



Policy Name:	Paper Setting And Evaluation Policies		
Department	Academic	Approval Authority	Rector
Date of Implementation	-	Date of Last Revision	19 Aug 2020, V01

1. Introduction

Having a uniform standard of assessment at all branches is mandatory in maintaining quality. The quality largely depends following an established procedure defined in the syllabus provided. It is obligatory to ensure the assessment of each module perfectly matches with assessment criteria defined in the smart school as smart school strictly follows the approved syllabus guidelines.

This document focuses on written examinations of the assessment and hence provides a comprehensive guideline for setting the examination paper.

An examination's capacity to measure the learning outcomes depends on the questions set and how marking of the questions are defined. A well-set examination will have the potential to grade candidates based on their academic progress accurately.

While this document provides a general framework for all modular examinations, there can and will be variations among subjects depending on the nature of the subject. Hence this document must be used as a general guideline and when in doubt, please contact the appropriate subject coordinators for specific subject related guidelines.

At MIC each faculty will have its responsible panel for setting examination papers. Each panel will be headed by the Dean, a Reviewer and Paper Setters.

2. Scope

This Policy:

Describes the standards and norms followed at MIC in Paper setting and answer scripts evaluations.

Describes the rules and procedures to be followed by lecturers while setting paper and evaluating the answer scripts

3. Definitions

4. Protocols and responsibilities

a. Dean's Duties

The Dean must ensure the examination papers are received by the Branch Managers or the concerned leading authority.

- i. It is the Dean's responsibility to ensure that examination papers: are in accordance with the syllabus content; align with the assessment weightage identified in the syllabus and hence the smart school; assess the objectives stated in the unit outline; are written concisely in unambiguous language and error free; are well-balanced in terms of timing and mark allocation.



- ii. Deans must also be marking schemes provided along with the examination paper. Marking Schemes must:
 1. set clear criteria for marking;
 2. show any calculations required;
 3. show clearly how the marks are allocated within each question.
- iii. The Dean must ensure the Examination paper checklist is attached along with the examination Paper. Please see Annex 1 for sample Examination Paper Checklist.
 1. Dispatched Content:
 - a. Examination paper
 - b. Marking Scheme
 - c. Examination Paper Checklist

b. Reviewer's Duties

A reviewer is a member of the particular subject teaching staff who is not involved in making the paper. The dean shall identify a reviewer for each examination paper.

- i. On reviewing the final copy of the examination papers, and the marking schemes, the Reviewer must check that the examination questions:
 1. are in accordance with the syllabus content;
 2. align with the assessment weightage identified in the syllabus and hence the smart school;
 3. assess the objectives stated in the unit outline;
 4. are written concisely in unambiguous language and error free;
 5. are well-balanced in terms of timing and mark allocation.
- ii. The Reviewer should answer all the examination questions with the aim of:
 1. checking that all relevant information is given and that the paper content is correct;
 2. checking any calculations;
 3. assessing the time that a typical candidate would take to answer each question (see Section 10 of this document);
 4. critically looking for any ambiguity and all forms of bias;
 5. focusing on other difficulties with the working of each question, which may be caused by the use of difficult or unnecessary words, incomplete information, unclear diagrams or pictures, candidates not having a clear picture of what is intended by the question (see Section 6 of this document);
 6. ensuring that optional questions are of the same difficulty level and take approximately the same time to complete;
 7. checking that the allocation of marks is fair in terms of the importance of the topic and in terms of the answer expected of candidates.
- iii. The Reviewer should scrutinize the marking scheme (see Section 9 of this document) with the aim of checking that:
 1. It is clear, unambiguous and can be followed easily by the markers;
 2. The allocation of marks to each question is appropriate to its difficulty;
 3. Acceptable and unacceptable alternative answers are identified;
 4. The marks of the paper add up to the total of marks allocated to that paper as indicated in the syllabus.



- iv. The Reviewer is responsible for liaising with the Chairperson to ensure the timely handing over of the examination papers and supporting documentation for the reviewing exercise.

c. Paper Setting Procedures

The Dean is required to adopt the following procedure:

- i. Identify a lead member to compose the Examination Paper
- ii. Assign sections of the syllabus to Panel Members on which to set questions and agree on the type of questions to be set;
- iii. Paper structure, type of questions, and mark allocations are agreed
- iv. Ensure that the questions are within the syllabus and adequately cover the subject matter and the assessment objectives;
- v. Ensure that all questions are clear, precise and intelligible.
- vi. Ensure that standards are maintained and that questions are not repeated from one session to another;
- vii. Act upon feedback from previous examinations including recommendations from relevant reports;
- viii. Ascertain that, in sections with optional questions, alternative questions are of comparable difficulty;
- ix. Ascertain that papers can be worked out by the candidates in the time allowed;
- x. Ensure the softcopy of the paper reaches the responsible cluster head for printing as per the decided time schedule.

d. Layout and Formatting

It is important that, as much as possible, MIC examination papers have the same format regardless of subject and level.

i. General

1. Times New Roman pt 12 is to be used throughout (except in special circumstances such as in the use of equations and java script).
2. All text is to be justified.
3. The paper should be A4 with moderate margins (2.54cm bottom and top; 1.91cm left and right).
4. Numbers 1-10 are usually written as text while numbers greater than 10 are usually written as integers.

ii. Spacing

1. 1.15-line spacing is to be used throughout. Double line spacing is to be used for blank lines (writing space).
2. There should be a space between figures and units (e.g. 47.5 cm3).
3. Questions should, as much as possible, refrain from starting on one page and continuing on another.
4. When a question or passage does not fit on one page and one has to leave a small blank space at the bottom of the page, the text 'Question / passage [as applicable] continues on the next page' should be written at the bottom of the page if the page is odd-numbered. This should be ***Right aligned and in Italics and Bold***

iii. Emphasis

1. Important parts of sentences are to be emphasized as follows:
 - a. Using CAPITAL LETTERS and **bold** to indicate the number of responses required (e.g. name **TWO** types of



fruit); b. using bold for words in the negative (e.g. do not use colored pencils);

b. Using CAPITAL LETTERS to indicate number of responses required or words in the negative in section titles/directions which are already formatted in bold (e.g. **Answer ALL questions**).

iv. **Numbering**

1. Questions are to be numbered using Arabic numbers. Further subdivisions should be numbered using Latin letters. If further subdivisions are required, Roman numbers should be used.
2. In all subjects having English instructions, headers and footers, lettering is to be carried out using letters in the English alphabet.
3. Sections are to be labelled using Latin letters unless otherwise stated in the syllabus (e.g. SECTION A).
4. Numbering should start afresh at the start of each section.
5. Subsequent to the colon, each point should start with a small letter and end with a semicolon, with the exception of the last point which should end with a full stop, as shown below:
 - (a) On the graph, plot as accurately as possible, the value of the ionization energy of:
 - (i) the element with atomic number 10.
 - (ii) the element with atomic number 19.

v. **Marks**

1. Marks should be clearly shown in a consistent style next to each question.
2. When blank lines are used in write-on papers, marks are to be indicated as follows:
 - a. the marks for each question are to be written using Arabic numbers in curved brackets **without** the word 'mark/s' or 'point/s' at the end;
 - b. The total mark is to be indicated in **bold**, right aligned, and in curved brackets.

This is illustrated below:

(2)

(Total: 5 marks)

3. When word-processing, tab stops offer a very simple and fast way to standardize the spacing before marks (where Applicable).

vi. **Headers, Titles and Captions**

1. Sectionheaders (where applicable) should be in bold, CAPITALISED and left aligned (e.g. SECTION A:LANGUAGE).
2. Titles / sub-titles / instructions are to be in bold.
3. General instructions related to the whole paper are to be formatted normally (Times New Roman, 12pt).
4. Table titles are to be centered above the table with a text size of 10pt (2pt smaller than the rest of the text).
5. Figure captions are to be centered under the figure with a text size of 10pt (2pt smaller than the rest of the text).



Table 1: Table Title

vii. **References**

1. For pictures and/or text copied/adapted from another source, the URL or name of author suffices. This can be placed under the piece in italics with a font size of 10pt (2pt smaller than the normal text).

Thursday, September 24, 2015, 12:44

Matsec results not late - Sept 27 deadline will be respected, board says

The results of the September Matsec examinations are not late, the Matsec Board insisted today in reply to criticism by the SDM students' organisation.

Since 1994 the target date for publication of September results has always been September 27. This has always been met in spite of an increase of candidates and a change in regulations over the years. This deadline will also be met this year, the board said.

Article taken from the Times of Malta (www.timesofmalta.com)

2. When referring to set texts/pieces of work, only the name of the piece should be in italics (e.g. F'Qabel Tiftah l-Inkesta ta' Alfred Sant pagna 4; Annunciation, Simone Martini, 1333, Uffizi Gallery, Florence).

viii. **Question Choice**

1. The questions a candidate is required to answer should be clearly indicated in the:
 - a. rubric;
 - b. Title/instructions.
2. If a choice between long questions is required, this needs to be additionally indicated by 'OR' between the questions. If questions are on separate pages, 'OR' should be at the bottom of the first page.

ix. **Language Use**

1. The readability of questions depends on two factors:
 - a. Language
 - b. Layout
2. Sentences should be short and concise as much as possible, especially for complex information. Disturbing the Subject-Verb-Object order by subordinate clauses is taxing for candidates under examination conditions.
3. Events in questions should be presented in the sequence in which they occur.
4. Command words (define, explain, outline, identify) should be used consistently and not changed for the sake of variety.

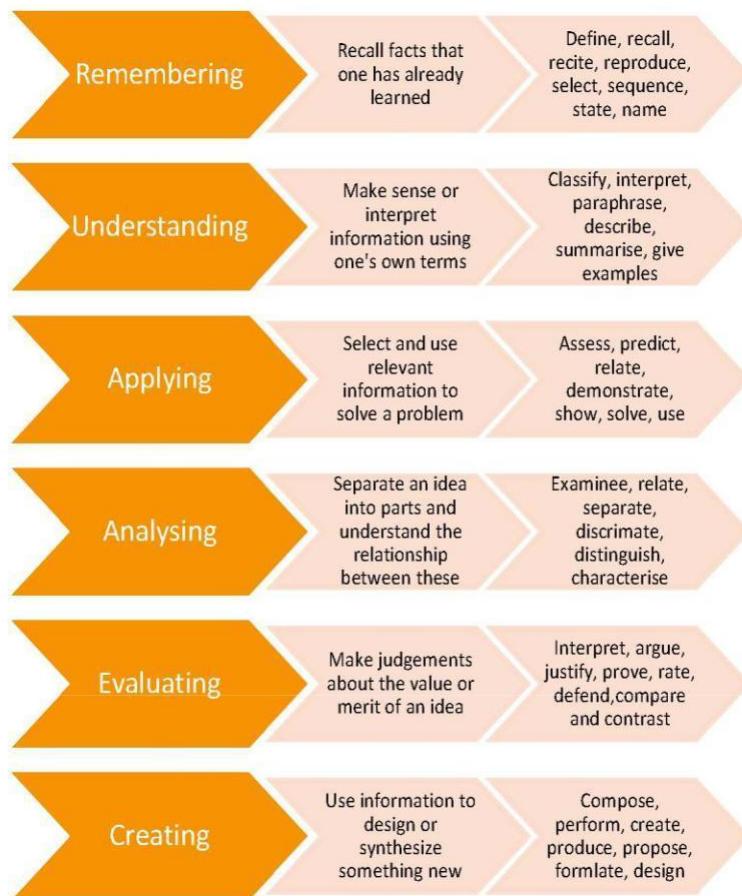


5. Negative ('not') and partly negative ('only') expressions should be avoided.
6. The information required for a task should be provided before the task in separate sentence/s.
7. Candidates tend to find the use of the passive voice, words with multiple meanings, abstract words and metaphorical language as barriers to their achievement.
8. Questions are best written in an impersonal form. Avoid questions which ask what the candidate would do since, strictly speaking, any answer would be correct.

x. Question Difficulty

1. The difficulty of examination questions should be within the candidate's reach. Specimen and past examination papers should be referred to as standard setters.

Figure 1: Bloom's Taxonomy of the Cognitive Domain



xi. Marking Schemes

1. Following an exam, a candidate is awarded a mark based solely on his/her evidence of performance during an exam. In order for the grade to be valid and reliable, two conditions must be met:



- a. The examination must elicit evidence of the trait/s in compliance with the subject syllabus;
- b. The evidence must be properly evaluated by means of a properly constructed marking scheme.

2. The Dean is required to ensure that the panel adopts the following procedures for devising the marking schemes:
 - a. ensure that questions and marking schemes are written concurrently;
 - b. ensure that marks are given for attainment, allowing credit to be allocated for what the candidates know, understand and can do;
 - c. ensure that marks allocated are commensurate with the demands of the question;
3. A good marking scheme:
 - a. includes expected answers, indicates whether these are right or wrong and shows clearly how marks are to be allocated to each question and part question;
 - b. is clear and designed to be easily and consistently used;
 - c. Is not a model answer sheet to the examination papers? Model answers provide little help in marking since these do not necessarily reflect the candidates' expected ability;
 - d. Does not include assumptions like 'any suitable answer/drawing' or 'one mark for each correct labelling'. These phrases are of very little help in the absence of a list of expected answers;
 - e. indicates what constitutes partially correct answers and the marks allotted in such cases;
 - f. indicates when no partially correct answer is to be accepted (e.g. award no marks for partially correct answers);
 - g. Shows the working of any calculations required.

xii. ***Marking Schemes for Essay Type Questions***

1. Candidates should not be penalized or rewarded for aspects of communication when other skills or knowledge should be assessed.
2. Moderation is more important in essay-type questions. This can be done by:
 - a. Setting works as exemplars to which marks can be compared;
 - b. Have different markers review the same essay.
3. If some answers go beyond the marking scheme's expectations, other candidates' work should not be deprived from gaining full marks if they fulfil the requirements of the marking scheme
4. Essay type questions can be the easiest to set but hardest to mark. There are two main models for marking schemes:
 - a. **Part marking** allocates marks for each quality expected in an answer. It is useful when an examination aims to verify that candidates have mastered each of a prescribed set of skills or content. Such marking scheme:
 - i. states the aspects required for a satisfactory answer and the marks allocated;

ii. establishes descriptors for these aspects in which distinctive qualities of a competent answer are described and marks stated. An example of a part marking scheme is shown below.

Question

Compare transition with s-block metal elements.	1
	0
Make use of examples.	
Aspect 1: Describes transition metal elements	4
<i>Incompletely filled d-orbitals</i>	1
<i>Two physical properties (color, Hardness, density, etc.)</i>	2
<i>Two chemical properties (multiple valency, catalysis, etc.)</i>	2
<i>Gives two examples of transition metals (do not accept Zinc)</i>	1
Aspect 2: Describes s-block elements	4

Etc....

Figure 2: A Part Marking Scheme for an Essay Type Question

b. **Holistic marking** allocates all marks in one operation by considering all qualities together against broad criteria. It is useful when assessing candidates' grasp of complex concepts or their ability to integrate or apply aspects. Such marking scheme:

- categories are set with a mark range; o descriptors for each category are set. An example of a holistic marking scheme is shown below

Describe the cruise passenger ship on which John was found in

the book 'No Title'		10 marks
Range	General criteria	Other notes
10-8	comprehensive coverage and detailed knowledge;	
	describes external appearance (size, colour, etc.);	
	describes internal layout with reference to some of the rooms;	
	good use of adjectives;	
	cohesive writing;	
7-5	a maximum of two grammatical errors.	
	Etc...	



Figure 3: A Holistic Marking Scheme for an Essay Type Question

xiii. **Timing**

1. The examination should be designed such that candidates of the desired ability complete it in time.
2. As a general rule of thumb, allow candidates triple the time it takes a paper setter to complete the examination.

xiv. **Plagiarism**

1. Questions and diagrams should not be copied from textbooks, the internet, class notes, past examination papers or any other document.
2. In the case of text, pictures or diagrams which are adapted/copied from elsewhere, a short note indicating this must be included (e.g. 'Adapted from ScienceNews www.sciencenews.org').

xv.

Security and Confidentiality

The Dean, Paper Setters and Reviewers are to ensure confidentiality and security of examination questions and papers.

1. Persons outside MIC should not know the identity of members of the Paper Setting Panels. Members have the duty of maintaining anonymity.
2. The Panel is advised to;
 - a. save questions on portable media (USB, CD, etc.) rather than hard drives on computers, especially those connected to the internet or other networks;
 - b. not send a compiled examination paper to each other by email;
 - c. not involve other persons who are not part of the panel in any part of the preparation of the examination papers unless otherwise instructed by the Dean
 - d. avoid working on examination papers on shared computers;
 - e. have a secure back-up of their work;
 - f. immediately report possible breaches of security to the Dean

xvi.

Front Cover

1. All Examination papers of MIC must follow the same general structure. Please refer to annex 2 for the general format.
2. Subject specific instructions must be clearly indicated on the front cover
3. The following gives a general indication of the information that must be collected / given on the front cover.
 - a. Name
 - b. Candidate Number
 - c. Duration: 2 hours 30 min
 - d. General Advice
 - e. Sections
 - f. Total marks

xvii.

Footer

1. The footer of the paper must be in the following format
 - a. MIC FBM BHRM Project Management 2016

xviii. **Allocating paper marks**

1. It is not mandatory to set the Examination out of 100
2. The minimum marks for any final examination paper must not be LESS than the allocated syllabus weightage
3. Marks must reflect the over-all time a candidate will have to spend in answering the questions.
4. Allocating odd fractions of marks for questions or part questions must be avoided.
5. The total marks for an examination must be predefined by the Dean.

xix. **Paper Sections**

1. Unless decided otherwise, the examination paper must comprise of three sections; Section A, Section B, and Section C
2. For Level five and the following indicates the general structure for the sections.

Section A	20 marks
MCQ / Short answers	
Section B	40 marks
Choice can be given Structured Questions / Short answers	
Section C	40 marks
Choice maybe given Case Studies / Essays / Structured essays	

3. For Level three and level four, the following general structure can be used

Section A	30 marks
MCQ / Short answers	
Section B	50 marks
Choice can be given Structured Questions / Short answers	
Section C	20 marks
Choice maybe given structured essays	

xx. **Setting Objective Type Questions / MCQs**

1. Don't provide clues to correct answers
2. Don't include ALL OF THE ABOVE OR NON OF THE ABOVE
3. Don't limit your MCQs to just knowledge level questions
4. Make sure distractors belong to the same family
5. Avoid opposites as one of the distractors
6. Try to keep all options to the same length
7. Try to make the stem and key fit into some grammatical rule
8. Each Correct question carries 1 mark



xxi. Setting Short Answer Questions

1. Short-answer questions (SAQs) are open-ended questions that require students to create an answer, rather than choose from a selection of responses.
2. It's a practical alternative to the long essay question.
3. They are commonly used in examinations to assess the basic knowledge and understanding of a topic before more in-depth assessment questions are asked.
4. Hence, SAQs tend to test the lower levels of the cognitive domain and assesses mainly knowledge, comprehension, and some application.
5. A question can be framed to carry from 1 to approximately 5 marks.
6. Where a question carries more than 1 marks, the examiner must ensure the correct response is inclusive of roughly that many points.
7. You may leave a quality mark for presentations
8. Avoid situations requiring provision of fraction of marks

xxii. Setting Structured Questions

1. These are generally an extension of the short answer type questions but organized in a way to cover more content.
2. Questions can range from roughly 5 marks to 10 marks
3. The separate sections of questions are linked
4. Questions should include knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation

xxiii. Setting Essay type questions

1. You may include restricted response style structured essay questions or open-ended free response style questions
2. Questions should allow for testing of knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation

xxiv. Setting Case Studies

1. They aim to test technical expertise
2. They aim to test the ability of a candidate to communicate effectively
3. They put them in the place of the professional who prepared it
4. They present real issues of the content they covered.
5. Case Studies should not be overly long
6. They should appropriately relate to the content being tested.
7. The questions framed can require the students to borrow knowledge and skills learnt in the module
8. Questions can be at all levels, from simply drawing answers from the passage to synthesis and evaluation of ideas.

xxv. Choosing content

In setting the paper you may stick to the following guideline

1. Same concept must not be repeatedly tested.
2. Content must be prioritized in a way it reflects the time spent on covering that content

Type	Weightage
Knowledge / Comprehension	50%
Knowledge / Comprehension	50%

Application	30%
Analysis / Synthesis / Evaluation	20%

5. Policies and documents to refer:

a. *Examination And Invigilation Policy*

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