

Assessment of Module Assignments and Dissertations

Contents:

7. PROCEDURES	3
7.1 RESPONSIBILITIES:	3
7.2 PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK FOR LEARNING.....	3
7.3 MODULE ASSIGNMENTS.....	4
7.4 ASSIGNMENT – MARKING SCHEME	4
7.5 TIME FRAME	4
7.6 MARKING OF MODULE ASSIGNMENTS	4
7.7 MARKING SHEETS.....	5
7.8 FEEDBACK TO STUDENTS ON ASSIGNMENTS.....	5
7.9 APPEALS RELATING TO ASSIGNMENTS.....	5
7.10 DISSERTATIONS - APPOINTMENT OF ACADEMIC SUPERVISOR & INDUSTRIAL MENTOR.....	5
7.11 SUPERVISION OF DISSERTATIONS	6
7.12 ASSESSMENT OF THE DISSERTATION.....	6
7.13 THE VIVAE VOCE	7
7.14 FEEDBACK TO STUDENTS ON DISSERTATIONS.....	7
7.15 POLICY ON PLAGIARISM.....	8
7.16 PROCESSING OF ACADEMIC QUALITY ASSURANCE RECORDS:	8
7.17 MANAGEMENT OF ACADEMIC QUALITY ASSURANCE RECORDS.....	8

This document must not be passed or copied to other Companies or persons without the written authority of the Board of the Institute of Supply Chain Excellence.

Description: Revision
Issued by: Quality Co-ordinator
Approved by: Quality Co-ordinator

7. PROCEDURES

7.1 Responsibilities:

- 7.1.1 The Dir. Academic Admin shall be responsible for the implementation of this procedure.
- 7.1.2 The Associate Lecturer [Module Manager] shall be responsible for the design; distribution; marking and production of feedback of module assignments.
- 7.1.3 The Academic Supervisor in partnership with an independent examiner [second reader] shall be responsible for the assessment and marking of a Dissertation.

7.2 Principles of Assessment and Feedback for Learning

- 7.2.1 The purpose of assessment and feedback for learning shall be to:
- a) help to clarify, from the early stages of a programme, what good performance means (goals, criteria, standards);
 - b) encourage 'time and effort' on challenging learning tasks which recognise the importance of learning from the tasks, not just demonstrating learning through the tasks;
 - c) deliver timely learner-related feedback information that helps students to self-correct and communicate clear, high expectations and professionalism;
 - d) provide opportunities for students to act on feedback and close any gap between current and desired performance through complementary and integrated curriculum design and pedagogic practice;
 - e) ensure that all assessment has a beneficial, constructive impact on student learning, encouraging positive motivational beliefs, confidence and self-esteem;
 - f) facilitate the development of self- and peer-assessment skills and reflection on learning, to enable students to progressively take more responsibility for their own learning, and to inspire a lifelong capacity to learn;
 - g) encourage interaction and dialogue around learning and professional practice (student-student, lecturer-student and lecturer-lecturer) including supporting the development of student learning groups and peer learning communities.
- 7.2.2 The implementation of these principles will influence curriculum design, delivery and educational practice, such that students and academic staff become co-creators and collaborators in learning.
- 7.2.3 In addition, as part of its policy, the Institutes expects that the development of academic skills, including learning to learn, is embedded as an integral part of the academic programme.

7.3 Module Assignments

- 7.3.1 Modules are managed by Associate Lecturers [also referred to as Module Managers].
- 7.3.2 Associate Lecturers shall be responsible for the design of assessments, based on the learning objectives as described in the module outline.
- 7.3.3 Prior to the commencement of the academic year [September] the External Examiner shall be provided with copies of the following:
- a) Course/subject handbook
 - b) Programme regulations
 - c) Module descriptions
 - d) Draft copies of module assignment briefs and marking criteria
- 7.3.4 The External Examiner shall satisfy themselves that the module assignments and the marking criteria is of a desired standard commensurate to the level of the award sought for the particular course of studies.
- 7.3.5 Should the External Examiner require further clarification on the topic[s] chosen for assignments or marking criteria, they shall make their request through the Director of Academic Administration who shall liaise with the associate lecturer to provide the required information.
- 7.3.6 Module Assignments and marking schemes shall be distributed to students, at the discretion of the Associate Lecturer, either at the beginning or end of the module.

7.4 Assignment – Marking Scheme

- 7.4.1 As part of the induction process, students shall be informed about the expectations of the Institute as to how assignments should be presented for assessment [see attachment 5.1].
- 7.4.2 Module Managers shall develop a module assignment and marking criteria for the modules they teach.
- 7.4.3 Copies of module assignments and marking criteria shall be provided to the External Examiner at the commencement of the academic year. [see procedure ref: AP/407.06 – *The External Examiner and Examinations Boards.*]

7.5 Time Frame

- 7.4.1 Students shall be required to submit assignments to the school office within six [6] weeks of the end of the module.

7.6 Marking of Module Assignments

- The Associate Lecturers [module managers in charge of specific modules] shall be responsible for the marking of module assignments and production of feedback reports in strict accordance with the processes specified in Procedure ref: SA/410.01 [Control of Quality Records].
- 7.6.1 The above documentation shall form part of the Associate Lectures report on the module and shall be presented for consideration at the relevant programme committee.

7.7 Marking sheets

7.7.1 Scripts shall be marked on the basis of the Assignment Grading System and Rationale [see attachment 5.2]

7.8 Feedback to Students on Assignments

7.8.1 Assignment markers [Associate Lecturer] shall provide feedback to the student in the same format as Feedback Format Template [see attachment 5.3]

7.8.2 Feedback shall be completed within four [4] weeks of receipt of assignments.

7.8.3 The Assignment Marker shall return the feedback sheet to the Administrator – at the School office, who will forward them on to the Dir. Academic Admin. for review and moderation if required.

7.8.4 Students shall be informed that all marks awarded are subject to Examinations Board approval, in accordance with procedure ref: AP/407.06 - External Examiner and Examinations Boards.

7.8.5 When satisfied that due diligence has been performed by the examiners the Dir. for Academic Admin. shall inform the students of the marks they have been awarded for their work.

7.9 Appeals relating to Assignments

7.9.1 Students wishing to appeal assignment results shall address their concerns in writing to the Dir. Academic Admin.

7.9.2 The Dir. Academic Admin. shall appoint a second reader [examiner] to review and mark the script.

7.9.3 The second reader shall report their findings to the Dir. Academic Admin.

7.9.4 The results of both examiners shall be presented to the Examinations Boards for consideration.

7.10 Dissertations - Appointment of Academic Supervisor & Industrial Mentor

7.10.1 In part fulfilment of the requirements for the Institutes M.Sc. in Supply Chain Management students shall be required to attend the Research and Project Management module.

7.10.2 The assignment for the Research and Project Management module shall be produced in the form of a 'project proposal' for a Dissertation.

7.10.3 The project proposal shall be sent to the module manager for assessment and approval. When the proposal has been approved, it shall be submitted to the Dir. Academic Admin. who shall appoint an Academic Supervisor.

7.10.4 The Academic Supervisor shall act in accordance with the duties and responsibilities as detailed in procedure ref: MS/403.04 - *Academic Supervisor*,

7.10.5 The student shall be required to identify an Industrial Mentor whose task will be to support the technical aspects of the research.

7.10.6 The Industrial Mentor shall be a senior manager in the student's company or an independent person of similar standing, with an in-depth knowledge of the research topic.

7.10.7 On being informed by the student of their choice of Industrial Mentor, the Dir. Academic Admin shall contact the nominated person so as to confirm their willingness and availability to support the student.

7.11 Supervision of Dissertations

7.11.1 The Academic Supervisor is responsible for monitoring the progress of the project; they shall agree to meet with the student on a regular basis and shall record all such meetings, in a 'Meeting Log' [see attachment 5.4] The Industrial Mentor shall be invited to attend all such supervisory meetings.

7.11.2 The student is responsible for their own learning and for the planning; execution and management of their research for their Dissertation, that is:

1. Defining the topic of research
2. Developing a research question
3. Conducting a literature review
4. Conducting an industrial review
5. Conducting a research methodology review
6. Developing a research instrument
7. Carrying out the research
8. Evaluating their findings
9. Writing up their conclusions and recommendations

7.12 Assessment of the Dissertation

7.12.1 The assessment of the Dissertation differs from other modules. When ready for assessment students shall submit two [stapled] hard copies and one electronic copy to the School office marked for the attention of the Dir. Academic Administration.

7.12.2 The Dir. Academic Admin. shall appoint an independent examiner and send them a copy of the Dissertation with the copy being sent to the Academic Supervisor along with a copy of the Criteria for Assessment of M.Sc. Dissertation [see attachment 5.5]. The electronic copy shall be filed by the Administrator.

7.12.3 The independent examiner and the Academic Supervisor shall be given sufficient time [normally two [2] weeks] to read and evaluate the completed work, the Director shall agree with all concerned [the candidate and both examiners] a date and a time for the Vivae Voce.

7.12.4 The independent examiner shall be the lead at the Vivae Voce. Both examiners shall record their findings on the Vivae Voce Marking Sheet [see attachment 5.6]

7.13 The Vivae Voce

- 7.13.1 The Institute has no prescribed format for the conduct of a Vivae Voce.
- 7.13.2 However a suggested format involves:
- i. a short presentation (usually about 10 minutes) by the student that provides an overview of his/her work;
 - ii. some general questions about this overview;
 - iii. detailed discussion of all parts of the Dissertation (with the independent examiner usually taking the lead); and,
 - iv. some general questions by way of conclusion.
- 7.13.3 If there is an expectation that the Vivae Voce assessment board requires the student to present the findings of their research in a Power Point presentation format, they shall be informed of this requirement in advance by their Academic Supervisor.
- 7.13.4 After each Vivae Voce examination the examiners shall complete the Vivae Voce Marking Sheet.
- 7.13.5 The examiners shall employ the consensus method in reaching a decision on the marks to be awarded.
- 7.13.6 In cases where agreement by consensus is not possible an average of the marks shall be proposed by the examiners. In such cases the marks will be moderated by the Dir. Academic Admin. prior to the Examinations Board meeting.
- 7.13.7 Dissertations shall also be viewed by the External Examiner prior to the Examinations Board meeting. These checks and balances are to ensure that the Institute is being as consistent as possible in the application of the grading criteria and, therefore, as fair as possible to all candidates.

7.14 Feedback to Students on Dissertations

- 7.14.1 Under no circumstances should exact percentage marks be given to students at the time of the Vivae Voce.
- 7.14.2 It shall be the practice of the Institute to provide some general feedback on both the positive and negative aspects of their work, as well as a general indication of the grade that is to be recommended (for example: "a middle 2.1", "a low pass", etc.).
- 7.14.3 The final mark shall be decided by the Examination Board following the moderation process and possible review by the External Examiner.
- 7.14.4 Should the examiners require the candidate to make stylistic or other minor changes to the dissertation they shall inform the student of same when providing feedback.
- 7.14.5 Any required changes shall be limited to purely stylistic or other relatively minor aspects of the work. Anything more substantive shall result in a new dissertation and, therefore, require re-submission / re-examination.

7.15 Policy on Plagiarism

- 7.15.1 It is the policy of the Institute that plagiarism of any kind is strictly forbidden and constitutes a serious breach of examination regulations. Falsification of data in any way is strictly prohibited and such falsification constitutes a serious breach of examination regulations.
- 7.15.2 Incidences of suspected plagiarism is shall be reported immediately to the Dir. Academic Admin.

7.16 Processing of academic quality assurance records:

- 7.16.1 The Dir. Academic Admin. shall be responsible for the processing of all academic quality assurance records.
- 7.16.2 When scheduling Programme Committee meetings, the Dir. Academic Admin. shall ensure that time on the Agenda has been allocated for discussion and consideration of the Assessment of Module Assignments and Dissertations. see procedure ref: AP/407.03 – *The Programme Committee*.
- 7.16.3 In the event of issues arising from the above-mentioned evaluations the matter[s] shall be investigated as a Corrective Action[s] procedure ref: MS/409.01 – *Corrective and Preventative Actions*. See also attachment 5.3.

7.17 Management of academic quality assurance records

- 7.17.1 Evaluations arising from modules are academic quality assurance records shall be filed by the Administrator in the appropriate filing cabinets which have been set aside for the purpose of storing all such documentation. They shall be managed in accordance with procedures ref: SA/410.01. *Control of Academic Quality Assurance Records*
- 7.17.2 The information generated from the evaluation of modules shall held in the strictest confidence and shall not be disclosed outside the Institute except in the instance of requiring inspection by an Audit Team from QQI.
- 7.17.3 Access to the quality records system shall be controlled by the Administrator

SAMPLE

Attachment 5.1

Assignment – Marking Scheme

ref: AP/407.09 - 7.4.1

The paper consists of six [6] questions – Please answer any **two [2]** of your choice

Each answer shall consist in total of 3,000 words.

The scripts will be marked on the basis of presentation, structure and content.

Presentation:

Cover page:	Name, student number and questions being attempted
Font size:	Times New Roman 12 point or Arial 10 point
Line spacing:	1.5
Side margins:	3cm
Top and Bottom margins:	2cm
Page numbering:	For example: page 1 of 4, etc.

Structure and Content:

Introduction:

Introduction must include the subject matter, the order in which this subject matter is to be discussed and brief mention of the conclusion.

Main discussion:

Your overall treatment of the subject[s] matter will account for 90% of the marks awarded.

The candidates' success in this regard will depend on:

1. the relevance between the material discussed and the arguments presented
2. the logic behind the progression of thought between the points raised, that is: coherence
3. the amount of valid critique of traditional views, that is: analysis

Conclusion:

The conclusion must follow on logically from the arguments presented, it must not include any information not already mentioned and must exclude any 'sweeping generalisations'.

Bibliography:

The paper should include a bibliography of all references used in the work.

Deadline: The deadline for this assignment is:

SAMPLE

Attachment 5.2

Assignment Grading System and Rationale:

ref: AP/407.09 - 7.7.1

The following is a broad set of criteria for guidance in assessing M.Sc. assignments in ISCE.

Grade	Percentage Value	Interpretation
High Distinction (HD)	80% +	Work of exceptional quality showing clear understanding of subject matter and appreciation of issues; well formulated; arguments sustained; sketch maps and diagrams where relevant; relevant literature referenced; marked evidence of creative ability and originality; high level of intellectual work.
Distinction (D)	70 - 79%	Work of unusual quality showing strong grasp of subject matter and appreciation of dominant issues though not necessarily of the finer points; arguments clearly developed; relevant literature referenced; evidence of creative ability; solid intellectual work.
Credit (Cr)	50 - 69%	Work of solid quality showing competent understanding of subject matter and appreciation of main issues though possibly with some lapses and inadequacies; arguments clearly developed and supported by references though possibly with minor red herrings and loose ends; some evidence of creative ability; well prepared and presented.
Pass (P)	40 - 49%	Range from a bare pass to a safe pass. Adequate, but lacking breadth and depth. Work generally has gaps. Frequently work of this grade takes a simple factual approach and does not attempt to interpret the findings. At the lower end, indicates a need for considerable effort to achieve improvement.
Fail (N)	< 40%	Unsatisfactory. This grade characterises work which shows a lack of understanding of the topic. Inadequate in degree of relevance, sometimes completeness, sometimes both.

SAMPLE

Attachment 5.3

Feedback Format

ref: AP/407.09 - 7.8.1

Institute for Supply Chain Excellence

Graduate Development Programme

Post-Module Assignment

Feedback

Name:

Company:

Module:

Dates:

Mark:

Comments:

Associate Lecturer

Date:

Please note: Marks are subject to Examinations Board approval

SAMPLE

Attachment 5.4

Dissertation Supervision - Meeting Log

ref: AP/407.09 - 7.11.1

Student:
Date & Time:
Location:
Material submitted:
Item discussed:
Agreed task[s] for next meeting:
Date & time of next meeting:
Location:

SAMPLE

Attachment 5.5

Criteria for Assessment of M.Sc. Dissertation

ref: AP/407.09 – 7.12.2

(a) The following is a broad set of criteria for guidance in assessing M.Sc. dissertations (40% of the total project and dissertation assessment) in ISCE

	Example Questions
Definition (10%)	Has the purpose of study been defined? Is its scope indicated?
Data (10%)	Is the data which have been chosen relevant? Is the data representative of the field? Is the data accurate?
Discussion (40%)	Has the writer analysed the subject matter effectively? Is it examined critically? Are the arguments relevant? Is the discussion systematic and constructive?
Originality (10%)	Has the writer used novel data? Has the writer suggested novel ideas?
Presentation (30%)	Does the essay/report fulfil stated intentions? Is it a fluent piece of writing? Is there a stimulating beginning and an appropriate ending?

(b) The project is assessed based on project progress, dissertation and oral examination as follows:

Progress (10%):

- (i) Project planning, progress made during project execution, ability to work without excessive supervision, ability to meet interim deadlines, research methodology skills.

Dissertation (60%)

- (i) Comprehension – justification and rationale of project, quality of literature review, clarity and appropriateness of methodology used, data collection and intellectual quality of analysis, justification and appropriateness of recommendations and conclusions.
- (ii) Presentation – structure of dissertation, appropriateness of length, use of graphical and other forms of presentation, clarity of prose.

Oral examination (30%):

- (i) Grasp of subject, understanding of the business context of the project subject matter, understanding of the detailed issues addressed in the dissertation.

SAMPLE

Attachment 5.6

Vivae Voce Marking Sheet:

ref: AP/407.09 – 7.12.4

The marks for the Vivae Voce [oral examination] are awarded in equal proportion by the two examiners [the Independent Examiner and Academic Supervisor]

Student:

Student ID:

	Independent Examiner	Academic Supervisor
Progress 10%
Oral 30%
Dissertation 60%
Totals:

Recommended Mark:

Signed: **Independent Examiner**

..... **Academic Supervisor**

Date:

Please note: Marks are subject to Examinations Board approval