic performance in respect of any students (anonymized) and the outcomes of such consideration (even if no action was subsequently taken);
 - cases where the discretion of the Board of Examiners has been exercised about special cases, and the outcomes of such consideration;
 - explanation of any procedural irregularities or unusual circumstances within the remit of the Board of Examiners which affected the marks/grades/awards made;
 - any other matters that the Board of Examiners considers important to record.
 - A summary of any concessions or special recommendations and requirements made, detailing the exact nature of the concessions, recommendations and/or requirements.
 - Communication(s) with the External Examiners (if any).
 - A summary of special or difficult cases and/or where the Board of Examiners has had to exercise its discretion in the discharge of its duties.
2. The report must be made on the required pro-forma.
3. A copy of the report must be sent to: (a) all members of the Board of Examiners; (b) the Teaching and Learning Committee of the University; (c) the Quality Assurance Office.
4. The Faculty must hold the original copy of the report.

Strictly Confidential

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BOARD OF EXAMINERS REPORT PRO-FORMA

Faculty:

.....

Board of Examiners for which Program(s):

.....

.....

Total number of meetings:.....

Please attach to this report a copy of the following:

All meeting minutes, which should include the following information:

1. The attendance list
2. The agenda
3. Materials discussed on this meeting (if any)

N.B. This completed form and all its attachments should be completed and kept in the Faculty Office and a copy be sent to the QA Office by 28 (29) February and 31 July.

Signed: Chair of the Board of Examiners

Date:

THIS FRONT COVER SHOULD BE USED AS THE FRONT COVER FOR THE REPORT, AND SHOULD BE KEPT AND SUBMITTED TOGETHER WITH ALL THE DOCUMENTS LISTED ABOVE.

This report should be written in conjunction with the regulations of Board of Examiners.

Please report on the following, where relevant:

1. In awarding marks, was any information considered by the Board other than that of the academic performance of the student (e.g. personal/medical information)? If so, please indicate, for every case (the evidence itself should not be included in this report form):

The student's name and Student ID number

The date and source of the evidence

The nature of the evidence

The decision reached by the Board

2. In considering the marks/grades/classification, were there any cases where the discretion of the Board of Examiners was exercised about special cases, and, if so, what were the outcomes of such consideration? Please indicate, and, where relevant, please include, by name and Student ID, any student(s) so affected, the nature of the evidence, and the decision reached by the Board.
3. In considering the marks/grades/classification, were there any procedural irregularities or unusual circumstances within the remit of the Board of Examiners which affected the marks/grades/awards made? If so, please indicate what these were and how the Board took them into account and, where relevant, include, by name and Student ID, any student(s) so affected, the nature of the evidence, and the decision reached by the Board.
4. Were there any other special recommendations and requirements made by the Board? If so, please indicate what these were.

Please write the report here, and continue on another sheet if required.

SCHEMA OF PROCEDURE FOR OPERATIONS OF BOARDS OF EXAMINERS

