

Kerala State Higher Education Council

REPORT OF THE EXAMINATION COMMITTEE

Summary of Recommendations

Provision of a syllabus-based framework for improved assessment practice

1. A suitable template with guidelines relating to the scope and structure of the syllabus statement of each separate course should be prepared and its use made mandatory by the university. The syllabus statement for each course (issued by the relevant Board) should include a detailed note on the recommended assessment scheme, especially the internal component.
2. a) The duties and responsibilities of Boards of Studies in each area should be amended to include a definite provision for syllabus preparation in keeping with the guidelines and regular reviews.
b) Administrative and financial provision should be made for workshop-type sessions for syllabus development, with the option of including qualified resource persons as special invitees. Manuals and library resources and secretarial assistance should be available at the workshop venues. Final committee-mode decision making (if needed) must be based on workshop output.
3. Members of Boards should be given orientation/training relating to curriculum design and educational technology. A permanent facility for this purpose should be set up by the university.

Upgrading the technical support and personnel resources at the college level

4. All teachers need to be given training in the areas of assessment and educational technology. A long-term strategy for training teachers in assessment with a special focus on the internal/ in-term component should be developed and implemented using both face-to-face and distance modes. The specific needs of different subject areas should be recognized and addressed. The relevant boards should be associated with the overall planning of these programmes. The process needs to be envisioned as becoming self-supporting over time.
5. College departments should maintain an up-to-date reference file relating to assessment rules and guidelines. The approved schemes for Internal Assessment of various departments should be available to students in a clear form. The facility for dealing with difficulties/ grievances relating to IA should be accessible to students.
6. College libraries should have a collection of manuals and reference books, CDs on assessment, curriculum, and educational technology for the use of teachers. Subject-wise collections of question papers and IA tasks (along with notes, critical comments) should also be obtained, and made accessible to teachers.

Improving the external final examination

7. Boards should undertake a review of models and recent question papers, giving priority to compulsory courses. Useful improvements can be made without waiting for the

training workshops to achieve wide coverage. A plan to review all question papers over the next several months should be prepared by each department

Reports on this exercise should be required by the Academic Council.

- 8 Variations in the design and physical structure of questions papers (and answer booklets) should be tried out. These may include: separate sections for objective-type questions, short answer and essay questions, restricted response space to encourage precision, timed sections, and flip-reduced answer sheets.
- 9 Paper setting by teams through modularized setting and section-wise marking by markers in teams should be introduced in a phased manner.
- 10 Small-scale and experimental question banks should be set up in selected departments for selected courses. A task force to plan a centralized question bank (with a state level component and a separate components for individual universities may be set up.
- 11 Measures to maintain the integrity of the system should be reviewed and extended at the CoE level. These may include: parallel versions of question papers; conducting examinations in-camera; video-recording of opening packets of question papers; and packing of answer books. Video recording of viva voce examinations should be considered and initiated in a phased manner.
Bar-coding of answer books and response sheets should be taken up. Delivery of question papers in electronic mode for printing at local centres on the day of the examination should be explored.
- 12 A clear policy for dealing with unfair practices relating to Internal Assessment should be evolved and put in place at the college level. Prevention through ensuring transparency in grading, attending to convenience aspects, and education regarding plagiarism should also be attended to.
- 13 Under the head of student welfare, a component specifically concerned with examination-related issues (especially stress and anxiety) should be established. Accessibility to students should be a priority for counseling activities. Support from the community including student volunteers could be canvassed.
14. A scheme to support innovation and experimentation in the area of assessment at various levels, administratively and financially, should be formulated. Potential awardees should be reached through vigorous publicity. Support of an academic nature through accessible resource person/institution should also be provided. The presentation of reports at a suitable forum should be a requirement. The implications of findings from such experiments for improving assessment practice on a wider scale should be noted and acted upon.
15. Research on various aspects of examinations should be taken up at each university and at selected colleges, according to an overall plan developed through consultation to avoid duplication. The departments of Education should take the lead. Research scholars in the social sciences could be encouraged to participate by offering access to databases in examination branches.
