

KARPAGAM ACADEMY OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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This is to certify that the enclosed pages (1 to 34) consists the details of Examination Manual of Automation of Examination Division.

D.m.

REGISTRAR Karpagam Academy of Higher Education (Deemed to be University Under Section 3 of UGC Act 1956; Pollachi Main Road, Eachanari Post, Coimbatore - 641 021.



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EXAMINATION SECTION



EXAMINATION MANUAL

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Examination Manual

Preamble:

One of the major duties of the University is to hold examinations of various academic / professional program offered by the University, declaration of results and conferment of Degrees to individuals who fulfill the requisite qualification / conditions. It is the most sensitive section of the university as it impacts the future of the students and the image of the institution. Hence, it becomes utmost important that the functions of Examination Section are performed with precision, fairness and objectivity to ensure credibility of the institution.

The Examination Section mainly deals with the appointments no question paper setters, examiners, preparation and publication of schedule of examinations, smooth conduct of examinations, proper evaluation of answer scripts and timely declaration of results and awarding degrees / diplomas and certificates. To perform these functions effectively and efficiently, all rules, regulations, systems and procedures relating to examination need to be clearly defined. This manual is prepared keeping in mind this objective.

Functions of Examination Section:

The functions of Examination Section are divided into three phases.

I Phase	: Before the conduct of Examinations (Page 02)
II Phase	: During the conduct of Examinations (Page 15)
III Phase	: After the conduct of Examinations (Page 25)

I PHASE: BEFORE THE CONDUCT OF EXAMINATIONS

- 1. Drafting and issue of schedule of examinations and detailed time table.
- 2. Notification of examination fees
- 3. Inviting applications from the candidates for admission into University examination.
- 4. Scrutiny of examination application of candidates.
- 5. Checking and preparing of statement of the collected amount of fees, date of payment, whether paid in full or in part.
- 6. Printing of candidates' lists and issue of the same to Examination Centres.
- 7. Preparation of the statement subject-wise, paper-wise and date-wise to print question papers with code number. Question Papers to be printed shall be 20% in excess of what is actually required in each subject.
- 8. Appointment of question-paper setters and allotment of questions to be prepared. Whenever necessary instructions to proper scheme of valuation also.

- 9. The question paper packets shall indicate programme, subject, semester, date of examinations, time of examinations, number of question papers in each packet etc.
- 10. Issue of appointment orders to the Chairperson, members and internal and external examiners.

Constitution of Board of Examiners

1. Appointment, duties and responsibilities of the Chairman of the Board of Examiners

The Chairman of the Board of Examiners shall be appointed by the Vice-Chancellor for each Programme from among the internal examiners provided such persons satisfy the following conditions:

- He/she shall be Head of the University Department.
- He/she should have put in at least 10 years of full time teaching experience or as decided by the University from time to time.
- He/she shall preserve strict confidentiality regarding the work allotted to him/her and shall not violate the integrity of the examination system.
- 2. The Chairman of the Board of Examiners has to prepare the list of question papers, with title and code, to be set Programme-wise, Semester-wise, subject wise (Scheme / Regulations -wise).
- 3. After the preparation of the list of question papers to be set, the same has to be forwarded to the COE with the Syllabus of the paper, Question paper pattern/ Model Question paper, and if possible past Question paper.
- 4. The Chairman of the Board shall ensure that the meetings of the Board of Examiners shall be conducted only in the University premises.
- 5. He/she shall also maintain the minutes of the meetings of the Board of examiners and send copies of these minutes to the COE.

II. Panel of Examiners

- 1. Panel of Examiners shall be prepared for each subject of study with the approval of Board of Studies of each Department. All faculty members of institution will automatically become the examiners in the respective department board.
- 2. In addition the Chairman of the Board of Studies shall call for a list of all eligible examiners from various Institutions/ University departments.

- 3. All such eligible panel of examiners shall be placed in the Academic council for approval.
- 4. The Board of Examiners shall be appointed by the Vice-Chancellor from the Panel of examiners and shall continue to function for three academic years. A new Board of Examiners shall be constituted for the subsequent period. Except in the case of non-availability of eligible examiners, no person shall be reappointed as examiner in the same board for the same subject/ course.
- 5. It shall be the duty of the Heads of the Departments to prepare seniority-wise detailed panels of examiners and place the same before the respective Boards of Studies for approval. The Chairperson shall extend all cooperation in preparing the list of examiners. Only names of such teachers from other Institutions who have a minimum of 5 years of full time teaching experience shall be included in the panel.
- 6. The Question Paper setter must also be a member of the Boards of Examiners. Whenever assigned, it shall be the duty of the member of the Board of Examiners to scrutinize and approve sets of question papers, with necessary translation wherever necessary, and submit the same to the COE.

Question Papers

- 1. All arrangements shall be made to get the required sets of question papers for each paper of examination sufficiently in advance to the commencement of the examination period.
- 2. The question paper(s) shall meet the specifications/ pattern as per the academic regulations of each programme of study in the University. Question papers for each subject shall be available in multiple sets to meet any eventuality.
- 3. The question paper-setters shall be communicated regarding their appointment together with the necessary instructions, syllabus, model question papers, question paper pattern, forms of acceptance, inner cover and outer cloth cover, remuneration forms and other related stationery etc.
- 4. Whenever, a paper setter declines the offer, alternative arrangements shall be made expeditiously to get the paper set by a suitable alternative paper-setter.
- 5. Appointment of Question Paper setters/ Scrutinizers.
 - 5.1.No one can claim appointment as paper setter/ scrutinizer or any other examination work as a matter of right. The COE shall finalize the question paper setters/ scrutinizers from the BoE.
 - 5.2.No person shall be appointed as a paper-setter for an examination if any of his/her near relatives are appearing for that examination.
 - 5.3. The paper setters/ scrutinizers are required to submit their acceptance/ decline of the offer.

- 5.4. The acceptance of the offer may also be informed by email to the COE. If no communication is received within the prescribed time limit, it will be presumed that the assignment is not accepted by the paper setter.
- 5.5.If by chance, a wrong subject has been assigned to the paper-setter, he shall indicate the same and decline the offer. He shall NOT accept an offer that is NOT related to his subject/ expertise/ knowledge domain.
- 5.6. The paper setters/ examiners shall follow all the regulations of the University from time to time in respect of setting of question papers, scheme of evaluation etc.

Functions and Responsibilities of Paper Setters

- 1. The Paper setter shall set the papers only on the texts and courses of study prescribed, and ensure that no question on topics not included in the prescribed syllabus is set.
- 2. The Paper Setter shall take all the necessary precaution for the maintenance of confidentiality of his/ her appointment and the question paper(s) submitted set by him/ her.
- 3. The Paper setter shall set the number of sets of question papers as requested, as per the prescribed pattern containing questions covering a wide range of contents of the courses for which they are set and send them all in sealed packets to the COE.
- 4. The Paper setter shall ensure that the question papers set carry the correct name of the subject, Title and code of the paper, applicable Regulation(s). He/ she shall also indicate the duration of the paper, the maximum marks allotted to each question of the paper, choice, and maximum marks of the full paper. If the question paper is common to one or more schemes/courses, it shall be clearly indicated.
- 5. The Paper setter shall provide necessary instructions for the guidance of candidates at the top of the question paper. Any Mathematical, Physical tables, charts, data and handbooks permitted to be used should also be clearly indicated.
- 6. The question paper should be fairly distributed over the whole syllabus of study and not concentrated on any one or a few units/ portions only.
- 7. The question paper setter shall indicate the permissible use of mathematical, Physical tables, Charts, data or hand books, gazettes etc. which are permitted to be used by the examinee in the INSTRUCTIONS. He/she shall affix his/her signature on each page of the question paper without fail.
- 8. If there are any sections which need to be answered in different answer booklets, the paper setter shall provide clear instructions for the same. The number of questions to be answered in each section shall also be indicated clearly. All questions and subdivisions shall be marked clearly as per the pattern provided.
- 9. The Paper setter shall write the questions legibly in Ink or type personally, avoiding additions, alterations and erasures. Abbreviations are to be avoided. Special care shall be taken in the delineation of mathematical signs of index figures. He/she should workout the numerical problems before including them in the question papers.
- 10. The paper setters shall write/type the questions in the blank booklets specifically supplied for the purpose by the University or on / A4 papers. The questions should be

written/typed clearly and legibly. Sufficient space should be provided between two questions.

- 11. The Paper setters shall observe strict secrecy regarding the work allotted to them. The Paper setter is not permitted to keep carbon copies of hand written question paper. Drafts or copies of the paper set should be destroyed as soon as the papers set have been sent to the COE.
- 12. The paper setter shall not delegate the task of setting the question paper partially or entirely to anyone else.
- 13. The paper setters shall submit the Scheme of valuation whenever demanded while setting the question papers and send them in the same envelope.
- 14. The question papers and scheme of valuation, if any, shall be enclosed in the labeled inner cover, sealed and included along with other information/ forms and claim bills in an outer cover.
- 15. The check list shall be marked to ensure that all required documents/ components have been included in the cover.
- 16. The Paper setter must carefully paste the inner cover provided by the University and affix his/ her signature on the joints of the cover and fix a cellophane tape on the signatures. The Paper setter shall fill in all the details required on the inner cover. This inner cover shall then be enclosed in a clothlined outer envelope marked "CONFIDENTIAL" and sent through Speed Post/ Registered post to the Controller of Examinations, or delivered to the COE in person.
- 17. The paper setter shall also submit the remuneration and postal expenses claim bills in the outer cover/ or separately with all the details to the COE.
- 18. The paper setter shall send the declaration and check list along with the Question papers set.

Handling Question Papers Received from Paper Setters

- 1. The question paper(s) received from the respective paper setters are received processed and stored securely maintaining full confidentiality. An account keeping must be done in order to send reminders to the paper setters if question papers are not received within the stipulated time.
- 2. All the question papers received from the paper setters are subjected to scrutiny in order to validate its conformity with the pattern and academic regulations in force.
- 3. The printing of the question papers shall be done in a classified zone with restricted entry. The printing process shall NOT leave any trail which may eventually result in the leakage of full or part of the question paper.
- 4. All the printed question papers shall be packed in cover and sealed securely for storage under the custody of the COE.
- 5. The sealed envelopes containing Question papers should be arranged examinationwise, and Paper-Code Number-wise and kept under strict secrecy and vigil. The almirah, in which these Question papers are kept, should be sealed every time it is opened.

6. Relevant sealed envelopes containing the Question-papers should be taken out of the confidential almirah strictly in accordance with the Examination Programme. Envelopes should be counted and an entry made in the Stock Register before the envelopes are carried to the Control Room of each of the Examination Centres.

Registration of Candidates for University Examination

- 1. Call for Registration of Application
 - 1.1.A notification regarding the time schedule for issue of exam application forms from CoE to the University to the Departments and deadlines for submission of application forms to the University shall be notified.
 - 1.2.Examination forms relevant to each Faculty shall be made available in sufficient quantities in each of the Departments of Teaching. Instructions to students for filling the examination forms shall be displayed on the examination notice-board of the Departments or a printout provided. The Examination fee details shall be provided in a structured manner for theory/ practical/ viva-voce/ project-work etc. Online registration is also available in the University website.
 - 1.3.Examination forms duly filled and verified should be collected by the Departments' office along with the examination fee receipt. The forms are to be arranged exam-wise/ programme/branch-wise / semester-wise/ year-wise and submitted to the Examinations section by due date. Forms submitted after the due date shall be accepted only if due penalty/ fine applicable for late submission has been paid along with the fees.
- 2. Scrutiny of Examination Applications
 - 2.1.All application forms received from the Candidates shall be subject to thorough scrutiny for the validity/ correctness of details.
 - 2.2.It should be verified that the candidates have paid the due fee and fine/ late fee, if any, along with the application form and tally the same with the receipts in the University accounts.
 - 2.3.All valid applications are processed further for data entry into the appropriate database systems at the examination computer centre. Such data entry shall also be cross-checked and validated.
- 3. Preparation of Candidates list
- 3.1.A list of all eligible candidates for each examination shall be prepared after thorough scrutiny and accounting for attendance or other deficiencies.
- 3.2. The list shall contain the candidate's name, Register number and the Code numbers of the courses/ subjects in which he/ she has registered for appearing in the Examination.
- 3.3.The programme-wise list of candidates shall be sent to the concerned Departments of Teaching/ Study along with the printed Hall Tickets.

3.4.Programme-wise list shall also be made available at the Control Room of theory examinations centres for verification in certain exigencies/ circumstances by the Chief Superintendent.

Hall Ticket

- 1. The Hall Ticket is issued to all the eligible candidates admitted to the University examination. Any Candidate found ineligible due to valid reasons such as attendance deficiency etc. shall not be issued the Hall Ticket.
- 2. Hall Ticket shall contain information regarding the Name of the candidate, Register number, Photograph, Programme of Study, Semester/Year, Department and the Code numbers of the Subject(s) in which he/ she is registered for the current examination.
- 3. The office of the COE shall send the Hall Tickets to the concerned Departments at least 3 days before the commencement of the examinations. The Department office shall distribute it after due verification to the concerned student with due acknowledgement by signature. If any discrepancy or error is found in the Hall Ticket, it should be communicated to the concerned examination section with the recommendation of the Head of the Department.

Scheduling and Time Table of Examinations

- 1. While scheduling examinations all care should be taken to ensure that NO overlap in the subjects/ papers of examination occurs for any regular or arrear candidate.
- 2. The Examination time-table shall be cross validated for any overlap and necessary amendments made.
- 3. The scheduling of all Practical Examination shall be provided by the Head of the concerned Departments to the COE sufficiently in advance of the scheduled commencement of the examinations.
- 4. The Time-table of examinations shall be dispatched sufficiently in advance to the Departments for record and display on the Notice boards.
- 5. The Time tables shall also be posted on the University website before the commencement of the examinations.

Initial Preparations for the Theory Examination Period

- 1. The number of Candidates, day-wise, session-wise, shall be ascertained on the basis of the examination schedules, List of Candidates registered and admitted for the University examination.
- 2. On the basis of the Number of candidates and the seating capacity of halls available, the number of examination halls required should be fixed and necessary steps taken to make arrangements for the conduct of examinations.
- 3. The order of appointment of invigilators be issued and communicated to the invigilators.
- 4. A Control Room and Services Room that is considered accessible and at the same time secure (safe) are identified at the Examination centre for the entire period of examination.

- 5. Attendance sheets/ register of candidates seated in each of the examination hall are prepared based on the Programme of study and Semester/ Year of study.
- 6. Preparation of Answer-booklets Stock register at the examination centre which need to be updated after each session of examination.
- 7. Specific number of Answer-booklets shall be prepared hall-wise. The University seal shall be affixed.
- 8. Seating Charts be prepared for each room and displayed in the respective rooms.
- 9. It should be verified that sufficient quantum of Question Papers of each paper have been received in sealed envelopes. The sealed envelopes are arranged date-wise, hall-wise and paper-wise and kept inside a sealed almirah/safe/ locker. A copy of the time table is kept in the almirah/ safe with the envelopes of Question Papers. This should be available for ready reference every day. It should be seen every day before taking out the envelopes before the scheduled time of the examination.

Duties and Responsibilities of Chief Superintendents

- 1. The COE shall appoint the Chief Superintendent(s) and communicate his/her appointment order in sufficient advance of the commencement of examinations. Each Centre of examination shall have one or more Chief Superintendent(s) who shall not be 16 less than the rank of Professor, based on the number of examinees and examination halls.
- 2. The Chief Superintendent (CS) who finds it impossible to attend to the work assigned shall submit the appropriate form to the COE expressing the reasons and the details of alternative arrangement (Professor consenting to serve as Chief Superintendent) sufficiently in advance to the assigned time of duty.
- 3. The Chief Superintendent(s) shall be responsible for the proper and smooth conduct of examinations at his/her/their centre. He/ She shall take all necessary action before, during and after the examination for the smooth conduct of examination and dispatch of answer-booklets promptly to the office of the COE.
- 4. The CS shall arrange to prepare a 'Session Report' of candidates present during the examination session at his/her centre for each programme of study and each subject of examination and forward the same to the COE. A record of the usage of Answerbooklet in an examination session shall also be prepared.
- 5. The CS shall ensure satisfactory seating of candidates taking the examination and resolve any contingency issues that may arise in seating arrangement. He/ She shall ensure that all candidates are treated equally without any discrimination.
- 6. The CS shall depute the required number of Hall Superintendents, Hall Assistants to each examination hall. One HS shall be allotted for every 40 students or part thereof as far as possible.
- 7. The CS shall make sure that as far as possible, Hall Superintendents are allotted Halls at random and that no Hall Superintendents shall have prior information of the Hall to which he/ she shall be posted.
- 8. The Chief Superintendent shall briefly address all the supervisory staff prior to the commencement of examination and remind them of their duties and responsibilities.

He/ She shall particularly impress upon them the need to prevent malpractices by scrupulous observation of rules. He/ She shall also explain to the supervisory staff the procedure of reporting when a case of malpractice is detected.

- 9. The CS shall inform the Hall Superintendent and candidates personally that no additional Answer Booklet will be provided and the candidates have to write their answer only in the Answer Booklet supplied to them in the Examination by the University.
- 10. The CS shall not leave the Centre of Examinations during the period of examination without the prior permission of the COE. In case of emergency, he/ she shall make arrangements for the proper conduct of examinations by entrusting the responsibility to an eligible member of faculty, and report the arrangements made to the COE and obtain approval, before leaving the centres of examination.
- 11. The CS shall ensure that the question paper packets for each hall is sealed and not tampered with before handing it to the Hall Superintendent prior to the Examination session not earlier than half an hour fixed for the commencement of the examination in that hall.
- 12. The CS shall arrange to collect back the undistributed question papers from the examination halls at the end of the examination session along with the Answer scripts.
- 13. The CS shall attempt to resolve any serious misprint, wrong code, mistranslation, omissions or ambiguity etc, noticed or reported to him in the question papers by referring to the original scripts of the respective question paper and shall not, on his own accord or at the instance of any other person, give any clarification, unless it is a clear case of apparent misprint. Serious disparity in the question paper shall be 17 immediately reported to the COE by phone and the issue resolved according to his instructions.
- 14. The CS shall see that only candidates with valid Hall tickets issued by the University are allowed to take the examination. If a candidate has lost the Hall ticket, the Chief Superintendent shall arrange to issue ad hoc one-session conditional permission after verification of his/ her Identity and credentials in candidates list and getting an undertaking from the candidate.
- 15. When the subject/paper is wrongly indicated in the hall ticket issued, the Chief Superintendent shall give the correct subject/paper provisionally after an undertaking by the candidate. Such provisional permission is subject to the approval of the University. The student shall be made aware that incase the contention of the candidate is found to be not valid; his/her answer script may not be valued. All such cases of admissions are provisional till they are approved by the University.
- 16. The CS shall ensure that no candidate is admitted to the examination hall 30 minutes after the commencement of the examinations and no candidate is allowed to leave the examination hall within 30 minutes of the commencement of the examination. The Chief Superintendent shall arrange for the ringing of bells to mark the examination timings as per Section-11 below.
- 17. The Chief Superintendent shall take action against an examinee indulging in malpractice or attempting to use unfair means as defined in Section-13.1&13.2 below, in the examination hall or within the premises of the examination centre. All

malpractices shall be reported and shall be handled as per the guidelines given in the Examination Malpractice Handling guidelines provided in Section-13.3 below.

- 18. All the Answer-booklets confiscated in malpractice cases during the examination session should be packed separately in one bundle and marked "Malpractice Case" on the label. Such answer-booklets shall NOT be mixed with the regular answerbooklets.
- 19. The CS shall sign all relevant records such as invigilators attendance sheet, answer booklet usage in the session, Programme & subject-wise attendance summary for a session, remuneration acknowledgement sheet etc., relevant to the examination session.
- 20. In case of any major law and order problem or in the event of any external factor causing a disturbance in the Examination centre, the Examinations Office should be notified immediately by the CS. It is essential that any incident or condition which could potentially cause disturbance or discomfort to students is reported.
- 21. The Chief Superintendent shall have the power to expel an examinee from examinations on subsequent examination days; on any of the following grounds: 21.1 That the examinee created a nuisance or serious disturbance at the examination centre.

21.2 That the examinee showed a seriously aggressive attitude towards an invigilator or a member of the staff entrusted with the examination work. 21.3 If necessary, the Superintendent may get security guard assistance. Where a candidate is sent out of the examination hall, the COE shall be informed immediately.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Hall Superintendent (HS)

- 1. The Hall Superintendents are appointed by the Controller of Examinations to perform invigilation work during the specified sessions of theory examinations conducted by the university.
- 2. The Hall Superintendent (HS) shall report to the Chief Superintendent (CS) at least 45 minutes before the commencement of the examination on the first day and 30 minutes before on successive days/ sessions of examinations at the Control room. The HS should affix his signature in the duty attendance sheet of the session and wait for the allocation of the examination hall and issue of the question paper packet for the hall.
- 3. On allocation of the examination hall at the Control room, the HS shall go to the examination hall allotted at least 10 minutes before the commencement of the examination with relevant examination materials and ensure that no incriminating or any other materials are found in the hall.
- 4. All the HS must remain in the examination hall for the entire period of examination. HS are advised to keep constant vigil on the examinees in the hall.
- 5. The candidates shall be admitted into the examination hall 10 minutes before the commencement of the examination. The HS shall announce to the candidates to leave the books, papers and other reference materials etc., outside the examination hall.
- 6. The HS should read out the warning note: "You should follow the instructions printed on the hall ticket and on the facing and last sheet of the answer-booklet. You should

search your pockets, desks and tables and handover to the Hall Superintendent any paper/ book/ notes/ manuscripts/ photocopies/ electronic gadgets which you may find there and close surroundings, before receiving the question paper in hand".

- 7. HS shall ensure that any undesired materials brought by the candidates are left outside the room at his own risk.
- 8. The HS should warn the candidates about the possession of Mobile phones, digital equipments and other electronic gadgets except a simple wrist watch. The candidates should be advised to submit the same to the HS if they have inadvertently brought to the examination hall.
- 9. If any student has not brought his/ her hall ticket and Identity Card, the matter shall be brought to the notice of the CS for issuing provisional permission after the candidate gives due undertaking in exceptional circumstances after verifying the identity of the candidate and verification in the Candidate List.
- 10. The HS shall ensure that candidates are seated before the commencement of the examination. No candidate is allowed to enter the examination hall after the first 30 minutes for whatever reason.
- 11. The HS shall instruct the Hall Assistant to distribute the Answer Booklets ten minutes before the commencement of examination, only to those candidates, who are seated in the examination hall and are not to be placed on the vacant seat.
- 12. The HS shall distribute the question papers to the candidates seated in the examination hall only when the commencement bell of the examination is given (Section-11.4.2).
- 13. When candidates seek clarification on question paper that cannot be dealt with by the Hall Superintendent(s) in the Examination Hall, the HS shall immediately notify the Chief Superintendent who will endeavor to obtain and convey the necessary information to the student(s). If the matter cannot be resolved by the CS, the Examinations Office must be informed immediately to resolve the issue.
- 14. The HS shall affix his signature at the appropriate place on the first page of the Answer Booklet only after checking the identity of the candidate with photo on admit card and also ensuring that the Candidate has written the correct Register number, Programme, Subject of examination, date of exam etc in relevant fields of the First page of the Answer Booklet including proper shading of the OMR region with ink. He shall also secure the signature of the candidates in the attendance sheet(s) provided for the hall.
- 15. The HS shall mark the absentees only after the first 30 minutes of commencement of the examination. A consolidated statement of the number of candidates present, absent and the absentees register numbers shall be prepared.
- 16. The HS should NOT allow any candidate who arrives later than 30 minutes into the examination hall. No extra time shall be given at the end of the examination to account for the late arrival of those candidates permitted within the first 30 minutes.
- 17. The HS should NOT allow any candidate to leave examination hall for any purpose within the first half an hour of the commencement of the examination.

- 18. After half an hour of the commencement of the examination (the third bell), the spare Answer Booklets shall be returned to the Control Room along with the Consolidated Attendance Statement for the Hall.
- 19. The HS shall NOT accept the Answer Booklet of any examinee without ensuring that, it bears his/ her University Register number, other information asked on the title page of the Answer Booklets and that the blank pages in the Answer Booklet are crossed out by the examinee with pen.
- 20. The HS shall remain alert in the examination hall and shall attend to the requests of the candidates for supply of the graph sheets & other relevant material through the Hall Assistant.
- 21. All Hall Superintendents are expected to remain in the hall for the entire duration of the examination. In the eventuality that the HS must leave the room in order to clarify a question or other emergency, it shall be made sure that there is at least one HS present in the hall. Such absences must be kept to a minimum.
- 22. The candidate visiting the toilet should be properly escorted; however frequent visits to the toilet by the candidate should be discouraged. No student will be allowed to go to the toilet in the first half an hour and the last 30 minutes.
- 23. Whenever the warning bell sounds every half an hour, the HS shall alert the examinees about the time remaining for the examination session.
- 24. The HS shall ensure that, there is no communication among the candidates in the examination hall. The Hall Superintendent shall not allow the candidate to use unfair means in the examination hall. Smoking, chewing tobacco/ paan etc. is strictly prohibited in the examination hall while the examination is in progress.
- 25. The invigilator should report to the Chief Superintendent the cases of insolent, indecent, undisciplined and undignified behaviour of candidates.
- 26. While making rounds of the examination hall, if the HS notices that any candidate is indulging in copying or possessing a manuscript or Answer Booklet other than that of the candidate, any written material on calculator/ geometry box / scale, he/ she shall immediately take in his/ her possession the candidate's Answer Booklet, question paper, and the materials which he / she has used or intended to use for copying and immediately report to the Chief Superintendent. He should not allow the candidate to leave the examination hall till the Chief Superintendent comes to the examination hall and takes over charge.
- 27. The HS should not tamper with the Answer Booklets issued to the candidates for any reason whatsoever. Malpractices are recorded in the appropriate form along with a statement from the candidate in the presence of the Chief Superintendent. CS should ensure that if a candidate is asked to give a statement in connection with suspected or proven malpractice or use of unfair means but is unwilling to do so, she/he shall not be forced to give the statement. The fact of his/her having refused to make a statement shall be recorded by the CS in the presence of the invigilator(s) on duty, at the time of occurrence or detection of the incident or immediately thereafter.
- 28. The Hall Superintendent shall arrange the written Answer Booklets returned by the candidates at the end of the examination in proper order for each subject and programme and tally the same with the attendance of the candidates. He/ she shall be

responsible for the safe possession of all Answer Booklets until it is handed over to the Answer-booklets receiving staff in the Control Room. The receiving staff shall receive the Answer-booklets after due verification and tally with the attendance.

- 29. The HS shall not leave the Examination Centre premises until he/ she personally hands over the Answer Booklets at the Control Room to the designated staff and return the examination relevant materials of the examination session in his possession.
- 30. In the event of an emergency alert, all candidates should be instructed to stop writing, leave all papers, answer books and bags and silently leave the room. It should be made clear to students that examination conditions will continue until they are told otherwise.
- 31. When any candidate feels extremely sick/ distressed, the HS may request the Chief Superintendent to make arrangements to escort the sick candidate to the University Hospital with necessary transport arrangement with the help of the supporting staff in the control room.
- 32. Answer Booklets Confiscated due to unfair and malpractice of the candidates shall be handed over separately without mixing them with the regular answer booklets.
- 33. Any dereliction of duty on the part of the HS is recorded and the CS shall initiate necessary action as per the provisions of the examination regulations and report the same to the COE immediately.

II PHASE: DURING THE CONDUCT OF EXAMINATIONS

- 1. Appointment of Chief Superintendents and Hall Superintendents for each session of the examination and issue of instructions regarding the conduct of examinations.
- 2. Appointment of officials and other staff required for conduct of examination.
- 3. Arrangements for dispatching of all examination material to examination halls.
- 4. Arrangement for conducting examination, collection of answer papers, bundling and packing and return them safely to Examination Section.

Examination Session Timings

- 1. The timing of Examinations is between 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. for the forenoon session of theory examinations and the afternoon session of theory examination shall be between 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- 2. The schedules for practical examinations to be conducted in the specified laboratories of the departments shall be notified in the examination notice boards of the respective departments well before the examination.

Control Room & Services Room at the Examination Centre

- 1. Answer-booklets
 - 1.1.Answer-booklets shall in no case be stamped in larger quantity than required for each session/ day's use so that any misuses/ malpractices are prevented.
 - 1.2. Only University seal shall be used on all the answer.

- 1.3. The Answer booklet stock register should be made available for Inspection by the Observer or Chief Superintendent or any other authority concerned with the Examinations.
- 2. Hall Arrangements & Seating Arrangement in the Examination
 - 2.1.The Examination Hall(s) should have adequate light and ventilation. It should be clean and tidy. Sufficient furniture, *viz* desk, chairs, tables, benches should be provided to the candidates. It should be ensured that the atmosphere around the Examination Hall remains calm and quiet.
 - 2.2. The examination section shall prepare well in advance, the statement regarding seating arrangements for the candidates.
 - 2.3.Each Candidate shall be allotted a definite seat for each paper of the examination. It is preferable to allot the same seat for a candidate for his entire examination. The seat allocation for arrear candidate may vary for each of the arrear paper due to logistics and administrative constraints.
 - 2.4.Sufficient space is given between two examinees so that the neighboring candidates may not peep into each others' Answer booklets. As far as possible, two adjacent candidates shall not be writing the same subject/ paper. If necessary, a candidate of a different subject or paper shall be seated between two candidates of the same paper.
 - 2.5.Seating charts should be displayed prominently showing the position of candidates (according to their register number) in each room for each day accessible place for the examinees (inside/ outside the room) and copy of the same shall be retained for the sake of documentation and record keeping.
 - 2.6.On the first day of Examination, the Examination Hall(s) should be opened half an hour before the commencement time in order to enable candidates locate their allotted seat. On the remaining days of the Examination, the rooms should be opened 15 minutes before the commencement of examination.
 - 2.7.Special care may be taken in providing a seat to a candidate who suffers from any infectious disease so as not cause an adverse effect on the other candidates. Candidates who cannot climb staircase due to their physical condition shall be provided sitting arrangement in a Hall in the Ground floor.
- 3. Packing of Answer-booklets after the examination
 - 3.1.Immediately after every session the answer scripts of each paper collected from candidates will be arranged in the serial order of Register Number and after counting them and checking the number of answer scripts with the number of candidates appeared, the same shall be packed in covers of suitable size. The answer scripts must be packed as below:
 - 3.2. Answer books of only one subject and one examination must be packed in sealed packet(s).
 - 3.3.Several such packets of answer scripts shall be bundled and wrapped in appropriate material (cloth/ paper).

- 3.4. The answer scripts related to Malpractice/ Misconduct shall NOT be mixed or packed with the regular answer scripts. In each case of malpractice, the answer scripts shall be packed along with the confiscated incriminating material (duly signed by the examinee), report of the Hall Superintendent and statement of the errant examinee.
- 3.5.The consolidated report of the CS on all cases of reported malpractices/ misconduct shall be placed in the outer cover which shall contain all individual covers of reported malpractice cases.
- 4. Documentation of Reports of the Examination Session The following records are consolidated, packed and sent to the Office of the COE after each session/ day of the examination at the examination centre.
 - 4.1.Attendance Statements of Candidates sorted programme-wise/ subject-wise, Attendance statement of Superintendents and all Staff on Examination duty.
 - 4.2.Attendance Summary Statement programme-wise/ subject-wise be prepared and sent to the Office of COE.
 - 4.3. Answer scripts packing list for each bundle/ bag/ box.
 - 4.4.Record of the instances of Malpractice/ Misconduct and the related materials such as Answer-scripts, incriminating materials and reports of HS & CS.
- 5. Transportation of Answer-Scripts from Examination Centre to the Office of the COE.
 - 5.1.All the Answer-scripts and Reports/ Records of the examination held on the session/ day shall be packed safely and dispatched to the Office of the COE in the University vehicle securely.
 - 5.2. The person in-charge of the receipt and safe-keeping of answer scripts after the examination shall receive those bundles from examination centre(s), check for the integrity of the packing. He/ She shall then arrange to keep them safely and securely till taken up for further processing.

Misconduct and Malpractices in Examination by Candidates

In the Examination Hall the candidate shall be under the disciplinary control of the Hall Superintendent and he/ she shall obey the instructions of HS. No candidate shall use unfair means or indulge in disorderly conduct or malpractice during, or in connection with the examinations.

- 1. Misconduct: A candidate indulging in any of the following acts in the examination hall will be considered as Misconduct in the examination and booked for the same.
 - 1.1. Candidate blatantly disobeying the instructions of the Chief Superintendent (CS)/ Hall Superintendent (HS)/ Vigilance squad member or any other university appointed officials on examination duty.
 - 1.2. Candidate exhibiting insolent/ violent behaviour with the HS or other examination staff or other examinees. Unruly behavior in or near the examination hall.

- 1.3. Acts of threats, violence, creating disturbance inside/ outside the examination hall, preventing other candidates from entering the hall, misbehaviour with the supervising staff etc.
- 1.4. Bringing dangerous weapons/ articles into the examination centre/ hall on any pretext.
- 1.5. Any acts by candidates that hinder the discharge of duty by staff on examination duty or the smooth conduct of the examination.
- 1.6. Tearing off or mutilating an answer booklet or any part thereof.
- 1.7. Talking with neighbours, showing signs or signals to others in the hall/ verandah.
- 1.8. Writing the examination even after the final bell despite several calls to stop writing.
- 1.9. Causing damage to the belongings of Examiners, as an act of vengeance.
- 1.10. Arranging outside persons to terrorise the examination staff.
- 1.11. Causing damage to examination material/ records
- 1.12. Assaulting physically or attempting to attack any examination staff while being caught/ booked for any malpractice.
- 1.13. Writing filthy/ indecent/ vulgar words or sketching obscene figures etc in the answer- booklet or black board or walls or furniture at the examination centre.
- 1.14. Tampering with the particulars, including register number, written on another candidate's answer-book and/ or writing wrong particulars, including register number on one's own answer-booklet.
- 1.15. Refusing to be searched by the HS/ CS/ any other member of the Supervisory Staff, or obstructing or hindering such search in the Examination Hall, Verandah, etc.
- 2. Malpractices: A candidate indulging in any of the following acts in the examination hall will be considered as committing malpractice(s) in the examination and booked for the same:
 - 2.1. Possession of printed/ photocopy / manuscripts pertaining/ not pertaining to the day's examination, or in the form of book, pages of a book or loose sheets, or any other matter not permissible to be brought into the Examination hall.
 - 2.2. Possession of Tables, Hand books, Code books etc. which are not permitted for the day's examination.
 - 2.3. Possession of Programmable Calculators, Mobile Phones, Smart watches/ Bluetooth or Wi-Fi enabled devices, Pagers, Organizers, Digital memory pad etc. with/ without matters related to the day's examination stored in them.
 - 2.4. Possessing any other prohibited material that may be of help in writing answers or facilitate copying in the examination hall.
 - 2.5. Writing any matter, formula, definitions, sketches in any part of the candidate's body, dress, handkerchief, instrument box, calculator cover, wall, table, drawing board, Question paper, hall ticket etc. which may have relevance to the syllabus of the examination-paper concerned.

- 2.6. Exchanging of hall tickets, question papers, scales, calculator, instrument box etc. with any formula, answers, sketches, and hints related to the day's examination written on them with neighbouring candidates.
- 2.7. Showing the answer-booklet/ question paper to the neighbours or allowing them to copy.
- 2.8. Giving/ Receiving the main answer-booklet or other information carrying material to/ from neighbour for copying.
- 2.9. Copying from any printed or hand-written material or answer-booklet of another candidate.
- 2.10. Writing any appeal to the Examiner offering money or any irrelevant matters in the answer script, insertion of currency notes in answer script and giving contact address, telephone numbers etc.
- 2.11. Communicating or attempting to communicate, directly or through another person with an examiner or with an official of the University with the object of influencing him in the award of marks or making any approach or manipulation for that purpose.
- 2.12. Communicating or attempting to communicate with the staff of the University or any person connected with the conduct of examination or with any papersetter, with the object of finding out the name and address of the paper setter or finding out the questions.
- 2.13. Making any request or representation or offers any threat or inducement to Supervisor/Room Superintendent or/ and any other official or officer of the University/College in the Examination Hall or to the Examiner in the answer script.
- 2.14. Approaching directly or indirectly the teachers, Officers or Examiners or brings about undue pressure or undue influence upon them for favour in the examination or valuation.
- 2.15. Writing the register number anywhere in the answer-booklet other than in the fly slip of the Front Page.
- 2.16. Revealing identity in any form in the answer written or in any other part of the answer-booklet by the examinee at the University examination
- 2.17. Writing the examination without valid hall ticket or obtaining admission to the examination on a false representation.
- 2.18. Striking off all the pages including the correct answers written by him/ her in the answer-booklet, when being caught for any act of malpractice.
- 2.19. Inserting pre-written additional sheet(s) having matters related to the subject of the day's examination into the main answer-booklet.
- 2.20. Smuggling-in blank or written answer-booklet and forging signature of the Supervisor thereon.
- 2.21. Replacing the answer-booklet supplied in the hall by pre-prepared answerbooklet brought by the candidate himself/ herself or got from external sources.
- 2.22. Presenting to the examiner a practical or class-work-notebook which does not belong to him/ her.

- 2.23. Forging the signature of the teacher anywhere in the Practical Record book.
- 2.24. Altering the marks awarded for any exercises in the Practical Record book or boosting the total and average marks obtained in the Record book of Laboratory work.
- 2.25. Helping another candidate in answering any question orally or by transmission of material or information.
- 2.26. Giving or receiving assistance in answering the question papers to or from any other candidate/ person in the examination hall or outside during the examination hours.
- 2.27. Unauthorized communications in any form with other examinees or anyone else inside or outside the examination hall.
- 2.28. Mutual/ Mass copying by candidates in the examination hall.
- 2.29. Impersonation Arranging some other person to write the examination for the candidate (or) attempting to write the examination for somebody else.
- 2.30. Taking away with him/her the Answer script, without handing over the same to the Hall Superintendent or trying to take away or damage another candidate's answer-booklet/ script.
- 2.31. Refusing to give written statement, refusing to receive show cause notice, absenting from enquiries, running away from examination hall when caught for any malpractice, trying to destroy the evidences by tearing/ swallowing/ erasing/ throwing away the bits, materials etc.
- 2.32. Destroying or attempting to destroy a note or paper or any other material, or causing disappearance or destruction of any such material either by himself or with the assistance of any other person etc. during the examination hours.
- 2.33. Interfering with or counterfeiting of University/ Institution seal, or answer booklets or office stationery used in the examinations.
- 2.34. Making a false representation pertaining to the eligibility of the candidate to appear in the examination.
- 2.35. Committing any act(s) intending to gain an advantage or favour in the examination by misleading, deceiving or inducing the examiner or officers or authorities of the University/College.
- 2.36. Forging another person's signature in any of the examination documents.
- 2.37. Any other similar act(s) of commission and/ or omission(s) which may be considered as Malpractice by the competent authority.
- 3. Handling and Reporting Misconduct, Malpractice at Examinations

The following shall be the procedure for dealing with the cases of candidates found using or suspected of using unfair-means or involved in malpractice or misconduct in connection with the examinations:

3.1. Where a candidate is suspected of using unfair means as defined above, the HS or the centre superintendent or any other member of the supervisory staff or observer shall search the candidate and/ or his belongings. Where any written or

printed material is found in his possession as a consequence of the search, the matter is taken to the notice of the Chief Superintendent of Examination centre. The candidate's answer booklet shall be confiscated along with the material recovered.

- 3.2. The Chief Superintendent shall hold a preliminary enquiry, record the report of the Hall Superintendent, the statement of the candidate in the presence of a teacher other than the HS concerned. On sufficient grounds, the Chief Superintendent shall forthwith suspend the candidate from writing the examination and withdraw the admission ticket.
- 3.3. The Chief Superintendent shall thereafter obtain a statement/ undertaking of the student. The HS shall provide his/ her report. CS shall countersign both the report and the statement. The candidate shall be made to affix his/ her signature on the incriminating materials used in the malpractice. Answer scripts of all such cases are packed separately.
- 3.4. If the candidate refuses to give a statement, he/she should be asked to record in writing his/her refusal to give a statement. If he/she refuses to give a statement, the facts shall be noted duly witnessed by two members of the supervisory staff.
- 3.5. If the candidate refuses to hand over the incriminating material or destroys or runs away with the material (causes to disappear) the facts shall be noted duly witnessed by two members of the supervisory staff and the matter reported to the Chief Superintendent immediately.
- 3.6. In case of Misconduct/ insolent behaviour (i.e. verbal or nonverbal e.g. gestures), the Supervisor or concerned authorized person shall record the facts in writing and shall report the same to the Controller of Examinations.
- 3.7. The answer scripts, relevant question paper(s), statement of the errant examinee and the incriminating materials confiscated shall be packed in a cover and labeled. This packet in turn shall be placed in an outer cover along with the HS Report(s) of all such cases along with the consolidated report of the CS on cases of malpractices for the session. It is reiterated that these 29 Answer scripts should NOT be packed with the other Answer scripts. They should be placed in a separate packet and sealed. It is the responsibility of the Centre's Chief Superintendent to ensure that the malpractice related bundle is securely dispatched to the COE with appropriate labeling.
- 3.8. A record of such malpractice shall be maintained at the examination centre in order to prevent such candidates from appearing in subsequent examinations by pretending to have lost the Hall ticket.
- 3.9. The Office of the COE shall open only the outer cover containing the reports of HS/ CS and the inner cover/ packet containing the malpractice related answer scripts, statement of the errant-examinee and the incriminating materials confiscated shall not be opened. Based on the reports of HS/ CS, the COE shall place such cases before the Examination Malpractices Enquiry Committee (EMEC) along with all the materials and records received by him/ her.
- 3.10. Post-Examination, if the examiner at the time of assessment of answer booklet(s) suspects that there is a *prime facie* evidence that the examinee(s)

whose answer script(s) the examiner is assessing appears to have resorted to malpractice, he/ she shall forthwith stop further evaluation and return the answer script with a report prepared by him under his/ her name and signature to the Chairman of the Board in separate confidential sealed envelope marked as "Suspected Malpractice case". The Chairman shall forward the same to the COE along with his/ her remarks and signature.

- 3.11. If the suspicion arises or malpractice is suspected after script is already valued, marks shall not be entered in the OMR Sheet or marks list along with other students but enter them in a separate list and hand over to the custodian who in turn shall forward the same to the COE in a sealed cover.
- 4. Punishments for Malpractice

A candidate found guilty of Misconduct/ Malpractice at, or in connection with an examination shall be subjected to due enquiry by the Examinations Malpractices Enquiry Committee (EMEC) appointed for the purpose. If the candidate is found guilty, he/ she may be awarded one or more punishment(s) and/ or monetary penalty based on the norms of punishments prescribed in this regulations and the Committee's assessment on the nature and severity of the malpractice. This may even be in addition to the punishment that may have been already awarded by the Chief Superintendent during the examination. The punishment(s) and/ or monetary penalty shall be subject to review and/ or moderation by the Vice-Chancellor.

- 5. Examination Malpractices Enquiry Committee Constitution, Powers and Functions
 - 5.1. The EMEC constituted by the University shall be the competent authority to enquire the act of misconduct/ malpractice and recommend appropriate disciplinary action against the students using, attempting to use, aiding, abetting, instigating or allowing unfair means at the examination conducted by the University.
 - 5.2. The Examination Malpractices Enquiry Committee (EMEC) shall be appointed by the Vice-Chancellor. It shall consist of not more than five members, one of 30 whom shall be the Head of the Department of Study to which the candidate belongs. The Chairman, of the Committee shall be the Dean of the Faculty of the respective Department. There shall be one convener, who shall be an official of the University not below the rank of Deputy Controller of Examinations. The other two members (teaching faculty of the Central University of Tamil Nadu) shall be nominated by the Vice-Chancellor.
 - 5.3. The EMEC shall function as a recommendatory body and submit its recommendations in the form of a report to VC through COE. The Competent Authority (Vice-Chancellor and/ or Syndicate) may impose a fine and/or punishment on the student /person concerned declared guilty taking into account the recommendation of the Examination Malpractices Enquiry Committee (EMEC).

- 5.4. The EMEC shall have all the powers to issue notice, summon the candidate and witness, record their statements and recommend appropriate punishment/ penalty as per the norms provided in the regulations.
- 5.5.A *prime facie* case of Misconduct/ Malpractice in examinations reported to the University by the Chief Superintendent/ or Examiners shall be enquired into by the EMEC.
- 5.6. The Dean of faculty/ Head of the Department shall be the competent authority to implement appropriate disciplinary action recommended against the candidate.
- 6. The Protocol and Procedure for Enquiry of Errant Examinee/ Candidate during Examinations:
 - 6.1. The Controller of Examinations of the University/Dean/ Head of the Department, or the Officer authorized by them, as the case may be, shall inform the concerned examinee in writing of the act of malpractice alleged to have been committed by him/her, and shall ask him/her to show cause as to why the charge(s) leveled against him/her should not be held as proved and why the stipulated punishment should not be imposed.
 - 6.2. The EMEC shall meet at the required place specified in the said notice for the purpose of holding the enquiry and the said candidate shall be allowed to be present, and heard in the same. The errant examinee may appear before the EMEC on a day, time and place fixed for the meeting, with written reply/explanation to the show cause notice served on him/her therein. The examinee himself/herself only shall present his/ her case before the Committee and no other person shall be permitted to represent his case.
 - 6.3. In no case the candidate shall be allowed to be represented by a lawyer or any other person. Also no adjournment of the hearing will be granted to the candidate unless deemed necessary by the committee.
 - 6.4. After serving a show cause notice, if the implicated concerned examinee fails to appear before the Inquiry Committee on the day, time and place fixed for the meeting, the concerned examinee may be given one more opportunity to appear before the Committee in his/her defence. If even after offering two chances, the concerned examinee fails to appear before the Committee, the 31 Committee shall take decision in his/her case in his / her absentia, on the basis of the available evidence/documents, which shall be binding on the examinee concerned.
 - 6.5. The documents that are being taken into consideration or are to be relied upon for the purpose of proving charge(s) against the concerned examinee should be shown to him/ her by the EMEC, if the concerned examinee presents himself/herself before the Committee.
 - 6.6. The EMEC shall proceed to conduct a summary enquiry by providing a fair and reasonable opportunity to the student. On conclusion of the enquiry the committee shall record its findings about the commission of guilt by the student or otherwise prepare a report along with its recommendations.

- 6.7. The EMEC should follow the above procedure in the spirit of the principles of natural justice in dealing with the cases of malpractice.
- 6.8. The EMEC shall submit its report to the COE along with its recommendations regarding punishment and quantum of penalty if any to be imposed upon the errant examinee or otherwise. The Committee shall follow the norms for award of punishment in Section 13.7 hereunder as far as possible.
- 6.9. Except the punishment and action taken by the Chief Superintendent/ Examiner on the examination day, no other penalty may be imposed on a candidate except after an enquiry held, as far as may be, in the manner hereinafter provided.
- 6.10. The Controller of Examinations in turn shall, place the report before the Vice-Chancellor/the Executive council which shall consider and impose the penalty as recommended by the Malpractices Enquiry Committee or moderate the punishment or exonerate the candidate, as the case may be.
- 7. Malpractices/ Misconduct- Some general policies
 - 7.1. If the Vice-Chancellor receives complaints to the effect that the integrity of a University examination has been violated at the examination centre as a consequence of mass copying or other use of unfair-means, he may after enquiry, order re-examination in one or more papers.
 - 7.2.Ordinarily, the University shall conclude the issues/ matters related to malpractices and the processes thereof within a period of three months or in any case before the commencement of the next examination.
 - 7.3. The Vice-Chancellor shall have the power at any time to institute an enquiry and to punish such malpractice/ misconduct or breach of rules by exclusion of such student(s) from any University examination or from any University programme in the University Department or from any Convocation for the purpose of conferring degree either permanently or for a specified period, or by cancellation of the result of the student in the University examination for which the student appeared or by deprivation of any University Scholarship held by him/her or by cancellation of the award of any University prize or medal to him/ her or by imposition of fine or in multiple of the aforesaid ways within a period of six months.
 - 7.4.Examination Result(s) of the concerned examinee(s)involved in such misconduct/ malpractice cases shall be withheld till the Competent Authority arrives at a final decision in the matter and the concerned examinee(s) and the Department to which he/she belongs to, shall be informed accordingly.

III PHASE: AFTER THE CONDUCT OF EXAMINATIONS

- 1. Preservation and disposal of valued answer scripts at least for six months after the announcement of results.
- 2. Arrangement for preparation and distribution of marks cards and other certificates to the candidates.

- 3. Preparation of the lists of lapses and irregularities committed by the evaluators and others and forwarding the list to the competent authorities for consideration and necessary action.
- 4. Arrange for photo-copy/re-evaluation of valued answer-booklets requested by the candidates on prescribed application form with due fees.

1. Pre-Evaluation Processing of Theory Answer scripts

1.1.On the day of commencement of Central Valuation, the Identity masked Answerscript packets shall be transferred to Valuation Centre and Custody Transfer to Chairman of the respective BoE. In the case of the valuation done by the course teacher himself/herself, he/she has to collect the answer scripts from the examination section after verifying the number of papers.

2. Central Evaluation of Theory Answer scripts

- 2.1.A period of Central valuation of answer scripts is finalized by the COE in consultation with the respective Chairman of the Board of Examiners.
- 2.2. The shortlisted examiners are issued appointment order to evaluate the answerscripts of the University examination along with a form in which they shall express their acceptance/ decline of the offer within the stipulated period.
- 2.3.All theory answer scripts shall be sent to the central valuation centers (CVC) safely.
 - 2.3.1.Only examiners duly appointed by COE/ the Chairman, Board of Examiners, approved by the University should be assigned valuation work and none else.
 - 2.3.2.The Chairman of the Board shall ensure that the Registers pertaining to issuing of Answer-scripts to the Examiners, receiving of assessed answer-scripts from the Examiner are maintained properly.
 - 2.3.3.Only one packet of answer-scripts shall be given for valuation, one after another i.e., after completing the Valuation of answer scripts of the previous packets. Only 40-60 answer-scripts should be issued for evaluation to each examiner in a day.
 - 2.3.4. The Chairman of the Board shall remind the examiners to ensure that the papers are valued strictly in accordance with the scheme of valuation, if any, and that the papers are not valued in a hurry.

3. Appointment, Duties and Responsibility of Examiners

- 3.1. The COE shall appoint examiners for each examination from among the list of eligible examiners approved by the Vice-Chancellor depending upon the need in each paper. Persons whose names are not in the approved list shall not be appointed. However, under special circumstances after obtaining the permission of the Vice-Chancellor, exceptions may be made. All Examiners will be required to submit their acceptance of the offer or otherwise.
- 3.2. The Internal examiners shall normally not decline the assignment of examination work except in extraordinary situations since examination duty is treated as an essential service by the University.

- 3.3.The external examiners shall intimate their acceptance or otherwise as soon as they receive the communication from the University or in the prescribed time limit. The acceptance of the offer may also be informed by email to the COE. If no communication is received within the prescribed time limit, it will be presumed that the assignment is not accepted by the examiner.
- 3.4.If by chance, a subject has been assigned wrongly to the examiner, he shall indicate the same and decline the offer. He shall NOT accept an offer that is NOT related to his subject/ expertise/ knowledge domain.
- 3.5.The Examiners shall maintain strict secrecy regarding their appointment and other work allotted in connection with the examinations.
- 3.6.On the day of commencement of valuation, if applicable sufficient time shall be utilized for discussion with regard to filling of OMR marks sheet and shading and other related valuation guidelines and regulations concerning the University examination.
- 3.7.The Examiners shall NOT evaluate the answer scripts NOT related to his/ her subjects.
- 3.8. The Examiners have to count the number of answer scripts in the packet and ensure that it tallies with the claim on the Packet. The Examiners must ensure that Dummy Number printed on the answer script and OMR sheet are the same and shall not value the packets in case of any discrepancy. Discrepancies, if any, should be brought to the notice of the Chairman, BoE immediately.
- 3.9. The examiners shall value the scripts strictly in accordance with the scheme of valuation given by the paper setters, if any.
- 3.10. The examiner shall value all the answers and take into account the marks of only the maximum required or permitted questions by considering the marks awarded to the questions advantageous to the candidate and round off those not considered.
- 3.11. The examiners shall write 'ZERO' wherever answers do not deserve any marks. The examiner shall total up the marks.
- 3.12. The examiner shall ensure that no answer or part of any answer is left out in valuation. The examiners should read the answer script in detail and evaluate the scripts.
- 3.13. The marks awarded for each question shall be entered in the appropriate row & column on the mark-table on the Front Page of the Answer-booklet. The total marks shall be entered both in figures and words with his/ her signature.
- 3.14. The examiner shall not take the answer scripts out of the valuation center under any circumstances.
- 3.15. If the examiner during valuation of the scripts suspects any case of malpractice, he/she shall immediately report it to the Chairman of BoE through the Custodian. He/she shall submit the suspected script after valuing it fully along with his/her report to the Chairman of BoE, who in turn shall forward the same to the COE. He/she shall enter such references in the marks list against the register number / code number.
- 3.16. The examiner shall report to the COE, cases of any candidates of other person on his/ her behalf approaching him/ her for any favor or writing letters to him/her

indicating the name of the person, the register number/ code number of the candidate, subject/paper etc.

- 3.17. The examiners shall value not less than 40 scripts if there are no Parts and 60 scripts if only a Part (Part-A/ Part-B etc.) of the answer-booklet is to be valued.
- 3.18. The examiner shall prepare marks lists in the prescribed proforma provided for the purpose. The Examiners should have full knowledge of shading and filling of OMR marks sheets.
- 3.19. Black Ball point pen shall be used preferably for shading of OMR marks sheet. Sufficient care should be taken while shading on the OMR mark-sheets since any mistakes made in the OMR marks-sheet at the time of shading cannot be rectified later.

Post-Evaluation Data Processing/ Tabulation

- 1. There shall be restricted/ classified zones within the office of COE with adequate security measures to ensure that no unauthorized person has access to sensitive materials or information that would affect the outcome of examination process. Only authorized persons shall have access to these areas.
- 2. All the data processing relevant to the marks shall be done in these restricted/ classified zones.
- 3. Marks Tabulation and Validation
- 4. The results of each of the examinations shall be tabulated in the Examination Database maintained on well secured Computer server with restricted access. The persons responsible for such activity may be referred to as Marks Tabulators.
- Marks-Tabulator(s) shall be appointed by COE with the approval of Vice-Chancellor. Marks-Tabulator(s) shall be staff members of the University working in the office of COE. They shall possess sufficient computer programming and database (SQL & RDBMS) skill and experience.
- 6. The marks tabulated by the Marks-Tabulator shall be scrutinized and validated by a Validator who shall be appointed by the COE. Validator(s) shall be drawn from the teaching faculty of the University.
- 7. The Validator shall:
 - Check the posting made by the Marks-tabulators from the original statement submitted by the examiner
 - Check totals/aggregates posted by Marks-tabulator;
 - Check the implementation of the resolutions of the Passing BoE;
 - Check the result prepared by the Marks-Tabulator for failures, honors such as Distinction, Pass, Fail, and Absentees etc.
 - Validate the Grades, GPA and CGPA etc. computed on the basis of the marks obtained by the candidates in examination.
 - Any other discrepancy/ errata/ manipulation/ inconsistency etc. that might have crept into the marks database.

Passing Board of Examiners Meeting

- 1. General Guideline
 - 1.1.The Passing Board shall meet at within the University campus on the assigned day with select members as appointed by COE from the respective Board of Examiners.
 - 1.2. The members shall consider any moderation issues arising out of wrong/ outofsyllabus questions/ unsolvable problems, etc. and the amount of marks to be awarded to the candidates affected by such issues.
 - 1.3. The members shall review the shortfall in marks of failed candidates for each subject and arrive at the criteria for awarding grace marks in such a manner that marginally failed candidates may clear the course/subject. The award of grace marks shall be subject to the conditions given in Section.
- 2. Award of Grace Mark/ Moderation of Marks
 - 2.1. Moderation of marks may be carried out in special/ unique circumstances such as, out-of-syllabus question, wrong question etc., so as to benefit all the candidates in a paper/ subject of the examination irrespective of the marks secured by candidates individually.
 - 2.2. The moderation of marks may be done on the basis of the representation by the examinees concerned or on the basis of the unanimous decision of the 40 Board of Examiners concerned for valid reasons that have to be substantiated in the minutes of the BoE meeting.
 - 2.3. Grace marks to the extent of 1% of the aggregate/ total marks prescribed for an examination will be awarded to a candidate failing in not more than 2 theory papers, as the case may be in which minimum pass marks have been prescribed; provided the candidate passes the examination by the award of such Grace marks. Such grace marks shall be split in a manner that may serve to pass both the papers wherever applicable.
 - 2.4. If 1% of the aggregate marks work out in fraction, the same will be raised to the next whole number. For example, if the maximum aggregate marks prescribed for the examination are 750, grace marks to the extent of 8 will be awarded to the candidate.
 - 2.5. No grace marks shall be awarded in the case of failure in Practical examination(s).
 - 2.6. If a candidate who passes in all subjects and heads of passing in the examination without the benefit of any grace marks but misses Distinction or First Division by marks less than 1% his/ her aggregate in the final examination, such grace marks shall be awarded to him/ her so as to entitle him for the respective higher division, as the case may be. Such marks shall be added to the paper in which he/ she gets the least marks in the final. The marks entered in the marks-sheet will be inclusive of such grace marks and it will not be shown separately.
 - 2.7. The Grace marks will be awarded only, if candidate appears in all the papers prescribed for the examination in case of regular candidates or all the failed

papers in case of candidates writing supplementary examinations. Absence of a candidate in any paper(s) that he or she has registered for the examination will make him ineligible for grace marks.

- 2.8. The grace marks of Candidate(s) who have completed their period of study and yet could not clear one or more papers shall be subjected to a maximum of 2% of the aggregate of the maximum marks in which he/ she has altogether appeared in that examination. For example, if the aggregate marks of papers written by him are 300, the maximum eligible grace shall not exceed 6 marks, which may be split according to the need.
- 2.9. While awarding grace marks for more than one paper/ subject, the papers/ subjects of passing shall be selected for award of grace marks in the order of decreasing (maximum => minimum) grace marks required for obtaining the required marks for passing so as to give maximum benefit for the candidate.
- 2.10. Grace marks shall be awarded only to the required extent to help the candidate pass the paper/subject and not more even if the candidate has a higher limit of eligible grace marks in that examination.
- 2.11. In case of professional degree/ diploma programs, the grace marks awarded shall be in concurrence with the rules and guidelines, if any, of professional statutory bodies at the All India level such as AICTE, MCI, DCI, PCI, Bar Council, etc.

Result Finalization and Publication

The results of the concerned examinations shall ordinarily be declared within 15 days of the last examination and the University shall dispatch the result along with the statement of marks and passing certificates (wherever necessary) to the Departments for distributing the same to the concerned students. The results shall be published on the University website. 21.1 Results Withheld and their Declaration.

- 1. If there is discrepancy in the subjects mentioned in the examination form and actual examination given by the candidate, the results of such examinee will be withheld and will be declared after due confirmation of the term that he/she had kept with approval of the Chairman, BoE &Controller of Examination.
- 2. The results of those candidates held in reserve for malpractice and/or lapse in the examination will be declared as per the resolution passed by the Examination Malpractice Enquiry Committee.
- 3. The result of the candidate writing wrong subject in the examination form and actually appearing for the different subject shall be withheld. The result of such candidate will be declared after confirming from the Chairman of BoE regarding the subject and payment of a prescribed fine.
- 4. The results reserved for dues payable to University and/or College shall be declared on confirmation of payment of the said dues.

Grievances in Examinations

- 1. The examination system of the University shall also provide for mechanisms to redress/ resolve any reasonable and valid issue(s) of grievances and provide relief to the concerned Candidates. All such matters shall be resolved subject to the University rules and regulations.
- 2. Photocopy of Answer-script(s)
 - 2.1.After declaration of the examination results with marks, if any candidate wishes to apply for Photocopy/ photocopies of theory answer-scripts (subject to a maximum of 3 scripts/ candidate), he/she shall apply to the COE by paying the prescribed fees notified by the University from time to time within 10 days from the date of announcement of results of the respective course.
- 3. Re-evaluation
 - 3.1.Re-evaluation is applicable only for theory papers and shall not be entertained for other components such as practical/ Thesis/ Dissertation etc.
 - 3.2.Every application for revaluation should be submitted by the candidate in the prescribed form along with the prescribed fee so as to be received by the Controller of Examinations within TWO WEEKS of obtaining the photocopy of the answer-script.
 - 3.3.Re-evaluation of answer-scripts can be sought only with at least one affirmation by a teacher relevant to the subject as mentioned below and that any of the criteria below are satisfied:
 - Finds that any answer(s) to question(s) that has/ have not been evaluated
 - Finds that the answer-script valuation in full or part is not justified and there is reasonable ground for reevaluation.
 - 3.4.The application for revaluation shall be submitted to the Controller of Examinations through the HOD of the concerned Department of study.
 - 3.5.The COE shall arrange for re-evaluation of such answer-scripts by an examiner from the approved panel of examiners. If there is a difference of more than 25% of maximum marks between the first valuation and Re-evaluation, the average of the original and re-evaluated marks shall be awarded to the candidate. Otherwise the candidate is entitled to the marks advantageous to him/ her.
 - 3.6. The marks awarded by the original examiner if marked on the answer scripts shall be concealed from the answer script and sent for revaluation.
 - 3.7.In cases of Re-evaluation(s), the University may provide two Answer-scripts of candidates who have secured high marks in the concerned paper/ subject to serve as bench-mark for re-evaluation.
- 4. In all cases of Re-evaluation, Fees once paid will not be refunded. Applications which are late and not in the prescribed form and which are found defective in any respect will not be entertained and will be summarily rejected without notice. In the case of applications which are found in order, the University shall take steps to get the answer-scripts reevaluated.
- 5. The result of the revaluation shall ordinarily be made known to the student through the Head of the Department within 2 months of the last date of receipt of applications

by the Office of the Controller of Examinations. No interim enquiries of any kind will be entertained in this regard. It may be noted that the University can never set in any case a time limit for the issue of the results of revaluation. The University will also therefore, not be liable for loss of any kind sustained by candidates concerned on account of the delay, if any, in issuing the results of revaluation.

- 6. Issue of Duplicate Hall Ticket/ Mark Statement/ Transcripts/ Consolidated Marks Statements/ Degree Certificate may be done after due application process with the necessary fees/ fine.
- 7. Name Change of the Candidate during study
 - 7.1.A student who is currently enrolled may change or alter his/ her full, legal name on the permanent academic record by presenting the appropriate application along with the necessary supporting documentary evidence to the COE.
 - 7.2. The change of name in the records of the university may be sanctioned on any one of the grounds such as Marriage (Ladies), Adoption, Assuming a new name by any person which has been notified by the order of the Central Govt. or a State Govt.
 - 7.3.A female student who wishes to discontinue the use of her married name and resume use of her maiden name, or another name, shall present a copy of the divorce decree, or signed court order, showing court restoration of the maiden or other name.
 - 7.4.No change in his/her name will be made in the past records of the University.
 - 7.5.Students should send this application through the Head of the Department and Dean of the Faculty.
 - 7.6. The candidate should apply along with the attested copy of the 12th Standard and/or last eligible examination (on which candidate's eligibility is finalized).
 - 7.7.Documents required for change in name are as follows and must accompany the application for change in name:
 - Govt. Gazette (Original copy)
 - Affidavit (Ladies) (Original copy)
 - Marriage Certificate (Ladies) (Original copy)
 - Photocopy of the Statement of Marks of last examination.
 - 7.8.After the necessary changes in permanent documents, corrected copy/ copies of the statement(s) of the marks and other certificates shall be issued on the payment of the fees applicable at that time.
- 8. Error Correction in Name
 - 8.1.To correct the spelling or the proper sequence of the name which are not due to data entry errors, the student shall present a copy of his/ her birth certificate/ Secondary School Certificate/ other Government record such as Passport.
 - 8.2. Any errors in the Name of candidates printed in the Marks statement/ Certificate/ Hall Ticket may be brought to the notice of COE for necessary correction with appropriate evidence.

Miscellaneous

- 1. Internal Assessment Marks
 - 1.1.The Internal Assessment marks shall be awarded as per the academic regulations of the individual programme.
 - 1.2. The Internal Assessment marks shall be submitted to the Controller of Examinations at the end of each academic session before the commencement of the University Examinations in the prescribed form provided by the COE.
- 2. Post-evaluation Custody and Disposal of Answer-scripts
 - 2.1. The evaluated Answer-scripts shall be preserved safely for a period of at least six months from the date of publication of results in their original packets bundled together. The bundles are to be stacked in racks with proper ventilation and free from termites/ pests. The answer-book storage area to be fumigated and aired periodically so that they are preserved without any damage.
 - 2.2.Appropriate staff shall be assigned the responsibility of safe-keeping of the answer-scripts till they are approved by the VC for safe disposal.
 - 2.3.Records of all such bundles shall be maintained in appropriate computer database/ Register for easy retrieval at a later stage if necessary. Any retrieval 44 and return of the answer-script(s) shall also be documented with date and time in the Register/ database.
 - 2.4.Answer-scripts shall be made available from the storage area for purposes such as Photocopying/ Re-totaling/ Re-evaluation etc. Such transactions shall be recorded.
 - 2.5.The details of all Answer-scripts so shredded/ destroyed/ disposed shall be documented and certified by the COE.

Scribes for Disabled Candidates

The facility of Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant may be allowed to any person who has disability of 40% of more if so desired by the person. Such candidates may be given compensatory time of one hour for examination of 3 hours duration.

Examination Audit

- 1. Efforts shall be made to audit critical processes in the entire examination system by appropriate/ designated team of academicians drawn from the senior faculty of University and other sister State/Central Universities.
- 2. Efforts shall be made to audit the evaluation of theory answer scripts by examiners on a regular basis. Answer-scripts awarded with high, average and low marks shall be randomly sampled for such process. The marks shall be masked before the auditing, which shall be carried out by external examiners who shall not be from the same institute as the original examiner evaluating the Answer-scripts.

Practical/ Clinical/ Viva-voce Examinations

1. The University shall notify the examination schedule of conduct of Practical/ vivavoce examinations at least two weeks prior to the Practical examinations. Detailed time table of the Practical examinations, subject wise, batch wise etc shall be announced by the Chairman, BoE, wherever necessary.

- 2. The University shall appoint Examiners (preferably Internal) for Practical examinations for different courses/ subjects from the panel of examiners submitted by the respective Boards of studies. Whenever Internal Examiners are appointed, all efforts should be 38 made to appoint the faculty who handled the practical classes during the respective academic period. When several teachers are involved in handling the classes, they shall be appointed by rotation. The HOD of the concerned department/ Chairman of BoE shall be responsible for the conduct of the practical/ viva-voce examination(s) in the respective departments.
- 3. The required number of answer booklets and other material shall be demanded and obtained from the University by the Chairman, BoE/ HOD well in time for practical examinations.
- 4. Candidates shall be in possession of Hall Tickets on all the days of Practical examinations. In the event of non possession or loss of Hall Tickets the HOD is empowered to permit the Candidate to appear in the examination in exceptional circumstances and after verifying the identity of the candidate.
- 5. Practical answer scripts after the practical examination shall be packed in separate covers and sent to the University after completion of all the Practical examinations.
- 6. Marks allotted by the examiners for the practical and viva-voce examination shall be entered in words and figures on prescribed format and enclosed in covers prescribed for the same.

Remuneration/ Honorarium/ Allowances

- 1. Remuneration/ Honorarium/Allowances etc., shall be paid to the Chairman and the Members of the BoE (if permissible), Paper-setters, Examiners, Chief Superintendents, Hall Superintendents, Observers and others who have put in work in connection with the conduct of examinations, as per the rates fixed by the University authorities from time to time., after completion of the assigned duties and after necessary documentation, at the University, along with TA/DA, remuneration for valuation, as applicable.
- 2. Remuneration for the appointed staff other than examiners shall be consolidated and claimed from the University on the prescribed form at approved rates.
- 3. In cases of practical/ viva-voce examinations, the Examiners shall submit their remuneration claims in appropriate Form along with the marks-sheets, Answer-scripts, attendance statement of candidates to the COE.
- 4. The claims of assistants at practical/ viva-voce examinations shall be prepared by the assistants themselves on separate prescribed Form, countersigned by the examiners concerned and the Chairman of the BoE.

Works related to Convocation are as under:

- 1. Inviting applications for award of Degrees.
- 2. Preparation of Eligibility lists for convocation, faculty wise and year wise.

- 3. Receipt and scrutiny of applications for conferring degree in person and *in absentia* at the Convocation.
- 4. Preparation of Presentation lists, faculty wise, year wise, in person and *in absentia* separately.
- 5. Preparation of lists of Prize winners, and medal winners.
- 6. Print the lists of students attending the convocation and preserving the bound volume of such list.
- 7. Writing/printing of degree certificates/Rank certificate/prize or medal certificate, Ph.D. certificate.
- 8. Intimating the candidates about the date and venue of convocation.
- 9. Distribution of admission cards and parent passes to candidates for the convocation.
- 10. Seating arrangements in the convocation hall.
- 11. Distribution of Degree Certificates.

Powers and Functions of the Controller of Examinations (COE)

- 1. The Controller of Examinations shall be the principal officer-in-charge of the conduct of examinations of the university and declaration of the results. He shall be a full-time salaried officer of the university and shall work directly under the direction and control of the Vice-Chancellor.
- 2. The Controller shall be responsible for all the work related to examinations.
- 3. The Controller of Examinations shall be responsible for maintenance of records, maintenance of marks lists and valued answer scripts. The valued answer scripts shall be preserved for six months after the announcement of results. He shall also be responsible for safe disposal/ destruction of the answer-scripts thereafter through tenders except the scripts regarding which court cases are pending.
- 4. He/ She shall draw up and notify a Calendar of events for various examinations in the beginning of each Academic year. It is incumbent on the part of the Controller of Examinations to ensure adherence to the Calendar of events.
- 5. He/ She shall arrange for the tabulation and announcement of results expeditiously and arrange for the distribution of Marks statements and Certificates to the department.
- 6. He/ She shall arrange to prepare the eligibility list of candidates and presentation lists for convocation and arrange to write/print the distribution of the Degree Certificates to be conferred at the convocation.
- 7. He/ She shall arrange to prepare the merit list and rank list and list of prize winners and medal winners list.
- 8. He/ She shall be responsible for the proper custody and maintenance of marks registers and other valuable and permanent records of the section.
- 9. He/ She shall pass the DA and TA bills and other remuneration bills of the staff drafted for the examination work subject to rules.
- 10. He/ She shall arrange for the photocopy of valued answer scripts, re- totaling in case of any reported totaling mistakes, re-valuation, redress the grievances of students.

- 11. He/ She shall arrange to make enquiries into all types of malpractices committed during examination, valuation, revaluation and processing of results etc. through appropriate committees.
- 12. The Controller of Examinations shall take disciplinary action wherever necessary against the candidates, paper setters, examiners, scrutinizers, or any other persons connected with examinations and found guilty of malpractices in relation to the examinations.
- 13. The Controller of Examinations shall keep a record of those persons who have committed lapses in discharging the examination related responsibilities entrusted to them and refer them to the Board of University Examinations for appropriate action.
- 14. He/ She shall arrange for printing of question papers and supply them to the Examination centre in accordance with the scheme laid down by the Board of University Examinations.
- 15. He/ She shall issue marks statement, duplicate marks statement, consolidated marks statement, Transcripts, rank certificates, duplicate Degree Certificates.
- 16. He/ She may make any structural changes in the examination administration as and when required
- 17. He/ She shall exercise all these powers subject to the general control and supervision of the Vice-Chancellor.

Manual for (Part-A) Online Examination

Part-A of CIA and end semester examination consists of twenty multiple choice questions and it is conducted as an online examination. The duration of the online examination is 30 minutes for 20 questions and students write the online examination before the theory examination. The software used to conduct online examination is developed in JSP(Java Server Page) with SQL Server as back end. The examination is conducted in the campus in anyone of the computer laboratories. A schedule is prepared to provide access to all the students.

The students' login to online exam server using their register number as their user name and date of birth as password in an Internet browser. The course(s) for which the examination is conducted on that day are displayed and once the correct course is chosen to write the examination the software prompts the user to enter another password which set by the online examiners to start the exam. The page displays questions one at a time, the user has the ability to move forward or backward during the exam. Once the 20 questions are answered the user can complete the test by clicking the appropriate button. Then the marks obtained are displayed to the user. Once the complete test button is clicked the user cannot go back to exam. The time countdown is also displayed during the examination. Once the time is out the test is completed automatically even though the user didn't do it. If the user was not able to complete the exam due to some technical problems then the online examiner may enable the re-login facility for that particular student so that the student can take the exam again.

The online examiners can monitor the student's exam process and once all the students of a class have completed the exam for a particular subject, the mark statement is printed and students cross check the mark and put their signature. The online examiner and faculty who is handling the course also attest the mark statement. Then the mark statement is submitted to examination section.

The MCQ questions to be loaded in online exam server are collected at the beginning of the semester from the faculty who is handling the course in appropriate format as a Microsoft Excel file. A total of 300 questions with 60 questions per unit are collected. The questions must a minimum of 4 options and maximum of 6 options. The correct answer is also included after the 6th option. The online examiner is responsible for uploading the questions onto the server and setting up the examination.

The questions from each unit are given equal weighting. For example 4 questions each unit is selected to display a total of 20 questions. While generating the question paper for the student, the software chooses 4 random questions from each unit for each student. That way no two students will get the same set of twenty questions. When a question is repeated for another student its options gets shuffled. So the faculty are advised to avoid options like "all of the above", "none of the above" or "both a & b" as it may end up as a first option.