

**EDUCATION ACT  
(CAP. 327)**

**University Assessment Regulations, 2009**

IN EXERCISE of the powers conferred upon him by articles 74(5) and 75(6) of the Education Act (Cap. 327), the Chancellor of the University of Malta has promulgated the following regulations made by the Senate of the University of Malta by virtue of the powers conferred upon it by articles 75 and 79 of the said Act:

**Citation and Interpretation**

1. (1) These regulations shall be cited as the University Assessment Regulations, 2009.

(2) In these regulations, unless the contrary intention appears, (a) words importing the masculine gender include the feminine; (b) words importing the feminine gender include the masculine; and (c) words in the singular include the plural and words in the plural include the singular.

(3) (i) These regulations are to be read in conjunction with all other Statutes, Regulations and Bye-laws, of the University including in particular the General Regulations for University Undergraduate Awards and the General Regulations for University Postgraduate Awards.

(ii) In case of conflict, these regulations shall be subservient to the Statutes of the University, the General Regulations for University Undergraduate awards and the General Regulations for University Postgraduate awards.

(4) In these regulations, unless the context otherwise requires:

“Absence” means absence for any assessment or non-submission of work for assessment;

“Assessment” means all forms of assessment that are used to award a mark and/or grade that contributes towards the award of any University qualification. The method of assessment shall be as prescribed in the Study-Unit description, and may include written supervised Examinations, oral examinations, home assignments (whether short or long essays) dissertations or theses, clinical or practical examinations, portfolios, projects, fieldwork, case studies, logbooks, continuous assessment of a placement, and any other method of assessment approved by Senate, or combinations of these, to each of which a percentage of the final mark is assigned;

“Board” means the Board of a Faculty, Institute, Centre or School that is directly responsible to Senate for offering a programme of study;

“Course” means a programme of study leading to a University award; it may consist of one programme of study or may include a number of programmes of study in particular areas of study;

“Dean” means the dean of a faculty or the director of an institute or a centre or a school or of any other academic entity that is directly responsible to Senate for offering a Course or part thereof;

“Examination” means any written assessment held under supervision on a set date, at a set time and venue and except when specifically stated, does not include oral, practical, clinical, or similar, and excludes assessment of work performed over a period such as practicums and work/field placements;

“External examiner” means a senior academic who is an expert in the area of study being examined and who is not affiliated to the University;

“Faculty” means any faculty or institute or centre or school or any other academic entity that is directly responsible to Senate for offering a Course or part thereof;

“Head of Department” means the head of a department or the co-ordinator of a division or a Course or an area of study, as appropriate;

“Student” means (a) all persons enrolled and participating in a Course or programme or study-unit of the University, including auditing students and any student who has temporarily suspended their studies; (b) any other person who is a candidate for any Assessment by the University; and (c) any person who has been awarded a qualification or credits for study-units by the University, as appropriate;

“Study-Unit / Unit” means a part of a programme of study carried out upon a syllabus approved by Senate, to which a specified number of ECTS credits is assigned, and which is capable of separate assessment; a Study-Unit may take the form of a series of lectures, seminars, tutorials, practical or clinical sessions, field placements, projects, research work, dissertations, private study, or a combination of such work, or any other method of teaching;

“Study-Unit Co-ordinator” is appointed for Units taught by more than one lecturer and means the lecturer responsible for overseeing the Unit and its assessment; normally a Study-Unit Co-ordinator is the lecturer who delivers the greater part of a Unit or, when teaching is distributed amongst various lecturers, the most senior lecturer; and

“Synoptic Study-Units” means study-units, the teaching of which helps students to integrate knowledge acquired in Study-Units pursued during the Course. Whenever such Study-Units are included in a programme of study, these study-units are designated and indicated as such in their Study-Unit description and the

programme of study, are compulsory, and are taught during the last year of the programme of study.

(5) Any term used in these regulations which is not defined in paragraph (4) of this regulation shall, if necessary, be taken to mean as defined in the General Regulations for University Undergraduate Awards.

### **Applicability**

2. These Regulations shall be applicable with effect from 1 October 2009 for courses in progress in 2009/2010 and later.

### **General Provisions**

3. These regulations shall govern all Assessments that contribute towards any award of the University, excluding awards of the Matriculation and Secondary Education Certificate Examinations (MATSEC) Board.

4. The Assessments of the University shall be those prescribed in the relevant regulations, bye-laws, course plans / programmes or programmes of study, and each individual Study-Unit description.

5. (1) Unless in special circumstances and with the approval of the Board, all students on the same Study-Unit shall be assessed by the same method/s of assessment. Supplementary Assessments shall normally have the same mode of assessment as the corresponding first assessment, provided that:

(a) when all the components making up the Assessment are re-assessable, students shall only be required to re-sit the failed component/s; and

(b) when it is not possible or practical for a failed component of the first Assessment to be re-assessed, the mark obtained in that component in the first sit shall be retained and students shall be required to re-sit any other remaining component/s. If this is not sufficient to ensure an overall pass, students shall normally be required to refer the Study-Unit to the next year, if allowed by bye-laws governing their Course.

(2) Attendance, whilst normally obligatory, shall not be a component of any method of assessment.

### **Administration of Examinations**

6. (1) Examinations, other than oral examinations of dissertations and theses, shall be held on the dates approved by Senate before the commencement of each academic year, which shall be scheduled as follows:

(a) a session comprising a period of up to three weeks at the end of the first semester;

(b) a session comprising a period of up to five weeks at the end of the second semester;

(c) a session at the beginning of September for students to take a number of assessments of incomplete Study-Units, as provided for in the relative bye-laws; and

(d) exceptionally, the Rector, after consultation with the Registrar, may grant permission for Examinations to be held on other dates.

(2) All Examinations, irrespective of whether the Study-Unit lectures are held during or after normal hours, shall be held during the periods approved by Senate from Monday to Saturday, between 8.00 a.m. and 8.00 p.m.

7. (1) The organisation and administration of Examinations shall be the responsibility of the Registrar, after consultation with the Deans.

(2) The Registrar shall be responsible:

(a) for preparing Examination timetables, ensuring that no student is barred from sitting any Examination because of clashes in the Examination timetables;

(b) for allocating adequate space and providing supervision to ensure proper conduct of the Examinations; and

(c) jointly with the Deans, for the security of Examination papers and for this reason may issue procedural guidelines to Faculties.

8. Where the students have obligations towards the University, such as the payment of fees or monetary penalties, that are outstanding, the Registrar, may direct that:

(a) they be excluded from taking any Assessment; or

(b) the results obtained by them in any Assessment be withheld; or

(c) they be withdrawn from the Course.

### **Duration of Written Examinations**

9. (1) When an Examination weighted 80% or more is indicated as the main method of assessment of a Study-Unit, Study-Units assigned up to four credits shall normally be examined by a paper of between one and two hours, Study-Units assigned five to ten credits shall normally be examined by a paper of either two or

three hours, and Study-Units assigned more than ten credits shall normally be examined by a paper of either three or four hours.

(2) When the Assessment of a Study-Unit includes more than one component, one of which is a written Examination weighted less than 80%, the duration of the Examination shall be established taking into account the weighting it is given towards the award of the credits.

(3) The duration of written Examinations shall be included with the method of assessment in the Study-Unit description.

(4) The Rector, on the recommendation of the Board and in consultation with the Registrar, may recommend that Senate approves a different duration for an Examination if the particular nature of the Examination so merits.

### **Assignment Submission Dates**

10. (1) The submission date of any work assigned as one of the components of the Assessment before the end of a Study-Unit shall always be before the date of the final Assessment of the Study-Unit.

(2) When the last component of the Assessment of a Study-Unit is by a take-home assignment, the submission date of the assignment shall not be later than four weeks following the end of the lectures of that Study-Unit.

### **Language of Assessment**

11. (1) The language of assessment shall be English, except that for areas of study involving a language or when Senate approves the delivery of a Study-Unit in Maltese or in any other language, students shall be assessed in that language.

(2) Senate, on the recommendation of a Board, may allow particular students or all students for particular study-units, for a just and sufficient reason, to present for assessment work written in any other language after the Board has ascertained, to the satisfaction of Senate, that all the examiners, including any external examiner, are sufficiently proficient in that language to be able to assess the work at the same standard.

(3) Students are expected to bear in mind the necessity for good expression and orderly presentation in all forms of assessment.

### **Boards of Examiners**

12. (1) There shall be a Board of Examiners for the assessment of each Study-Unit. The Board of Examiners shall be solely responsible to Senate for determining the marks to be awarded to each student.

(2) The Board of Examiners shall be appointed by Senate on the recommendation of the Board and shall be composed of the Head of the Department academically responsible for the Study-Unit concerned as chairman, the external examiner when one is appointed, and not less than two other examiners including the lecturer or the Study-Unit Co-ordinator, provided that:

(a) for Boards of Examiners for dissertations and in cases where the Head of Department is also responsible for the teaching of the Study-Unit, the Head may delegate the chairmanship;

(b) where supervisors are members of Boards of Examiners, they shall not be appointed chairmen; and

(c) two spouses, partners, cohabitants or persons who have been in such relationships or two siblings shall not both be appointed as members of the same Board of Examiners, as auxiliary examiners, or as reviewers of any Assessment.

13. (1) The Board of Examiners, collectively, shall be responsible for:

(a) the preparation of the Assessment (including marking scheme) to ensure that it meets the requirements and learning outcomes of the Study-Unit and that it covers the subject content specified in the Study-Unit description or syllabus;

(b) the marking of scripts or any other work submitted for Assessment and the moderation and award of the final marks; and

(c) reviewing the marks of students who do not obtain an overall pass mark for a Study-Unit before the final result is agreed to and published.

(2) The Chairman shall:

(a) ensure that the Assessment process is conducted properly and in a timely manner;

(b) where necessary, engage in discussion with members of the Board of Examiners with a view to agree the Assessment questions and mark scheme; and

(c) convene a meeting of the Board of Examiners to review and agree results, provided that a Department may agree that the Boards of Examiners of all or of selected study-units are convened at one meeting during which the results of the study-units concerned are discussed. In such cases the responsibility of agreeing the results of each Study-Unit remains solely with the members of the Board of Examiners appointed for that Unit.

(3) The lecturer or Study-Unit Co-ordinator shall be responsible for the setting of the questions, the mark scheme, and/or any other Assessment criteria as appropriate,

provided that when a Unit is taught by more than one lecturer, the Study-Unit Co-ordinator shall be responsible for coordinating the production of the Examination paper, including the gathering of questions from the individual examiners/auxiliary examiners, the writing of the rubric and all other matters related to the proper production of the Examination paper.

14. (1) The Examination process shall include a review procedure as follows:

(a) when a paper is set by one or two examiners, another member of the Board of Examiners shall be designated as the reviewer; and

(b) when three or more examiners are responsible for the setting of an Examination paper, and it is not practicable to appoint another member to act solely as reviewer, the review process shall be conducted by members of the Board of Examiners so that the questions and associated mark schemes prepared by one examiner are reviewed by another.

(2) The reviewer shall:

(a) ensure that the Examination paper is clear and unambiguous and that it addresses the learning outcomes of the Study-Unit in question;

(b) ensure that the Examination paper is properly proofread and that the paper and mark scheme are free of error and of the required standard;

(c) ensure that the marks allotted to each question are indicated on the examination paper;

(d) work out the paper him/herself to look out for any inconsistencies and discrepancies where applicable; and

(e) if the chairman of the Board of Examiners considers that due to the nature of the examination paper, or the large number of students registered on the study-unit, or other valid reason, the reviewer is also required to participate in marking, the Chairman shall indicate this to the person concerned at the time he is informed of his appointment as reviewer.

15. When External Examiners are appointed for a written Examination, weighted 60% or more, the Board of Examiners shall submit the draft Examination paper and mark scheme for their advice. External Examiners may suggest questions of their own.

16. The Board may appoint auxiliary examiners to assist in Assessment procedures, including the correction of scripts, or to assist in the continuous

Assessment of Study-Units, or to submit questions on a part of the Study-Unit which they taught as and where appropriate. Such auxiliary examiners shall not be considered as members of the Board of Examiners but may be required to participate in the deliberations of the Board of Examiners but only in so far as they concern those parts of the Assessment in which they were involved.

### **Assessment of Work Performed over a Period**

17. (1) In the case of the Assessment of students' performance over a period (not assessed through a written Examination or written assignments), such as placements and other Study-Units involving the assessment of a number of students over a period, that does not render it possible or practicable for the members of a Board of Examiners to assess all the students themselves:

(a) the Board may appoint as many auxiliary examiners as necessary to participate in the Assessment;

(b) each student shall be assessed by at least two examiners, whether members of the Board of Examiners or auxiliary examiners;

(c) individual examiners shall assess students according to the criteria set by the Board of Examiners to whom they shall be required to submit a report on each student;

(d) the Board of Examiners may, at its discretion, examine or re-examine any student; and

(e) final decisions shall be taken by the Board of Examiners after having considered the reports of the individual examiners and provided that any student declared to have failed would have been examined by at least two examiners, of whom at least one is a member of the Board of Examiners.

(2) The Board of Examiners shall be convened:

(a) during the latter half of each assessment session to consider the progress of students and take appropriate action in terms of the relevant provisions of this regulation; and

(b) after the end of the assessment session to agree on the final results.

18. Oral Assessments and any other forms of Assessment that do not permit later review shall always be conducted by at least two members of the Board of Examiners. The Board of Examiners shall keep a written record of the proceedings briefly describing each student's performance.

## **Assessment of Dissertations**

19. (1) In the case of Study-Units involving the writing of a dissertation or similar, Senate shall appoint a Board of Examiners for each student. The Head of the Department concerned or his delegate shall be appointed chairman of the Board of Examiners, provided that if the Head of Department is also the supervisor he shall not be appointed as chairman. The chairman shall ensure that appropriate Assessment criteria and procedures are used in the assessment of dissertations.

(2) When a visiting External Examiner is appointed to assess or review dissertations, s/he may wish to interview specific students about their dissertation.

## **External Examiners**

20. (1) The Senate shall normally appoint External Examiners, either on a visiting or a non-visiting basis, for programmes of study in undergraduate degree Courses. When appointed, External Examiners shall be members of each Board of Examiners of compulsory final year Study-Units, and also members of the Award Classification Board of the Course that includes the programme of study for which they are appointed External Examiners, provided that in programmes of study which include Synoptic Study-Units the External Examiner need only be involved in these Study-Units besides the dissertation.

(2) As members of the Board of Examiners of a Study-Unit, External Examiners shall:

(a) together with the Board of Examiners, approve Examination papers and mark schemes, and all other Assessment exercises, procedures and practices in relation to that Study-Unit;

(b) whenever deemed necessary, see the assessed work of students for compulsory first semester Study-Units of the final year; and

(c) moderate the results and/or recommend changes to unpublished marks of all compulsory final year Study-Units assessed at the end of the last semester, including the dissertation study-unit when one is required, provided that when the number of students is too large or in postgraduate programmes, it shall be sufficient for the External Examiner to moderate the Examination by seeing a reasonable sample of the assessed work, including assignments and/or examination scripts from the top, the middle and the bottom of the ability range and including work of borderline students.

21. (1) For a Master's degree which comprises mainly taught study-units and a dissertation of at least 30 credits where the number of students on the programme is 5 or more, Senate shall appoint External Examiners:

(a) on a visiting basis to review both the taught component and the dissertation study-unit; or

(b) on a non-visiting basis to review both the taught component and individual dissertations.

(2) For a Master's degree which comprises mainly taught study-units and a dissertation of at least 30 credits where the number of students on the programme is less than 5, External Examiners shall be appointed normally on a non-visiting basis to review the taught component of the programme and to assess individual dissertations.

(3) For a Master's degree mainly by research comprising a dissertation of at least 60 credits, External Examiners shall be appointed on a non-visiting basis to assess individual dissertations.

(4) Visiting External Examiners shall always be appointed for the examination of doctoral students.

(5) External Examiners shall be appointed to render service on a year to year basis, for up to a maximum of three years, except in the case of examination of dissertations for Master's degrees done mainly by research, when External Examiners shall not be appointed after the fifth consecutive assignment.

22. The formal notification of appointment and the invitation to visit the University shall be issued by the Registrar.

23. (1) External Examiners shall be requested to write a report to the Rector about the outcome of their evaluation, including advice about the standards achieved by the students, the quality of the evaluation process and their opinion about the degree programme in general pointing out any strengths and/or weaknesses that require attention, as applicable. The report should reach the Rector within two months following completion of the evaluation, provided that when an external examiner is appointed on a Board of Examiners of a Master's Course mainly by research, the report shall be submitted to the Chairman of the Board of Examiners.

(2) The Rector shall forward a copy of the report, or extracts thereof, to the Dean and the Head of Department concerned.

(3) Copies of the External Examiners' reports shall be kept at the Faculty and shall be made available for quality assurance purposes as well as to External Examiners appointed later.

#### **Procedures for Boards of Examiners**

24. (1) Subject to the provisions of these regulations and to any directions given by Senate, Boards of Examiners shall determine the procedures to be adopted for the conduct of the Assessment.

(2) Boards of Examiners shall strive to reach decisions by consensus.

(3) If there is disagreement among the examiners, they shall make every attempt to resolve the matter on the basis of detailed argument about the specific academic points arising from the Assessment in order to reach a common decision. If no agreement can be reached, the matter shall be referred to the Dean concerned who shall attempt to resolve the matter by mediation. If no consensual agreement can be reached, a decision shall be taken by a majority vote and be so recorded in the final report, provided that any dissenting member may submit a minority report giving reasons for the disagreement.

(4) No examiner shall be at liberty to abstain from voting.

(5) If an External Examiner is unable to take part in the final deliberations of the Board of Examiners, it shall be lawful for the other members of the Board of Examiners to proceed to a preliminary decision in his absence, which decision shall be communicated to him. If the External Examiner registers disagreement with this decision, the chairman of the Board of Examiners shall include the External Examiner's decision in his report or attach the External Examiner's minority report if one is submitted.

(6) Each member of the Board of Examiners shall be required to sign the final report and/or the Study-Unit result sheet, provided that, where it is not possible to obtain the signature of all the examiners, the chairman shall make a statement to that effect.

(7) The chairman of the Board of Examiners shall submit the report or the Study-Unit result sheet to the Registrar, who, if the decision is unanimous, shall proceed to publish the results and shall include them in the students' academic record. If a report includes a minority report by one or more of the examiners, the Registrar shall submit it to the Rector who shall either accept the majority decision or refer the matter for the consideration of Senate, provided that where an External Examiner has submitted a minority report the matter shall always be referred to Senate. Senate shall either accept the majority report, or appoint an additional examiner or examiners, or a new Board of Examiners to resolve the matter.

(8) Non-visiting External Examiners, appointed to assess a Master's degree dissertation assigned at least 60 credits, shall be requested to write a report for consideration by the other members of the Board of Examiners within 30 days from receipt of the dissertation. In the report, the External Examiner may propose questions to be asked to the student during the *viva voce* examination.

25. Members of Boards of Examiners shall treat as confidential everything connected with their proceedings.

26. In the case of written Examinations, examiners shall be available to clarify any matter pertaining to an examination but shall not normally visit the Examination venue.

### **Eligibility of Examiners**

27. (1) No person shall be appointed as a member of a Board of Examiners, as an auxiliary examiner or as a reviewer of any Assessment if:

(a) he is related to a student by consanguinity or by affinity to the third degree inclusive; or

(b) he has been, at any time during the academic year to which the Assessment refers, a guardian of a student; or

(c) he is in a dual or multiple relationship with the student; or

(d) he is precluded from examining in terms of the Consanguinity/Affinity/Dual Relationship Policy approved by Senate; or

(e) for any other ethical reason which in the opinion of the Rector justifies the non-appointment of the individual as an examiner.

(2) The Rector, acting on behalf of Senate, shall appoint another examiner in place of the member who is so disqualified, after consultation with the Dean of the Faculty concerned.

(3) If, prior to the commencement or during the progress of an Examination, the Rector is satisfied that a member of a Board of Examiners is unable to perform or to continue to perform his duties, the Rector shall, after consultation with the Dean of the Faculty concerned, appoint another examiner in place of that member, provided that, in the case of an oral Examination, or a clinical Assessment, or similar Examinations, the Board of Examiners may act in the absence of one of its members who is unable to be present as long as any such Assessment is conducted by at least two examiners.

(4) Where the examiner who is replaced is the chairman of the Board of Examiners, the Rector shall appoint a new chairman and such substitute examiners as may be necessary. The substitute chairman shall be the head of another department within the same Faculty or a lecturer from the department concerned.

## **Absence from Examinations or Non-Submission of Assignments or Dissertations**

28. (1) Absence from any type of Assessment in undergraduate Courses shall be governed by the General Regulations for University Undergraduate Awards, 2019.

(2) Absence from Assessment of Postgraduate Courses shall be conducted as follows:

(a) When students are absent from Examinations held in either January or May/June for a reason that Senate considers valid, they shall be allowed to take the missed Examination/s in the September Assessment Session under the same conditions, first sit, or resit as they were entitled to take it in the missed session, provided that they are otherwise eligible in terms of the regulations or bye-laws relevant to their Course. Cases of students who submit medical reports to cover absences from an excessive number of Examinations in the same session or more than one absence for the same study-unit may be considered by a board appointed by Senate for the purpose, with a view to determining whether these repeated absences are justified. In such instances, this board shall advise the Faculty of appropriate action that may be taken, including one or more of the following:

- (i) provide support for *bona fide* students;
- (ii) award a Fail for one or more study-units;
- (iii) withdrawal of student from the Course; and
- (iv) further investigation of the reason for absence.

(b) When the mode of Assessment is by assignment, and there are reasons for non-submission which the board of examiners considers valid, students shall be allowed an extension of the deadline by a maximum of three weeks, or if this is not sufficient because of their circumstances, they shall be allowed to submit the assignment at the first practicable opportunity, but not later than a maximum of two months, after the initial deadline.

(c) When the mode of Assessment is by dissertation, the deadline for submission shall be established by the Faculty. Submission of dissertations after the deadline and without the express permission of the Faculty, if accepted for evaluation, shall result in a reduction of marks as decided by the Board of Examiners. Requests by students for extensions may be granted by the Board or Senate in terms of the applicable regulations. The Board of Examiners shall take into account the period of extension and may decide on a reduction of marks.

29. When a valid reason is required to cover absence or non submission and students do not provide a reason for their absence, or the reason brought forward is not considered sufficient to justify the absence or non-submission, students shall be deemed to have failed the Assessment and shall receive a mark of 0.

30. Students are bound to follow any procedure for the notification of absence from Examinations issued by the Office of the Registrar from time to time.

### **Conduct of Students during Examinations**

31. Students shall be admitted to the examination venue ten minutes before the start of the Examination, or as deemed appropriate by the invigilator, and they shall be seated as directed.

32. (1) Students may be required to place their national or University identification card on the desk in the examination venue for the duration of the Examination. Invigilators may, when they have reason to believe that there is cause to do so, require students to produce further proof of identity.

(2) Students who are not able to provide acceptable proof of identity may be permitted to continue the Examination provided that they undertake to produce verification of their identity within a reasonable period, normally on the same day of the Examination. If verification is not provided, the matter shall be referred to the Assessment Disciplinary Board that shall, as a minimum, annul the particular Assessment and assign a mark of 0, unless the students are able to prove that they were prevented from complying with this regulation for a reason beyond their control.

33. (1) Students shall not be allowed into an examination venue after the first half an hour of the Examination unless the invigilator can confirm that no other student has already left the examination venue/s, either temporarily or permanently.

(2) When students are allowed to enter the examination venue after the commencement of the Examination in terms of paragraph (1) of this regulation, they shall not be given additional time to make up for the time lost because of their arriving late, unless in special circumstances arrangements have been approved in advance by the Registrar.

34. Students shall not be allowed to leave the examination venue whether temporarily or permanently, during the first half an hour and during the last ten minutes of an Examination, unless instructions in the rubric of the examination paper stipulate that students may not leave the examination venue before the end of the Examination.

35. (1) Students may be allowed to leave the examination venue temporarily after half an hour from the start of an Examination and before the last ten minutes of an Examination, provided they are duly supervised during the temporary absence; normally not more than one student shall be allowed to leave the examination venue at any one time.

(2) Students may not be re-admitted to the examination venue after they have left it, unless during the period of absence they have been under approved supervision.

36. Students are required to write all answers and rough work on the stationery provided by the University. Answers must be written legibly. Examiners may be permitted by the Board of Examiners not to mark work that is reasonably considered illegible.

37. When the invigilator announces the end of the Examination, students shall:

(a) stop writing immediately; and

(b) remain seated in silence until permitted to leave the examination venue by the invigilator.

38. (1) Students shall not:

(a) during any Examination:

(i) introduce or cause to be introduced into the examination venue, any mobile phones, tablets, smart watches (including health and fitness watches/trackers), programmable calculators, laptops or similar equipment, books, dictionaries, notes or any other printed or written matter or any other form of recorded matter, any blank paper or any blank, recording material, any pencil case or similar receptacle, any electronic device for mathematical calculations or any electronic data processor other than those which the examiners have expressly permitted to be taken into that particular Examination and so indicated in the question paper rubric, and any means of communication, provided that students may be allowed by the invigilator to leave their personal belongings, including coats and bags, in a place designated for this purpose at the examination venue, and provided that visiting students who are not registered on a Course leading to an award of this University may request and be granted permission to use a bi-lingual, English / native language dictionary during an Examination; English only dictionaries shall not be allowed;

(ii) allow another person/s to take an Examination in their stead or take an Examination in lieu of another person (impersonification);

(iii) directly or indirectly give or seek to give assistance to, or seek to obtain or accept assistance from, any other student;

(iv) by any improper means whatever obtain, or seek to obtain, advantage in the Examination; give or endeavour to give assistance to other students by having or seeking access to unauthorized information or material, or by copying

or attempting to copy from, or by communicating or attempting to communicate with an examiner or any other person during the time appointed for an Examination or with an examiner about the Examination until the official results are published;

(v) write anywhere other than on the stationery provided by the University;

(vi) write their name on any part of the examination book or make any other mark thereon calculated to disclose their identity to an examiner, except when specifically directed to write their name in a space provided for the purpose;

(vii) remove examination books or parts thereof from the examination venue;

(viii) act in any way as to disturb other students taking an Examination, in which case the Registrar or his delegate may order the student to leave the premises where the Examination is being held;

(ix) communicate with any other student in an examination venue, prior to, during, or at the end of the Examination on any matter or in any way whatsoever;

(x) disobey the directions of the invigilator/s; and

(xi) enter or leave the examination venue without the permission of the examination invigilator as indicated in these regulations;

(b) in any form of Assessment:

(i) engage in plagiarism - defined as the unacknowledged use, as one's own, of work of another person, whether or not such work has been published, and as may be further elaborated in Faculty or University guidelines, provided that in the case of work by two or more students that is substantially identical, plagiarism shall be deemed to have occurred even if the original source remains undetermined;

(ii) submit work or part thereof that has been submitted by the student himself or by any other student, for the Assessment of another Study-Unit, unless, when submitting part of one's own work that had previously been submitted, prior permission is obtained from the examiner and the insertion is clearly indicated;

(iii) allow another student to submit one's own work for Assessment as the other student's own work;

(iv) make false declarations in connection with any work submitted for Assessment;

(c) in a practicum, clinical placement, field placement, or similar, fail to inform the examiners of one's own absence or by any means attempt to cover up for one's own or anyone else's absence;

(d) in any Assessment, collude with other students to cover one's own or other students' breach of these regulations;

(e) in any Assessment, by any means act in any way that may be reasonably considered by the Assessment Disciplinary Board to constitute an act of cheating, or an attempt at cheating or an act intended to assist others to cheat in an Assessment; and

(f) submit work which is not truly their own. In such cases, the student shall be called for an oral examination. If during the oral examination it is confirmed that there is a serious mismatch between the quality of work submitted and the performance of the student during the oral examination, a report shall be made to the University Assessment Disciplinary Board.

(2) Students shall abide by any other additional instructions as may be applicable to particular Examinations due to their specific nature.

(3) Students shall not submit false claims for special arrangements in an Assessment intended to gain an unfair advantage.

39. When students are alleged to have committed a breach of any of the provisions in regulation 38, a report shall be made in writing by the lecturer, an administrator or an invigilator or other authorized person, which shall be referred either to the Secretary of the University Assessment Disciplinary Board or to the Secretary of the Faculty Assessment Disciplinary Board, as applicable.

40. (1) When students are alleged to have committed a breach of any of the provisions in regulation 38 (1) (b), (c) and (d) in work submitted for Study Units of any value:

(a) any case of plagiarism and/or collusion which is deemed to be minor, and being the student's first offence, shall be investigated by the Faculty Assessment Disciplinary Board of the Faculty offering the Study-Unit, composed of the Dean of the Faculty or his delegate as chair, the Head of Department or his delegate and a student from among the students' representatives on the Faculty Board. The academic who reports the case shall not form part of the Faculty Assessment Disciplinary Board;

(b) any case of plagiarism and/or collusion which is deemed to be major, even if being the student's first offence, shall be investigated by the University Assessment Disciplinary Board composed as in regulation 42 of these regulations; and

(c) all second and subsequent offences, whether major or minor, shall be investigated by the University Assessment Disciplinary Board composed as in regulation 42 of these regulations.

(2) When a breach of any of the provisions in regulation 38 (1) (b), (c) and (d) is established to have occurred and the provisions of paragraph (1) of this regulation apply, the Faculty Assessment Disciplinary Board shall:

(a) issue an oral or written reprimand; and/or

(b) reduce the mark of the Assessment or of the relevant Assessment component if applicable down to, and including, the mark of zero with the possibility of a reassessment:

provided that for a component carrying a weight of up to 20%, it shall reduce the mark of the relevant Assessment component down to, and including, the mark of zero with or without the possibility of reassessment.

(3) Instances of collusion or minor plagiarism which occur in the first year of an undergraduate course may be considered by the Faculty Assessment Disciplinary Board as academic incompetence.

(4) The University Assessment Disciplinary Board may give direction and more guidelines to Faculty Assessment Disciplinary Boards on procedures to be used in such cases.

(5) In cases covered by sub-paragraphs (a) and (b) of paragraph (1) of this regulation, a report shall be made in writing by the academic who found the plagiarism and/or collusion in consultation with the Head of Department / Dean of the Faculty offering the study-unit, stating whether the plagiarism and/or collusion is deemed to be minor or major. In cases deemed to be minor, the report will be referred to the Faculty Assessment Disciplinary Board and in cases deemed to be major, the report will be referred to the University Assessment Disciplinary Board for confirmation of admissibility.

(6) In cases covered by sub-paragraph (c) of paragraph (1) of this regulation, the academic who found the plagiarism and/or collusion, in consultation with the Head of Department / Dean of the Faculty offering the study-unit, will produce a report in writing to be sent to the University Assessment Disciplinary Board.

41. When students are alleged to have committed a breach of any of these regulations, after the result of a study-unit has been published or after an award has been conferred, a report shall be submitted to the University Assessment Disciplinary Board. After due consideration, the University Assessment Disciplinary Board, may direct that the result of the study-unit be annulled and/or that the award be withdrawn.

## Assessment Disciplinary Board

42. The Assessment Disciplinary Board shall be composed of:

the Rector or his delegate, as Chairman  
the Registrar, as Vice-Chairman  
an academic member appointed by Senate  
the Dean of the Faculty offering the course on which the student is registered, or his/her delegate, provided that these academics have not been involved in the assessment of the student in the study-unit, and  
a student or his alternate appointed from among the students' representatives on Senate, provided that any one case is considered by the same student representative.

43. The Assessment Disciplinary Board shall have the power to summon before it:

(a) a student against whom a complaint has been made; and

(b) for the purpose of giving evidence at any hearing, any student, any invigilator, and any academic or administrative member of staff of the University.

44. (1) The Assessment Disciplinary Board shall impose penalties in cases where it is established that a breach of the regulations has been committed.

(2) Penalties shall differ in severity depending on the extent and nature of the breach of these regulations as ascertained by the Assessment Disciplinary Board, previous instances of cheating by the student, and any extenuating circumstances.

(3) The Assessment Disciplinary Board may apply a penalty as it deems appropriate. Penalties may include any one or more of the following:

(a) oral or written reprimand;

(b) imposition of a fine not exceeding €150;

(c) reduction of the mark for the specific Assessment component down to, and including, the mark of zero with or without the possibility of a reassessment. If reassessment is allowed, students shall be eligible to not more than the minimum pass mark in that component;

(d) reduction of the overall mark for the Study-Unit down to and including the mark of zero with or without the possibility of a reassessment. If reassessment is allowed, students shall be eligible to not more than the minimum pass mark;

(e) cancellation of all, or of a number of successfully completed Study-Units taken during the same semester, with the cancelled Study-Units to be assessed as a first sit at the next available opportunity when any mark not higher than the original can be obtained;

(f) failure in the year as a whole with the possibility to repeat the year only if eligible in terms of the regulations or bye-laws governing the Course;

(g) reduction in the classification of the degree;

(h) suspension of studies of up to one academic year; during the period of suspension the student's right to enter or remain on any property or premises of the University may be limited or totally withheld;

(i) expulsion from the University; a student who has been expelled may only be allowed readmission with the permission of Senate that can only be granted after the lapse of three years from the date of the expulsion; and

(j) any one or more of the penalties listed above suspended for the duration of the student's studies at the University and conditional to the student not being found guilty of a breach of these regulations a subsequent time.

(4) A record of any offence and the penalties imposed by the University Assessment Disciplinary Board which involve one or more of the following:

- (a) expulsion from the University;
- (b) forced withdrawal from a course;
- (c) withdrawal of a University award; or
- (d) suspension from the University for three years or more,

shall be kept by the University and shall be included in the student's transcript of academic record. Such information may be divulged to third parties upon a request by such third parties, after the student's consent has been obtained.

(5) All penalties other than those specified in paragraph (4) of this regulation which are imposed by the Assessment Disciplinary Board shall be kept by the University in its records but shall not be included in the student's transcript of academic record or divulged to third parties without the express permission of the student.

45. Students accused of a breach of the provisions of these regulations have the right to be heard and to bring any witnesses in their defence, provided that students who fail to appear before the Assessment Disciplinary Board without justification shall be deemed to have renounced the right to be heard.

46. Decisions taken by the Assessment Disciplinary Board shall have immediate effect but all decisions taken are to be communicated to Senate at its first meeting following the taking of any decision.

47. Students may appeal a decision of the University Assessment Disciplinary Board to the University Assessment Appellate Board.

### **Composition of the University Assessment Appellate Board**

48. The University Assessment Appellate Board shall be composed of:

(a) two Pro-Rectors, one of whom shall be designated as Chairperson for each appeal;

(b) two academics not below the rank of associate professor; and

(c) a student appointed by Senate from among the students' representatives on Senate.

49. (1) Members of the University Assessment Appellate Board shall be appointed by Senate. Such members shall not be academic members of staff at the home Faculty of the student concerned. They shall declare any interest in or involvement with (i) the student, or (ii) the accusation prior to the commencement of proceedings, or (iii) both the student and the accusation.

(2) The student shall also, prior to the commencement of proceedings, have the opportunity to challenge the appointment of any member on the University Assessment Appellate Board. Any such challenge shall be made at the latest by the time the student appears before the University Assessment Appellate Board and the student shall be required to provide reasons for such challenge.

(3) Upon any such challenge, the remaining members of the University Assessment Appellate Board shall determine whether the member who was so challenged should continue to sit on the University Assessment Appellate Board. Should the challenge be successful, having consulted with the Legal Office of the University, the member so disqualified from the University Assessment Appellate Board shall be substituted by another person from the list of Substitute Members referred to in paragraph (6) of this regulation.

(4) For the purposes of these regulations, the term 'Member' includes a chairperson.

(5) There shall be a Secretary to the University Assessment Appellate Board, appointed by the Rector, to provide all necessary support to such Board.

(6) Senate shall nominate a list of substitute members for the purposes of paragraphs (2) and (3) of this regulation, referred to hereafter as 'Substitute Members'.

## **Functions and Powers of the University Assessment Appellate Board**

50. (1) The University Assessment Appellate Board shall hear and determine appeals from the decisions of the University Assessment Disciplinary Board, which are brought to its formal cognisance in accordance with these Regulations. Appeals shall be allowed only on any of the following grounds:

- (a) where the decision of the University Assessment Disciplinary Board has breached a relevant regulation or bye-law;
- (b) where the University Assessment Disciplinary Board acted in excess of its powers;
- (c) where the right to a fair hearing was not followed in the proceedings before the University Assessment Disciplinary Board;
- (d) where the decision of the University Assessment Disciplinary Board contains contradictory dispositions;
- (e) where there was an error in the conduct of the proceedings before the University Assessment Disciplinary Board; and
- (f) where any time frames as set out in the applicable regulations or bye-laws were not complied with.

(2) Where fresh evidence is presented to the University Appellate Board, the appeal shall be allowed by way of exception on points of fact. New evidence shall include the instance where, after the decision of the University Assessment Disciplinary Board, some conclusive document was obtained, of which the student had no prior knowledge, or which, with the means provided by law, he could not have produced before the decision was taken by the University Assessment Disciplinary Board. The conclusive document should be relevant to the disciplinary proceedings.

(3) The University Assessment Appellate Board shall at all times respect and apply the principles of natural justice, these being that:

- (a) no one shall be a judge in his or her own cause;
- (b) the student lodging the appeal is allowed to address the University Assessment Appellate Board; and
- (c) the University Assessment Appellate Board gives reasons for its decisions.

(4) The University Assessment Appellate Board shall also comply with the principles of procedural fairness as set out in regulations 52 to 56.

(5) The University Assessment Appellate Board shall, subject to paragraph (3) of this regulation and unless otherwise indicated within these Regulations, regulate its own procedure.

(6) The University Assessment Appellate Board shall have the right to summon witnesses.

(7) Decisions of the University Assessment Appellate Board shall be communicated to the student and to Senate, which shall register the decision at its next scheduled meeting.

51. Decisions of the University Assessment Appellate Board shall be valid only if taken in terms of regulation 50.

### **Procedure to enter an Appeal**

52. (1) A student shall submit a written letter indicating the reasons upon which the appeal is based to the Secretary of the University Assessment Appellate Board by not later than fifteen working days from the notification of the decision of the University Assessment Disciplinary Board.

(2) An appeals fee of €50 shall be paid concurrent with the submission of the letter of appeal in terms of paragraph (1) of this regulation. Such fee may, at the discretion of the University Assessment Appellate Board, be refunded if the appeal is upheld.

(3) Upon receipt of the written letter referred to in paragraph (1) of this regulation, the Secretary of the University Assessment Appellate Board shall:

(a) inform the student in writing who the University Assessment Appellate Board members are, and of the student's right to challenge the appointment of any such member of the University Assessment Appellate Board in terms of regulation 49; and

(b) make the necessary arrangements to have the University Assessment Appellate Board convened as far as practicable within twenty-five working days.

### **Appeal Proceedings**

53. The University Assessment Appellate Board shall, as far as practicable, decide upon the case expeditiously. In so doing, the University Assessment Appellate Board may confirm, with or without changes, vary or revoke the decision of the University Assessment Disciplinary Board.

54. The student shall appear before the University Assessment Appellate Board on the date indicated to him by the Secretary of the University Assessment Appellate Board.

55. Students and any other person on their behalf shall not at any stage of the proceedings communicate with any member of the University Assessment Appellate Board or with any family members of such University Assessment Appellate Board members. Members shall bring any such communication to the attention of the other members of the University Assessment Appellate Board.

56. Proceedings before the University Assessment Appellate Board shall be suspended when other formal proceedings before a competent Court or Tribunal established by law or both on the same matter are pending.

57. The student has the following procedural rights:

- (a) to summon witnesses;
- (b) to produce evidence; and
- (c) to submit before the University Assessment Appellate Board arguments either orally or in writing, or both as the University Assessment Appellate Board may determine.

### **Appeals from Decisions of the University Assessment Appellate Board**

58. The decisions of the University Assessment Appellate Board shall be final and no appeal shall lie therefrom.

### **Revision of Assessment Results**

59. (1) Subject to the provisions of any relevant regulations or to any procedural guidelines, including the payment of fees, made by the appropriate University authority, a student may, not later than one week from the publication of the result of the Assessment, request that an examination paper or any other work submitted for Assessment be reviewed for the purpose of ascertaining that no error was made in the award of marks. Students may additionally request that the decision of the revision be elaborated in a detailed report.

(2) The academic judgement of the original examiner/s is not reviewable by the academic conducting the revision and a recommendation to alter the result can only be made if the change can be justified by objective criteria.

(3) Work for which the result of a study-unit, or any of its components, has been reduced or cancelled as a penalty by the Faculty Assessment Disciplinary Board or the University Assessment Disciplinary Board, cannot be reviewed for the purpose of a revision of paper.

60. The revision shall be undertaken in the first instance by an examiner appointed by Senate and who had not participated in the marking of the original paper.

61. If the examiner conducting the revision is in agreement with the published result, the examiner shall draw up a report and submit it to the Registrar, through the Dean of the Faculty responsible for the Unit, for onward transmission to the student, if the student has requested a written report in addition to a decision.

62. If the examiner conducting the revision is of the opinion that there are objective grounds for changing the result either upwards or downwards, the examiner shall communicate the findings to the chairman of the Board of Examiners, who shall convene a meeting of the Board of Examiners, including the examiner who conducted the revision, to discuss the paper. The Board of Examiners shall follow *mutatis mutandis* the procedures outlined in regulations 24 and 25. If the examiner's recommendation is to revise the marks downwards, the Board of Examiners shall only agree to the recommendation if it results in a change of grade. A pass grade shall not be downgraded to a failing grade; if it is found that extra marks in a passing grade have been given by mistake, these marks shall be removed provided that the final percentage mark is not less than the minimum pass mark.

63. When a written report is requested by the student, the report of the examiner conducting the revision shall inform the student about the quality of his performance in each item from the set comprising the Assessment.

64. If after revision, a change in the result, whether upwards or downwards, is found to be necessary, all records, including the final classification, shall be amended accordingly. Any fee paid in connection with the request for revision shall be refunded in the following cases:

- (i) if the change in the marks changes the grade from a fail to a pass;
- (ii) if there is an increase of 10 marks to the original result accompanied by a change in grade; and
- (iii) if an administrative error is detected.

65. Nothing in these regulations prevents students from discussing Assessment questions, including the type of answers expected, with the lecturer and/or the Head of Department concerned. Such consultation is not a prerequisite, nor can it be used to extend the time limit provided for in regulation 60 (1).

66. An appeal which questions the academic or professional judgement of those charged by Senate with the responsibility for assessing students' academic performance or professional competence shall not be permitted.

### **Material for Assessment**

67. Any material, whether it is a dissertation, thesis, assignment, presentation, examination script, project, report etc., which is written, prepared or produced by a student for the purpose of assessment leading to the award of a certificate, diploma, degree or any other certification issued by the University, shall be physically maintained by the University, provided that the University shall have discretionary powers to determine when one or more such materials may be physically returned to the student.

## **Provisions for Students with a Disability**

68. (1) Assessment arrangements may be made for students with a disability to enable them to perform to the best of their ability and to be assessed:

provided that such students do not gain undue advantage from such assistance, and provided that the integrity and academic standards of the Assessments are not thereby jeopardised. Such arrangements will be made in line with the guidelines for access arrangements that may be approved by Senate from time to time.

(2) The ACCESS Disability Support Committee may approve that students who have severe dyslexia be allowed the use of a computer during their examinations, and may also be allowed to have the spell checker enabled;

provided that the use of the spell checker does not result in their gaining an unfair advantage over other students and provided that it does not change the examination objectives.

69. (1) Students with a disability should make their needs known to the University at the earliest opportunity, normally at the beginning of their course or of each academic year as appropriate, to allow adequate time for consideration of their needs and eventually for appropriate arrangements to be made. Prospective University applicants should make their needs known to the University six months prior to their submitting their application.

(2) Students who make a false claim to gain unfair advantage on other students shall be referred to the Assessment Disciplinary Board.

70. The request for access Examination arrangements, or access arrangements for other Assessments, shall be made in writing to the Registrar, through the Registrar's representative in the Faculty, and shall include the necessary supporting evidence provided by a specialist in the relative field.

71. Upon receiving a request for access Examination arrangements, the Registrar shall refer the request for the advice of the University's disability support committee that shall examine the request and shall make its recommendations to the Registrar, if need be after having interviewed the student and requested any further information or evidence as the committee may require.

72. It shall be legitimate for the University's disability support committee to request an assessment of the student making the request by a specialist nominated by the committee.

73. The recommendations of the University's disability support committee, together with the supporting evidence, shall be sent to the Registrar who shall normally proceed to ensure that the recommended access arrangements are made. If, for any reason, the Registrar is not able to act upon a recommendation, the matter shall be referred to Senate for a final decision. Senate may review a

recommendation by the University's disability support committee if it is referred to it by the Registrar, or by the Board of Examiners concerned.

74. When Senate considers it appropriate, the access arrangements shall be subject to the students' transcript of their academic record being endorsed as follows:

“Access arrangements were made to enable the student to be assessed. Details may be obtained from the Registrar.”

75. In cases of temporary disability, the Registrar may proceed to grant a request for access arrangements if he is satisfied that the case so merits, and after seeking advice as may be deemed necessary.

76. Requests by students for access arrangements due to a temporary disability, when the possibility exists of postponing the Assessment to the next session, shall be treated sympathetically but the granting of the request, even when the request is justified, shall not be considered a right of the student. In such cases, if access arrangements are granted, the expenses associated with such access arrangements shall be borne by the student.

### **Repeal**

77. The University Examinations Regulations, 1997, published as Legal Notice 181 of 1997, and amended by Legal Notices 30 of 1998 and 201 of 2002 shall be deemed to cease to be in force as from the 30 September 2009, provided that assessments pertaining to the academic year 2008/2009 shall be regulated by these regulations, and provided that any reference to the University Examinations Regulations in any statutes, regulations and bye-laws of the University shall be taken to refer to these new regulations

These regulations were published as:

Legal Notice 274 of 2009 – Malta Government Gazette No. 18,497 – 20 October 2009

And amended by:

Legal Notice 353 of 2010 – Malta Government Gazette No. 18,620 – 16 July 2010

Legal Notice 399 of 2010 – Malta Government Gazette No. 18,637 – 27 August 2010

Legal Notice 472 of 2010 – Malta Government Gazette No. 18,665 – 2 November 2010

Legal Notice 149 of 2011 – Malta Government Gazette No. 18,736 – 21 April 2011

Legal Notice 35 of 2012 – Malta Government Gazette no. 18,859 – 24 January 2012

Legal Notice 138 of 2013 – Malta Government Gazette no. 19,082 – 30 April 2013

Legal Notice 299 of 2013 – Malta Government Gazette no. 19,146 – 1 October 2013

Legal Notice 419 of 2013 – Malta Government Gazette no. 19,172 – 26 November 2013

Legal Notice 45 of 2014 – Malta Government Gazette no. 19,204 – 31 January 2014

Legal Notice 348 of 2014 – Malta Government Gazette no. 19,316 – 26 September 2014

Legal Notice 255 of 2015 – Malta Government Gazette no. 19,461 – 7 August 2015

Legal Notice 356 of 2015 – Malta Government Gazette no. 19,489 – 27 October 2015

Legal Notice 191 of 2016 – Malta Government Gazette no. 19,579 – 24 May 2016

Legal Notice 52 of 2018 – Malta Government Gazette no. 19,947 – 13 February 2018

Legal Notice 113 of 2018 – Malta Government Gazette no. 19,975 – 10 April 2018

Legal Notice 351 of 2018 – Malta Government Gazette no. 20,079 – 30 October 2018

Legal Notice 42 of 2019 – Malta Government Gazette no. 20,144 – 5 March 2019

Legal Notice 151 of 2019 – Malta Government Gazette no. 20,223 – 2 July 2019

Legal Notice 11 of 2020 – Malta Government Gazette no. 20,332 – 17 January 2020

Legal Notice 297 of 2020 – Malta Government Gazette no. 20,448 – 28 July 2020

Legal Notice 305 of 2020 – Malta Government Gazette no. 20,448 – 28 July 2020

Legal Notice 355 of 2021 – Malta Government Gazette no. 20,696 – 7 September, 2021

Legal Notice 150 of 2022 – Malta Government Gazette no. 20,863 – 20 May, 2022