

Administration of Central Examinations - Procedures



/about/policies-and-procedures/administration-of-central-examinations-procedures

1. Purpose of procedures

1.1 These procedures provide a broad framework for all central examinations.

2. Scope and application

2.1 These procedures refer to examinations conducted in a teaching period.

3. Definitions

Please refer to the University's Glossary of terms for policy and procedures. Terms and definitions identified below are specific to these procedures and are critical to the effectiveness of it:

Course Coordinator is the academic staff member who is responsible for the course.

Examination booklet is a booklet/s provided by the University in which a student records answers to the examination question paper.

Invigilator is a staff member who supervises examinations.

4. School-administered examinations

4.1 School-administered examination means any examination or test administered by a school. Heads of School are responsible for the organisation and conduct of assessment tasks, including School-administered examinations held within the central examination period.

4.2 School-administered examinations held within the central examination period would only occur if there is a requirement for special facilities located within the school, for example, oral presentations or computer laboratories.

4.3 To ensure the timing of the examination is consistent with the University's procedures on the scheduling of examinations (see Section 5.1 below), if a School-administered examination is to be held during the central examination period, the Course Coordinator must advise Student Business Services and note that it is a School-administered examination to ensure that the examination is included in the scheduling of the examination timetable.

5. Scheduling

5.1 Student Business Services will ensure that a final central examination timetable is produced and published no later than Week 9 of each semester (or equivalent in other teaching periods).

5.2 Scheduling guidelines

In order to ensure an environment which allows a student to perform to their potential, the examination timetable is prepared, as far as practicable, according to the following guidelines:

- (a) examinations may be held between the hours of 8am and 9pm on weekdays and between 8am and 5pm on Saturdays;
- (b) wherever possible examinations for courses with high enrolments, other than those with multiple choice examinations, are scheduled towards the beginning of the examination period;
- (c) a student should not be required to undertake more than two examinations on a single examination day;
- (d) there should be a minimum break of one hour between examinations for a student with consecutive examinations held on a single examination day;
- (e) a student should not normally be required to undertake examinations on more than three days in succession, and should not normally be required to take more than four examinations in three successive days;
- (f) examinations should be held on the campus or delivery site where teaching in the course concerned is normally conducted;
- (g) where courses are taught at more than one campus or delivery site, the same examination question paper must be set and where possible the examinations take place simultaneously and under comparable conditions; and
- (h) when allocating venues Student Business Services attempts to schedule examinations in locations with the most appropriate facilities.

APPROVAL AUTHORITY

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

RESPONSIBLE EXECUTIVE MEMBER

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

DESIGNATED OFFICER

Academic Registrar and Director, Student Services

FIRST APPROVED

9 September 2013

LAST AMENDED

27 April 2021

REVIEW DATE

27 April 2026

STATUS

Active

5.3 Length of central examinations

5.3.1 The time allowed for central examinations will be in hour blocks of either one hour or two hours in duration.

5.4 Length of perusal time

5.4.1 The time allowed for perusal is 10 minutes; a Course Coordinator can identify a longer period of perusal of up to 30 minutes when completing their online exam request.

6. Examination question papers

6.1 The Head of School is responsible for the process that ensures the quality of the examination question papers. The question papers must be clear, unambiguous and free of errors.

6.2 The Course Coordinator is responsible for generating the examination cover sheet and question paper, and must ensure that:

- (a) the cover sheet and paper are available when required by Student Business Services;
- (b) the cover sheet clearly identifies the materials that are permitted in the examination;
- (c) the paper conforms with the University's guidelines on format and presentation; and
- (d) the paper is complete and free of errors.

6.3 Student Business Services is responsible for arranging the printing of the required number of the examination question papers. The examination question papers must be delivered to Student Business Services at least three weeks prior to the start of the examination period. The cost of printing the examination papers will be attributed to the relevant cost centre.

6.4 At all stages of preparation for examinations, the examination question papers must be stored securely.

7. Availability of the Course Coordinator

7.1 The Course Coordinator, or delegate, is required to be at the main examination venue at least 10 minutes prior to the commencement of the examination.

7.2 Any delegate must be familiar with the learning outcomes of the course and the content of the examination.

7.3 The Course Coordinator, or delegate, must remain for the period of perusal time identified for the examination to clarify any anomalies with aids and materials that may arise and be available by telephone for the duration of the examination to answer any questions.

7.4 In the situation where an examination is being run simultaneously at another delivery site, the Course Coordinator, or delegate, must be contactable by telephone.

8. Examination aids

8.1 It is the responsibility of the Course Coordinator to specify clearly which aids and materials students are permitted to take into a central examination. This information must be consistent on both the online exam request and examination cover sheet.

8.2 Students are permitted to take into a central examination the following general examination aids:

- (a) writing implements i.e. pens, pencils, erasers, correction fluid/tape; and
- (b) a bilingual English translation dictionary.

8.3 It is the responsibility of the student to ensure they bring the permitted materials to the examination as these materials will not be available at the examination venue.

8.4 Bilingual English translation dictionaries

8.4.1 Only concise, direct translation dictionaries are acceptable, translation dictionaries with extensive interpretation or advanced level translation are not permitted. Course Coordinators who do not allow the use of bilingual English translation dictionaries in central examinations should specify that they are not permissible on the examination cover sheet.

8.4.2 Bilingual translation dictionaries for specific professions or disciplines of study are not permitted in any language, unless specified by the Course Coordinator on the examination cover sheet.

8.4.3 The use of bilingual translation dictionaries for foreign language course examinations, where one of the languages in the bilingual translation dictionary is the same or a similar language to that being examined, are not permitted unless specified by the Course Coordinator on the examination cover sheet.

8.4.4 A bilingual English translation dictionary must not be annotated, nor have any other materials attached to or inserted into it.

8.5 Other examination aids

8.5.1 A student may also be permitted to take into a central examination those general aids that a Course Coordinator has specified as allowable for that course. These aids are a programmable, non-programmable or any calculator and/or an English dictionary or Thesaurus.

Course Coordinators must specify on the examination cover sheet which of these aids, if any, are permissible. If an English dictionary or thesaurus is a permitted aid, it must not be annotated, nor have any other materials attached to or inserted into it.

8.5.2 It is the responsibility of the student to ensure they bring any other permissible materials to the examination as they will not be available at the examination venue.

8.6 Closed book examinations

8.6.1 Closed Book Examinations do not allow any further materials apart from those permissible aids outlined in Section 8.1 and potentially permissible in Section 8.5 above. 'Closed Book' must be selected in the online exam request and stated on the examination cover sheet.

8.7 Open book examinations

8.7.1 In an Open Book Examination, a student is permitted further written and/or electronic aids as specified by the Course Coordinator. The examination cover sheet must specify the following details:

- (a) that it is an 'Open Book Examination';
- (b) the type and forms of materials and aids permitted e.g. textbook, notes, book of readings, laptop computers, any non-electronic materials;
- (c) if only specific textbooks or guides are permitted these must be clearly referenced; and
- (d) whether the materials are permitted to be annotated, and the extent of this annotation i.e. whether underlining, highlighting, marginal notes, loose leaf inserts and/or tagging are permitted.

8.8 Confirmation and checking of permitted examination aids and materials

8.8.1 Responsibility of the course coordinator

8.8.1.1 The Course Coordinator is responsible for the following:

- (a) specifying clearly which aids and materials students are permitted to take into a central examination. This information must be consistent in the online exam request and on the examination cover sheet; and
- (b) advising students during the teaching period of the materials that they are permitted to have during the examination.

8.8.2 Responsibility of the invigilator/s

8.8.2.1 It is the responsibility of the invigilator to ensure that only permissible materials, as determined on the examination cover sheet, are brought into the exam venue and used by students. If an item is brought into the exam venue that is not listed as permissible on the examination cover sheet, then it will be confiscated by the invigilator and depending on the item that was confiscated will be returned to the student at the end of the examination.

8.8.2.2 The checking of examination aids and materials is carried out at the beginning of each central examination and the Course Coordinator (or delegate) should be available at the examination venue for the beginning of the examination to clarify any anomalies with aids and materials that may arise.

9. Student identification required at examinations

9.1 For all central examinations, a student is required to provide photographic identification at the examination venue.

9.2 Acceptable identification which must be shown at each examination:

- (a) USC Student Card;
- (b) Driver's Licence or Learner's Permit;
- (c) 18+ card; or
- (d) Passport

9.3 The student without ID is allowed to undertake the examination. However, the student cannot leave the examination venue until an invigilator or a member of Student Business Services has verified their identity. This is done by checking the University's recorded image of the student. If the student's identity cannot be verified by Student Business, then the Academic Registrar and Director, Student Services will determine whether the circumstances warrant the student being given further opportunity to present suitable evidence of identity. If the student fails to provide the required evidence, the Academic Registrar and Director, Student Services refers the case to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students) under the Student Conduct – Governing Policy.

9.4 Until the student's identity has been established the student's examination booklet/s is held by the Academic Registrar and Director, Student Services and will not be forwarded for marking.

10. Student late arrival at an examination

10.1 It is a student's responsibility to ensure that they are familiar with their examination timetable, that they have the correct time and venue and that their travel arrangements are reliable.

10.2 The student who arrives at an examination no later than 40 minutes (which includes 10 minutes perusal time) after the official commencement time must present themselves to an invigilator and will be permitted to complete their examination within the scheduled exam time period. The invigilator records details on an Incident Report that is provided to the Course Coordinator. If the student arrives more than 40 minutes after the official commencement time the student must report directly to Student Central.

10.3 If there are exceptional circumstances as to why a student was unable to get to the examination within 40 minutes of its start, Student Business Services will take the reason into account and if there is independent evidence that this was due to unexpected circumstances outside of their control then they may be permitted to take the exam at an alternate time determined by the Academic Registrar and Director, Student Services. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure they are available for the alternate exam sitting.

10.4 Failure to read the examination timetable correctly would not normally be regarded as being outside the control of the student.

11. Procedures during the examination

11.1 Every student in attendance at an examination must complete the attendance slip provided and fill in details required on the front cover of the examination booklet/s.

11.2 During the designated perusal time, students are permitted to:

- (a) read the examination paper and request clarification of question/s in the examination paper; and
- (b) (if specified by the Course Coordinator) make notes on loose-leaf paper provided or on the examination question paper.

11.3 During the perusal time students are not permitted to write in the examination booklet or on the examination question paper if the question paper is required to be submitted for marking (e.g. multiple choice or short answer questions written directly on the paper).

11.4 No student commences writing answers until authorised by the invigilator. If the student writes during perusal on examination materials that are not to be written on the invigilator will either replace the item or mark on the material that it was written during perusal.

11.5 All students must stop writing when instructed by the invigilator. At the end of the examination all remaining students must stay seated until all examination papers have been collected.

11.6 During an examination students are not permitted to speak to, or communicate with, any other student.

11.7 A student can request to leave the venue for a toilet break after the perusal period has concluded. When approval is given by the invigilator for a toilet break, the student is supervised during their period of absence.

12. Procedures for leaving the examination venue

12.1 A student is not permitted to leave the examination venue in the first 40 minutes after the published starting time or during the last 15 minutes of any examination.

12.2 After the first 40 minutes of the examination has lapsed, the student can request to leave the examination venue permanently.

12.3 No student is re-admitted to an examination venue after they have left it unless during the full period of the absence the student has been under approved supervision.

12.4 A student wishing to permanently leave the examination venue must hand all examination materials to the invigilator who endorses the examination booklet/s as correctly identifying the student. A student cannot remove any examination papers, examination booklet/s, scrap paper or attendance slips from the examination venue.

13. Collection of examination booklets and examination question papers

13.1 The Course Coordinator (or nominee) is responsible for collecting the examination question papers and booklets at the advised times and signing the examination collection report as receipt of the number of examination booklet/s and papers prior to taking them.

13.2 For central examinations, examination question papers and booklet/s may be collected by the Course Coordinator (or nominee) from the examination venue up to 15mins after the scheduled finish time. Any examination question papers and booklet/s not collected from the examination venue can be collected from Student Business Services.

13.3 If uncollected by the Course Coordinator (or nominee) by the end of the examination period, the relevant School office is contacted and requested to collect the papers on behalf of the Course Coordinator.

14. Interruption to a central examination

14.1 An invigilator may suspend the progress of an examination if an incident occurs, which the invigilator judges is likely to significantly disrupt the progress of a student or students in the examination.

14.2 Procedures for dealing with a disruption to an examination

14.2.1 If an invigilator, Student Business Services, security or emergency services personnel decide that the evacuation of an examination venue is necessary, all students must leave the venue as quickly as possible and proceed to the appropriate evacuation assembly area.

Students may take their personal belongings that are at their desk with them but must leave all examination materials in the examination venue.

14.2.2 The invigilator (after consultation with Student Business Services) must cancel the examination if it cannot be recommenced within 20 minutes. In such cases, the matter is referred to the relevant Head of School who, in consultation with the Course Coordinator, decides on one of the following options:

- (a) the rescheduling of another examination in the same examination period;
- (b) the awarding of a deferred examination to all students involved;
- (c) the assessing of students on work already completed for the course; or
- (d) a combination of the above options.

14.2.3 In regard to 14.2.2 (a) the Head of School or Course Coordinator should contact Student Business Services to determine whether there is sufficient time remaining in the examination period to accommodate this option.

14.2.4 The decision reached by the Head of School should be communicated to the students and the Academic Registrar and Director, Student Services within 24 hours of the sitting of the disrupted examination.

14.2.5 Under the Student Conduct - Governing Policy, any student disrupting an examination can be instantly dismissed from the examination venue at the discretion of the invigilator. Where dismissal is the appropriate course of action, the exam supervisor or invigilator documents the incident and provides a report, as per the Student Misconduct - Procedures.

15. Procedures for dealing with cheating in examinations

15.1 Invigilators should report any suspected cheating in examinations as per the University's Student Misconduct – Procedures.

16. Alternative venues for central examinations

16.1 Students are expected to sit all their examinations at the location specified in their examination schedule.

16.2 Students who can demonstrate that sitting a central or deferred examination at the location specified in the examination timetable will cause excessive hardship due to circumstances outside of their control may make an application to sit the examination at an alternative venue.

16.3 Approval to sit an examination at an alternative venue is made by the Academic Registrar and Director, Student Services. If approved, the Academic Registrar and Director, Student Services will determine an appropriate charge and inform the student of those costs. The student will be required to find and organise a suitable venue and an appropriate invigilator. Any costs that may be incurred in organising a venue or utilising an invigilator will be borne by the student.

17. Responsibilities

17.1 Student Business Services, within the Division of Student Services and Engagement, is responsible for the administration of central examinations, including deferred and supplementary examinations.

17.2 The Course Coordinator is responsible for providing the quality assured examination question papers.

END

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs - Academic Policy
Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs - Procedures
Coursework Curriculum Design - Academic Policy
Coursework Curriculum Design - Procedures
Deferred Examinations - Procedures
Review of Assessment and Final Grade - Procedures
Student Conduct - Governing Policy
Student Misconduct - Procedures
Supplementary Assessment - Procedures

LINKED DOCUMENTS

Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs - Academic Policy