

MUHIMBILI UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH AND ALLIED SCIENCES



MUHAS GUIDELINES FOR EXAMINATION MODERATORS

JULY 2021

1. INTRODUCTION

The Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS) is responsible for the quality of education it offers and for the academic standards of its degree awards. The University appoints Moderators for Examinations based on nominations received from Schools and Institutes at the University. The moderation of the examination is intended to help staff maintain national and international comparable standards in undergraduate and postgraduate programs. The system of engaging Examination Moderators and External Examiners to moderate the conduct and assessment of University Examinations is reckoned to have started in the 19th century when the Durham University reached an agreement with the University of Oxford for it to provide examiners to meet the required demand and to benchmark the quality of its academic awards. Subsequently, newly created universities in Great Britain and Ireland adopted the practice in the later 19th and 20th century.

This practice was adapted in other universities in Europe and America. Currently, this tradition is well established in most universities in the world. Initially, External Examiners were responsible for providing an independent mark for the assessed work of an individual candidate. This focus has changed over time and the main role of an External Examiner nowadays is to scrutinize and evaluate a body of evidence for cohorts of students and provide an overall judgment regarding their performance as well as the quality and standard of the program.

Most universities in Africa have an external examinership system in place. Universities in East Africa and certainly in Tanzania engage External Examiners and Examination moderators for moderation of their student assessment practices. This system has been in place at MUHAS since the time of the predecessor institutions (Faculty of Medicine and the Muhimbili University College of Health Sciences) under the University of Dar es Salaam. Currently there no guidelines for appointment and roles of Examination Moderators at MUHAS. Therefore, these Guidelines for Examination Moderators are intended to provide guidance on the various key issues related to moderation of examinations at MUHAS. Furthermore,

2. PURPOSE

The guidelines seek to provide direction, advice and information relating to the appointment, roles, duties, rights and responsibilities of Examination Moderators for courses taught in the MUHAS undergraduate and postgraduate academic programs. The guidelines should be made available to all Examination Moderators, all Heads of academic Departments, Quality Assurance and Examination Officers at the school level and all academic staff with the responsibility for the conduct of examinations.

3. PROCEDURES FOR NOMINATION AND APPOINTMENT OF EXAMINATION MODERATORS

3.1 Eligibility

Examination Moderator must be:

3.1.1 Senior University Faculty of the academic rank of Senior Lecturer and above

3.1.2 External to the department (from the same school or other schools at the University)

3.1.3 Expert in the course/subject to be examined or related course/subject or knowledgeable on the course/subject examined

3.1.4 Active researchers and other academic merits as it may be determined by Deputy Vice-Chancellor responsible for Academic, Research and Consultancy (DVC ARC)

3.2 Nomination

3.2.1 At the beginning of every academic year, the DVC-ARC shall direct the Deans of Schools and Directors of Academic Institutes to seek from their respective heads of academic departments, nominations for persons to act as Examination Moderators in that academic year.

- 3.2.2 The Head of Department shall seek recommendations for nominations through a Departmental academic staff meeting. The Head of Department may consult with the person proposed for nomination to seek her/his consent to be nominated and determine her/his availability to act as Examination Moderator.
- 3.2.3 The Head of Department shall recommend persons nominated for appointment as Examination Moderator to the Dean/Director of the respective School/Institute when it is known that the external examiner will not be available in the particular examination or academic year.
- 3.2.4 Names of proposed Examination Moderators shall be discussed by the School/Institute Boards and recommendations submitted to DVC-ARC who shall subsequently submit to Senate for approval.

3.3 Appointment

- 3.3.1 The appointment of Examination Moderators shall be done by the University Senate, following the recommendations by the School/Academic Institute Board and the Senate Undergraduate Education Committee or the Senate Higher Degrees Committee
- 3.3.2 Following appointment, the Examination Moderators shall be notified in writing by the office of DVC-ARC regarding their appointment. This notification shall also include a formal written agreement between the University and the Examination Moderator
- 3.3.3 The written agreement shall include the following:
- a. Dates for the beginning and end of the appointment
 - b. Role(s), responsibilities and rights of the Examination Moderator as described in section 5
 - c. Duties to be undertaken including the meetings to be attended
 - d. Information to be included in the Examination moderator's report
- 3.3.4 The Examination Moderator shall be required to sign and return a copy of the agreement to signify acceptance of the appointment and the terms and conditions outlined in it. This copy shall be retained in the office of DVC-ARC throughout the tenure of the Examination Moderator.

4. DURATION OF EXAMINATION MODERATION

4.1 Generally, the tenure of appointed Examination Moderator for MUHAS shall be two semesters (one year). Renewal may be done for three consecutive years.

5. ROLES/RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHTS

5.1 Roles/responsibilities

The main purpose of inviting moderators from outside the department is to appraise the whole process of quality assurance in teaching and learning as well as assessment and enhance adherence to the standards expected of universities and to ensure that students are assessed rigorously and fairly in the examination process. In undergraduate and postgraduate examinations, Examination Moderator typically (or specifically) see and have to;

- a. Approve draft examination questions before the papers are set
- b. Review the marks and the work of at least a sample of candidates.
- c. Often adjudicate when candidates are on borderlines or when internal examiners have disagreed about a candidate's marks.
- d. Carry out their duties in the context of their expertise and knowledge of the academic standards of other Higher Education Institutions. Comment on draft University Examination papers and appropriateness of the questions
- e. Ensure assessment information is clearly articulated and can be understood by students
- f. Confirm that all forms of assessment and the assessment process are properly designed and applied, and are supportive of achieving the intended learning outcomes
- g. Confirm the assessment process is appropriate, fair, consistent and equitable to all students concerned in line with the University policies and procedures
- h. Confirm standards and student's performance are comparable with those of other Higher Education Institutions

- i. Report on the structure, content, academic standards and teaching of programs

5.2 Rights

Examination Moderator appointed to examine at MUHAS shall have the following rights:

- a. To be notified of the appointment by the Department and course(s) for which they will have a responsibility to examine
- b. To be given a copy of the MUHAS Guidelines for Examination Moderator
- c. To access any work submitted for assessment of any course for which she or he has examining responsibility
- d. To request specific items of student work if they deem there is a problem with a module or program
- e. To receive feedback on their reports
- f. To report in confidence, directly to the Dean/Director, DVC-ARC or Vice-Chancellor, if they are very concerned about academic matters of particular importance relating to assessment, standards or procedures

6. EXAMINATION MODERATOR'S REPORT

6.1 Report writing

Soon after completion of the assessment, each Examination Moderator shall discuss her/his report with the Head of Department, incorporate any clarifications made and forward it to the DVC-ARC with copies to the Vice-Chancellor and Dean/Director of the School/Institute under confidential cover. The Examination Moderator's report should not identify any student or member of staff by use of any individual identifier like registration number or ID number. The report should be written by filling the MUHAS Examination Moderator report form in Appendix 2 and should cover the following key aspects:

6.1.1 Standard of written examination

Examination papers shall be made available to the appointed Examination Moderator for quality checks of the examination. The Examination Moderator shall review and comment on the structure of the examination, clarity of instructions, appropriateness of the questions for the level of training and overall quality of the examination.

6.1.2 Organization of examination

Comments regarding arrangements of any other types of summative assessment; arrangements for assessing candidates' scripts and dissertations, set up of practical/clinical examination; arrangements for viva voce; discussion of the assessment process and outcome with staff shall be included in the Examination Moderator report.

6.1.3 Coverage of course as stipulated in the curriculum

Examination Moderator shall comment on the suitability of course aims, learning outcomes and the extent to which these were achieved; coherence and of course structure and content.

6.1.4 Questions items format and uniformity

Examination Moderator shall comment on the format of the examination questions set forth and the uniformity throughout the examination.

6.1.5 Clarity of questions

Examination Moderator shall assess and report on the clarity of questions when evaluating the examination papers.

6.1.6 Standard grammatical and spelling errors in examinations

Examination Moderator shall check for and report on typographical and grammatical errors noted in the examination paper.

6.1.7 Appropriateness of the length of examination and allocated time

Examination Moderator to comment on whether the time allocated for the examination was appropriate based on the type, number and complexity of the questions.

6.1.8 Comment on the use of checklists during clinical and practical examinations

Examination Moderator to comment on the use of checklists for appropriateness of the design and structure of the assessment methods during clinical and practical examinations and their effectiveness in measuring the overall learning outcomes.

6.1.9 Use of examination marking schemes

Examination Moderator to comment on marking criteria in terms of whether the marking scheme/grading criteria have been properly and consistently applied to ensure that the internal marking is fair and of an appropriate standard; whether the marking criteria are effective in discriminating between levels of attainment to the classification of the award

6.1.10 Any serious misconduct during examinations as per University Regulations

The Examination Moderator will report on any serious deviation from proper procedures governing assessment and any observed misconduct per the University's academic regulations.

6.1.11 Assessment process

The Examination Moderator is required to comment on assessment processes in terms of whether the University's processes for assessment and the determination of awards were sound and fairly conducted in line with the University's policies and regulations; whether the assessment processes measure student achievement rigorously against intended learning outcomes; overall impressions of the assessment process. The Examination Moderator should also indicate his/her overall satisfaction with the level of involvement as an Examination Moderator in the University's processes for determining the award of its degrees. The University would appreciate it if Examination Moderator could also provide comments and recommendations on good practice and innovation relating to learning, teaching and assessment and on opportunities to enhance the quality of the learning opportunities provided at MUHAS.

6.1.12 Examination Moderator who are completing their tenure will be expected to include in their final report an overview on their term of Examination Moderatorship that shall include a summary of any significant changes in quality of learning and

assessment, or academic developments that have taken place and implementation of any recommendations made.

6.2 Report discussion

The report should be submitted to departments then departments should submit to the school board discussing examination results. The Dean of the School or Director of the Institute shall then direct the respective department to discuss the report and provide reactions to the comments made. Responses to Examination Moderator reports shall be discussed in the School/Institute Boards and recommendations submitted to the senate quality assurance committee which will subsequently submit to University Senate.

7. GUIDELINES STATUS

These are new Guidelines.

8. KEY STAKEHOLDERS

8.1. The stakeholders who were consulted during the development of these guidelines include:

- a. Quality Assurance and Examination Officers
- b. Heads of Departments
- c. Deans and Directors

8.2. The main stakeholders of these Guidelines are:

- a. All MUHAS academic staff
- b. Quality Assurance and Examination Officers
- c. Heads of Academic Departments
- d. Deans and Directors

9. APPROVAL DETAILS

The MUHAS Guidelines for Examination Moderators was approved by the SENATE.
Ref.No.QA.206/283/01

10. RELATED GUIDELINES

10.1 MUHAS Prospectus

10.2 MUHAS Guidelines for Quality Assurance

10.3 MUHAS General Regulations and Guidelines for Postgraduate Programs

10.4 MUHAS Guideline for External Examiners

11 RELATED DOCUMENTS

11.1 MUHAS Charter Rules, 2007

12 NEXT REVIEW DATE

The MUHAS Guidelines for Examination Moderators will be reviewed after every three years. The periodic review will ensure the guidelines are in line with the University changes that might have taken place.

13 OWNER OF THE GUIDELINES

The University Council shall own the MUHAS Guidelines for Examination Moderators.

14 CONTACT PERSON

The Contact Person for issues related to the MUHAS Guidelines for Examination Moderators shall be: -

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor – Academic Research and Consultancy (DVC-ARC),

Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences,

P.O. Box 65001,

9 United Nations Road, Upanga West, Dar es Salaam, TANZANIA.