

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Organization:	Institute of Technology Tallaght.
Section:	Department of Science
Procedure Name:	External review of examination papers and scripts
Procedure No:	SC042
Revision:	A
Prepared By:	Ken Carroll
Date:	21/02/05
Approved By:	Ken Carroll
Date:	

REVISION HISTORY					
Rev.	Reason for change	Effective from	Prepared by & date	Approved by & date	Description of change
A			Feb 21 st 2005		

1.0 POLICY

It is the policy of the Department of Applied Science that the scope and standard of all examination papers shall be appropriate to the level of teaching and learning for which they are intended.

2.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this protocol is to describe the processes of examination paper review and the review of examination scripts/work by external examiners.

3.0 ORGANISATIONAL UNITS AFFECTED

Department of Applied Science

4.0 DEFINITIONS

Sessional examinations: Spring and summer examinations.

Repeat examinations: Autumn examinations.

5.0 RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of the Head of School/Department of Science to ensure compliance to this protocol.

6.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROCEDURE *(figure 1 provides a flowchart outlines the major steps in this process)*

6.1 REVIEW OF EXAMINATION PAPERS

6.1.1 The HOD will assign external examiners to programmes and/or modules annually.

6.1.2 Lecturers will produce examination papers and associated marking schemes.

6.1.3 The School of Science Grade VI Administrative Officer will provide to each external examiner copies of the relevant course schedules and syllabi.

6.1.4 The School of Science Grade VI Administrative Officer will notify external examiners with respect to dates for return of comments on exam papers, and times and dates for examination board meetings.

6.1.5 All external examiners should familiarise themselves with the contents of the current issue of the HETAC 'Marks and Standards' which details the role of internal and external examiners, grading of subjects, and the working of the Grade Point Average (GPA) system. 'Marks and Standards' is available on the internet at http://www.hetac.ie/docs/hetac_marks_standards_2001.pdf.

- 6.1.6 Ensure that the scope and character of the examination paper is appropriate to the level of award for which it is intended.
- 6.1.7 External examiners should review all papers with respect to the following:-
- Ensure that the scope and character of the examination paper is appropriate to the level of award for which it is intended;
 - The instructions to candidates are clear and unambiguous;
 - Questions are numbered clearly and consecutively;
 - Marks are allocated in a consistent manner and total correctly;
 - The questions asked are clear and unambiguous; particular attention should be given to values, units of measurement etc.;
 - The range of questions asked provide a fair and reasonable coverage of the major topics in the module syllabus;
 - The demands being made of the student are fair and consistent with the time allowed and the scope and standard of the programme;
 - Marking schemes are sufficiently detailed to demonstrate what the lecturer expects of the student;
 - All relevant addenda (e.g. tables, spectra, diagrams, etc.) needed by the student to complete the examination are provided and are clear;
 - All examination papers should be paginated in the form of 'Page X of Y'.
- 6.1.8 External examiners will return by the due date (as per 6.1.4) any comments on or corrections to examination papers to the Grade VI Officer for distribution to the relevant lecturers.
- 6.1.9 External examiners will retain copies of the marking schemes for use when reviewing examination scripts.

6.2 REVIEW OF EXAMINATION SCRIPTS

- 6.2.1 Lecturers will send to external examiners by registered post, a representative selection (typically 15 to 25% of scripts) of the student scripts including the best script, the worst script and examples of the major grades in between. Also included is a 'Composite Gradable Component Display' sheet (the 'Whitesheet') showing student marks for final exam, CA, laboratory work etc.
- 6.2.2 Lecturers will identify any particular problems encountered with the examinations that might influence the outcomes.
- 6.2.3 External examiners will review the scripts in the context of the provided marking schemes and will notify the lecturer by return registered post of any comments or concerns about the examination results. The signed 'Whitesheet' should also be included.

6.2.4 External examiners are required to attend at least one examination board meeting each academic year. Generally, externs prefer to attend the summer meeting in June but are welcome to attend any/all such meetings.

6.2.5 External examiners are responsible for ensuring the security of any examination papers and materials retained by them. All such materials must be treated in confidence.

7.0 REVISION OF THIS PROTOCOL

7.1 Where an error, omission, or possible improvement to this protocol is identified by any member of staff, that information should be brought to the attention of the HOD / HOS as soon as possible in order that this protocol may be revised immediately.