

**AMENDED VERSION (HETAC 2007)**  
**Comhairle Náisiúnta na gCáilíochtaí Oideachais**  
**National Council for Educational Awards**  
**MARKS AND STANDARDS 2001**

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**PART A : PROCEDURES FOR EXAMINATIONS LEADING TO NCEA AWARDS**

**A1. Applicability**

These General Marks and Standards shall apply to all examinations leading to Council awards, to be held in the academic year 2000/01 and subsequent academic years, unless and until amended by the Council.

**A2. Responsibility for Examinations**

**A2.1** The Director/President/Principal or other appropriate officer of the institution shall have overall responsibility for the conduct of examinations in the institution and shall, in particular, ensure:-

- the proper conduct of examinations, including invigilation
- the maximum security in all matters pertaining to examinations
- that all examination entries are notified to the Council by the required date(s)
- that examination question papers/and appropriate marking schemes/ are prepared by Intern Examiners, sent in good time for approval by Extern Examiners and printed in good time for examinations
- that appropriate accommodation arrangements are made for each candidate for examinations
- that examination answer scripts are examined by Intern and Extern Examiners and that results for each candidate are made available for meetings of Boards of Examiners
- that accurate records in regard to continuous assessment are maintained and made available to Extern Examiners
- proper arrangements for holding meetings of Boards of Examiners, in accordance with the provisions of Section A7 below
- timely transmission of the recommendations of meetings of Boards of Examiners to the Council
- that candidates are provided with the information relevant to them with regard to the conduct and regulation of examinations.

### **A3. Intern Examiners**

**A3.1** Institution staff who exercise an examination function shall, together with the persons indicated in A2.1 above, be deemed to be Intern Examiners.

#### **A3.2 The role of Intern Examiners shall be as follows:-**

- To consult with the appropriate Extern Examiner(s) in the drafting of examination papers by providing to the Extern Examiner(s), in good time before the printing of examination papers, typewritten draft question papers, together with appropriate marking schemes and worked solutions to numerical questions involving quantitative data.
- To take account of all suggestions, criticisms, deletions, additions and amendments proposed by the Extern Examiner(s).
- To submit examination papers and marking schemes, as approved by the Extern Examiner(s), to the Director/President/Principal of the institution, or to the person nominated thereby for this purpose.
- prior to the meeting of the Board of Examiners, to consult with the Extern Examiner(s) and to agree the grades/marks proposed to be awarded to each candidate.
- To attend meetings of the Board of Examiners.

### **A4. Extern Examiners**

**A4.1** Extern Examiners are appointed by the Council to ensure adequacy of standards at examinations moderated by the Council. In particular, Extern Examiners should ensure that the appropriate standards with regard to Pass, Merit and Distinction/Honours are applied and that comparability of standards between institutions should be achieved and maintained as far as is feasible.

#### **A4.2 Course Extern Examiners**

Extern Examiners are normally appointed as Course Extern Examiners, with responsibility for a course, or a range of courses. In these cases the Extern Examiner(s) concerned should deal with all subjects in the course(s), and should approach the task with a view to ensuring that each candidate's performance in the course as a whole is properly assessed, without undue emphasis on individual subject performance, subject to the requirements of the Council's Marks and Standards Regulations.

### **A4.3 Additional Extern Examiners**

**A4.3.1** The Council also appoints Additional Extern Examiners to support Course Extern Examiners. Additional Extern Examiners are, normally, appointed in the subjects:-

Communications and Language Subjects

and in such other subjects as the Council may deem necessary.

**A4.3.2** Where Course Extern Examiners require assistance in any of these subject areas they should consult with the appropriate Additional Extern Examiner. Additional Extern Examiners will not normally visit the institutions, unless required to do so as part of the specific course involved, in which case prior approval should be sought from the NCEA.

### **A4.4 Subject Extern Examiners**

In some degree courses, and in some other courses, Extern Examiners are appointed as Subject Extern Examiners, with responsibility in relation to specific subjects. Subject Extern Examiners are required to ensure that each candidate's overall performance in the course as a whole is properly assessed, without undue emphasis on performance in an individual subject for which they have been appointed, subject to the requirements of the Council's Marks and Standards Regulations.

### **A4.5 Specific Duties of Extern Examiners**

**A4.5.1** It shall be the duty of Extern Examiners to see the drafts of all examination question papers, marking schemes, worked solutions etc., before the question papers are sent for printing. Extern Examiners shall have the right to make such suggestions, criticisms, deletions, additions and amendments as they deem appropriate.

**A4.5.2** The Council requires that Extern Examiners see a representative sample of examination material presented by candidates (approximately 5% where feasible), including borderline cases. The sample, which should be drawn on a basis agreed between the Intern and Extern Examiner(s), should include sufficient material to enable the Extern Examiner(s) to form a judgement as to the appropriateness of the marking at all levels of classification.

**A4.5.3** All Course Extern Examiners and Subject Extern Examiners will be required to visit the institutions to which they have been assigned ONCE in each academic year. This visit will, normally, take place at the time of determination of final results in Summer, and it should conform to the arrangements made in this regard by each institution. In the case of courses or subjects in respect of which winter semester examinations are held in January or supplemental or repeat examinations are held in the Autumn, or at such other times as may be approved by the Council, the arrangements for attendance of Extern Examiners in the institutions will normally be made by the institution. Extern Examiners should endeavour to discharge by correspondence as much of their work (including finalisation of examination papers and/or other tests) as it is feasible to perform in this manner.

**A4.5.4** Where an institution deems it necessary for an Extern Examiner to visit more than once per year, the institution should seek prior approval from NCEA indicating the special circumstances involved. Similar approval should be sought in the case of any proposed additional visits to institutions sought by Extern Examiners.

#### **A4.6 Oral/Performance based Examinations**

**A4.6.1** Where oral/performance based examinations constitute a substantial part of the assessment procedure and are conducted in the absence of an Extern Examiner(s), the proceedings of any such examination or assessment conducted entirely by Intern Examiners should be recorded on video or audio-tape and an appropriate sample of the recordings sent to the Extern Examiner(s), or, if the Extern Examiner(s) so require, retained in the institution for scrutiny by the Extern Examiner(s). Alternatively, where special circumstances so require, the Intern and Extern Examiner(s) together may examine a representative sample of the candidates concerned.

#### **A4.7 Visitation of Institutions**

**A4.7.1** When visiting an institution, the duties of Extern Examiners shall be as follows:-

- to review borderline cases and, if necessary, interview such candidates;
- to agree with the respective Intern Examiner(s) the proposed final marks/grades for consideration by the appropriate Board of Examiners;
- to attend appropriate meeting(s) of the Board of Examiners as required.

**A4.7.2** Where examinations are held at the end of a winter semester or First or Second Terms, in addition to end-of-year examinations, Extern Examiners shall, normally, deal with examination material by correspondence. The remainder of their duties shall be carried out during the Summer visit, or, by prior arrangement with the NCEA, at prior additional visits if such are required for substantial reasons.

#### **A4.8 Extern Examiners' Reports**

Extern Examiners are required to submit to the Director of NCEA, not later than 1st October in each year, a full report on the examinations with which they are involved. One report covering the academic year will normally be sufficient. A copy of the report should be sent to the Director/President/Principal of the institution concerned. The report should be submitted in accordance with the standard Report Form supplied by the Council.

#### **A4.9 Communications between Intern and Extern Examiners**

Extern Examiners are required to acknowledge receipt of examination and assessment material received from the institutions. All communications between institutions and Extern Examiners shall be by registered mail, or other secure means of delivery. Institutions should ensure that all such mail is securely sealed, whether circulated internally or through the post. The use of fax, telex or electronic messaging systems is not authorised for these communications. Use of telephones should be restricted to logistics and operational matters; mobile telephones should not be used for any purpose in relation to examination material.

#### **A4.10 Special Arrangements in relation to Art and Design**

**A4.10.1** In cases where there are written examinations in the History of Art and Design/Complementary Studies, it shall be the duty of Extern Examiners to see the drafts of the examination papers before printing. They shall have the right to make such suggestions, criticisms, deletions, additions and amendments as they deem appropriate. Where this Examination Subject is examined by thesis, a representative selection of theses shall be submitted to the Extern Examiner.

**A4.10.2** On visitation, the duties of Extern Examiners shall be as follows:-

- (1) To review the exhibition of candidates' work and to interview a selection of candidates;
- (2) To agree the final marks/grades for each candidate; and
- (3) To attend appropriate meetings of the Board of Examiners, as required.

**A5. Provisional Entries**

- A5.1** Entries by candidates who have not complied with all appropriate Council and institutional requirements will be regarded as provisional. Any recommendations by a board of examiners in respect of the result of any such candidate will be regarded as provisional until such time as the candidate has complied with the appropriate requirements.
- A5.2** The Council shall not grant an award to any candidate whose result is regarded as provisional.

**A6. Return of Examination Marks/Grades by Intern Examiners**

- A6.1** Should a college, for any reason, (personal, health, discipline, or otherwise) decide before, during or after the process of presenting a student's performance in one or more examination subjects to the purview of the Council, that it does not wish to so present the student, then it is the college's right and responsibility to withhold that student's results or part thereof from that purview (including the Board of Examiners' meeting, etc.). It is further a matter for the College whether it will present such a student again, and if it does so, under what circumstances e.g. as a first attempt or otherwise.
- A6.2** Examination marks/grades, as agreed with the Extern Examiner(s), should be submitted by the Intern Examiner to the Head of the appropriate institution authority on the "Subject Marks Sheet" (formerly known as the white marks sheet) supplied by the Council upon request, at least 24 hours in advance of the appropriate meeting of the Board of Examiners. Normally, a "Subject Marks Sheet" should be completed in respect of each Examination Subject, and signed by both Intern and Extern Examiners. The Extern Examiner(s) should certify the agreed final marks/grades for each candidate on the "Subject Marks Sheet". The completed "Subject Marks Sheet" should include the following for each candidate:-
- (a) The allocation of marks for Written, Oral, Practical, Projects, Continuous Assessment etc., in accordance with the terms of the Approved Course Schedule currently in operation;
  - (b) The overall total of marks/grades awarded to each candidate and agreed upon by the Intern and Extern Examiners for that Examination Subject.
- A6.3** The "Component Marks Sheet" (formerly known as the green marks sheet) supplied by the Council upon request, is intended for the use of Examiners in respect of separate elements of assessment of each Examination Subject, e.g. orals, projects, each written paper, continuous assessment, and, in cases where several Component Subjects comprise an Examination Subject, in respect of the individual Component Subjects.

## **A7. Meeting of Board of Examiners**

**A7.1** After each examination the Intern and Extern Examiners shall meet together as a Board of Examiners under the chairmanship of the Director, President or Principal of the institution, or by a member of the institution's staff nominated for that purpose by the aforementioned. Only those Intern Examiners who have participated in the examinations for a given award (or examination stage leading to an award), together with the Registrar, Head of School and Head of Department concerned, and such Extern Examiners as the Council shall deem appropriate, shall participate in the meeting of the Board of Examiners at which recommendations in relation to that award or examination stage are decided. A Board of Examiners may act notwithstanding the absence of one or more members, provided that the Chairman of the Board is satisfied that the meeting has been duly convened and that the members present at the meeting constitute an appropriate attendance for the proper discharge of the Board's responsibilities.

### **A7.2 Semesterised/Trimesterised Courses**

In the case of courses organised on the basis of semesters or trimesters, and in which an examination stage includes the results from more than one semester or trimester, the powers of the Board of Examiners shall include the consideration of, and the determination of recommendations in relation to, the results of all semesters or trimesters not previously considered by such Board. The duties and functions of Extern Examiners in such courses should be construed accordingly.

**A7.3** The proceedings and deliberations of Boards of Examiners are strictly confidential; under no circumstances should any person attending a meeting of a Board of Examiners disclose to any other person a decision of the Board or any document, information or opinion considered, conveyed or expressed at the meeting. The Chairman of the Board of Examiners may however cause to be issued the provisional list of results referred to at Paragraph A7.11 below, and may, as necessary and as decided by the Board, communicate appropriately with the Council with regard to any matter requiring such communication, arising out of the proceedings of the Board of Examiners.

**A7.4** The dates of meetings of Boards of Examiners shall be agreed annually between the Director of the Council and the Directors/Presidents/Principals of institutions.

**A7.5** Group meetings of Intern and Extern Examiners, prior to the meeting of the Board of Examiners, are not permitted unless the form of the examination requires the examiners to work in groups. The proceedings of any such meeting must be made available to the Board of Examiners.

### **A7.6 Broadsheets of Results**

At the meeting of the Board of Examiners, a Broadsheet of Results shall be endorsed which shall record the total marks or grades awarded to each candidate in each Examination Subject and which shall indicate, in relation to each candidate's overall result, as to whether the candidate has passed, or has passed with Merit (indicating the grade of Merit), or has passed with Distinction, or has passed with Honours (indicating the grade of Honours), or has failed. Any other overall result should be recorded in accordance with the following table:

<b>Result Code</b>	<b>Result</b>	<b><i>Effect on Number of Exam Attempts</i></b>
EXE	Exemption(s) Granted	<i>Counted as an Attempt</i>
ABS	Absent from Examination	<i>Counted as an Attempt</i>
FAIL	Fail	<i>Counted as an Attempt</i>
DEF	Deferral of Result(s)	<i>Not Counted as an Attempt</i>
WDRW	Withdrew from Course	<i>Counted as an Attempt</i>
WHLD	Student's Result(s) Withheld	<i>College to Decide</i>

In the case of a candidate who fails, recommendations of exemptions, if any, should be indicated. A pass by compensation should be recorded in all Council and institutional documentation in the same manner as passes other than by compensation. The annotation of results shall be in accordance with the Council's requirements in this regard.

**A7.7** In the event of disagreement between Examiners with regard to the mark or grade which should be awarded to a candidate in any Examination Subject, which shall not have been resolved between them prior to the meeting of the Board of Examiners, an Extern Examiner who continues to dissent at the meeting, may choose to have a dissenting opinion recorded on the Broadsheet of Results.

**A7.8** Any dissenting opinion by an Extern Examiner which shall have been recorded upon the Broadsheet of Results shall be brought to the attention of the Council, whose decision in relation thereto shall be final.

**A7.9** **Borderline Cases**

Meetings of Boards of Examiners should allow for full and frank discussion of all borderline cases before a final decision is made. That final decision should be based on the cumulative evidence presented rather than on the view of one Intern or Extern Examiner.

**A7.10** The Broadsheet(s) of Results shall be signed by the Chairman and Secretary of the meeting, and by all of the Examiners (Extern and Intern) present at the meeting. It shall be forwarded by the Director/President/Principal or other appropriate officer of the institution to the Director of the Council immediately following the meeting.

### **A7.11 Provisional Lists of Results**

Where clear-cut recommendations emerge at a meeting of a Board of Examiners, the Chairman of the Board of Examiners may cause a provisional list of results to be issued by the institution. The institution may not issue a provisional result in the case of any candidate whose result is in dispute, indeterminate, the subject of a recorded dissenting opinion or the subject of referral to the Council, or whose entry is regarded as provisional in accordance with Paragraph A5.1 or otherwise; the name of any such candidate may not be included in any provisional list of results issued by the institution, nor should any information in relation to results be communicated to any such candidate pending a Council decision thereon.

### **A7.12 Disqualification of Candidates**

Refer to section A6.1 above.

### **A7.13 Recommendation of Results to Council**

**A7.13.1** Refer to section A6.1 above

**A7.13.2** The following guidelines should be followed with a view to arriving at definite recommendations.

- a) In the case of non-award examination stages, the candidate should, normally, be accorded the benefit of the doubt, given reasonable grounds, and the Board of Examiners should endeavour to make a firm recommendation on the matter without referral to the Council, unless a fundamental question of principle is involved.
  
- b) In the case of final (award stage) examinations, Marks and Standards should be interpreted in such a manner as to require the candidate to have demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt an entitlement, on the basis of examination performance, to the result being sought.

**A7.14**      **Deferral of Examination Results**

A Board of Examiners may, in the case of illness or bereavement, recommend that a final decision on a candidate's result be deferred to enable the candidate to complete specific outstanding requirements of the course or examination.

**A8.**      **The Granting of Council's Awards**

When the Council endorses the recommendations of a duly constituted meeting of a Board of Examiners, the results thereby approved shall be final and appropriate awards shall be granted by Council on foot thereof.

**Comhairle Náisiúnta na gCáilíochtaí Oideachais**  
**National Council for Educational Awards**

**MARKS AND STANDARDS, 2001**

**PART B: GENERAL MARKS AND STANDARDS**

**B1 General Requirements for Examinations and Awards**

- B1.1** Only candidates who have satisfactorily attended or otherwise pursued or followed a course of study or instruction approved by the Council, and who have met all course requirements, including satisfactory completion of prescribed coursework and projects within prescribed deadlines, shall be admitted to the examinations or other tests.
- B1.2** The granting of a certificate, diploma, degree or other Council award shall be on the basis of a candidate's performance in examinations or other tests of knowledge or ability which have been set or prescribed by the Council and which have been approved and monitored by Extern Examiner(s) appointed by the Council.
- B1.3** The term "examination" in these Marks and Standards should be construed to include reference, as appropriate, to written and oral examinations, assessment of coursework, project-work, etc., examination of theses, dissertations and similar work, and such other forms of assessment of candidates' performance as may have been approved or prescribed by the Council in relation to any course of study or instruction, and cognate expressions should be construed accordingly.
- B1.4** All examination and assessment material must be available for scrutiny and approval as required by the Council's Extern Examiner(s).

**B2 Approved Course Schedule**

- B2.1** Where the Council has adopted an Approved Course Schedule in relation to an approved course, the provisions of that Schedule are deemed to form part of the Marks and Standards applying to the course.
- B2.2** Any special regulation, which is indicated in an Approved Course Schedule as applying to a particular course, is deemed to apply to the examinations relating to that course, notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the provisions of the General Marks and Standards herein. No special regulations shall apply unless the Council has actually adopted such regulations and incorporated them in the Certificate of Course Approval issued in relation to the course concerned.

### **B2.3**      **Examination Subjects**

The Approved Course Schedule for each approved course sets out the approved Examination Subjects for the course. An Examination Subject may consist of one or more Component Subjects. Where an Examination Subject consists of more than one Component Subject, these are normally examined separately and the marks/grades scored in the several Component Subjects are aggregated to determine the candidate's overall performance in the Examination Subject.

**B2.4**      Examination Subjects are categorised as Mandatory, Elective, Group Elective and Optional. The following provisions apply to the various categories of Examination Subjects for the purpose of completing any examination stage leading to a Council award:-

#### **MANDATORY**

Each candidate must present and pass in all Mandatory Examination Subjects.

#### **ELECTIVE**

Where the course structure consists of one or more Mandatory Examination Subjects and several Elective Examination Subjects, each candidate must present and pass in all Mandatory Examination Subjects and in a prescribed number of Elective Examination Subjects. The number of Elective Examination Subjects required is prescribed in the Approved Course Schedule.

#### **GROUP ELECTIVE**

Where the course structure consists of one or more Mandatory Examination Subjects and several Elective Examination Subjects, each candidate must present and pass in all Mandatory Examination Subjects and in the required number of Elective Examination Subjects in one of the Elective Groups prescribed in the Approved Course Schedule.

#### **OPTIONAL**

Performance in Optional Examination Subjects is not taken into account in determining a candidate's overall result.

**B2.5**      The Approved Course Schedule indicates the Examination Subjects, and combinations of Examination Subjects, approved by the Council in respect of each course. (No other Examination Subject nor combination of Examination Subjects is approved by the Council for the purpose of proceeding to the award to which the Approved Course Schedule refers).

**B2.6**      Normally, no result shall be approved in respect of any candidate presenting in an examination subject or in a combination of Examination Subjects which has not been approved by the Council.

**B3. Marks Maxima and Allocation**

- B3.1** The maximum mark for each Examination Subject, and the allocation of marks to each Component Subject and to each examination element, shall be as indicated in the Approved Course Schedule.
- B3.2** The allocation and weighting of marks as between the various Examination Subjects, and as between the various elements and components within Examination Subjects, is designed to ensure that the course aims and objectives are properly reflected and realised in the application of compensation and in the calculation of eligibility for Honours, Distinction and Merit.
- B3.3** Normally, the maximum marks available in each Examination Subject should be 100 marks. In the case of courses where it is deemed appropriate that marks should not be allocated equally as between the various Examination Subjects, the maximum marks should in all cases be a multiple of 100 marks, and the Approved Course Schedule should provide accordingly. In all such cases the maximum mark, and the minimum pass mark, in each Examination Subject, should be clearly indicated on the Broadsheet of Results. In default of such indication, the maximum mark in each Examination Subject is assumed to be 100 marks.

**B4. Minimum Pass Mark**

- B4.1** The minimum mark required for a pass in any Examination Subject shall be 40% of the maximum marks available for that Examination Subject. In any case where the Approved Course Schedule provides for a minimum pass mark other than 40%, the minimum pass mark must be indicated clearly on the Broadsheet of Results; in default of such indication, the minimum pass mark is assumed to be 40%.
- B4.2** In each Examination Subject which consists of component subjects the marks awarded to each candidate shall be the total of the marks scored in the various examination elements.

**B4.3 Continuous Assessment Marks**

- B4.3.1** In the case of a candidate who has omitted to perform a satisfactory proportion of continuous assessment tests in any Examination Subject, or who has been awarded such low marks for continuous assessment that a pass in the Examination Subject as a whole is unlikely, the institution should advise the candidate of this situation in good time to enable the candidate to take appropriate action before the final examination.

**B4.3.2** In the case of a candidate repeating an examination, marks awarded on the basis of continuous assessment, practical, project or laboratory examinations, etc., shall, normally, be carried forward from the original examination to the repeat examination and shall be aggregated with the marks scored in the latter to determine the total marks to be awarded in respect of the repeat examination. However, in the case of a candidate repeating an examination following a repeat attendance, only the marks awarded as a result of the repeat assessment and examination shall be considered.

**B4.3.3** In the case of a repeat candidate whose results are liable to be jeopardised by the carry-forward of poor continuous assessment marks, the institution may devise, having due regard to the provisions of the approved course schedule, alternative assessment arrangements in agreement with the Extern Examiner(s) in lieu of the Continuous Assessment. The results of such candidates at the repeat examination shall be based on the marks awarded for the alternative assessment combined with the other repeated examination elements.

#### **B4.4**     **Assessment of Joint Projects**

Where two or more candidates present a joint project, the individual contribution and performance of each candidate should be assessed, and individual marks/grades awarded accordingly.

#### **B4.5**     **Examination Subjects consisting of Several Component subjects or Several Examination Elements**

**B4.5.1** The provision at section A6.1 in relation to the presentation of a candidate's performance to the purview of the NCEA system of external moderation shall apply to the situation of extreme weakness/failed element provided that the consequences of such extreme weakness in an otherwise satisfactory performance have been notified in advance to all candidates by the Institution, following agreement at course approval stage with the Council. The utility of the approved course schedule in this regard (section B2) is drawn to the attention of the designated institutions.

#### **B4.6**     **Alphabetic Grading System**

The foregoing paragraphs B3 and B4 shall also be applicable to examinations where alphabetic grades are used in assessing student performance in accordance with the provisions of Part E attached to this document.

## **B5 Pass by Compensation**

**B5.1** A candidate who fails to attain the required pass standard in one or two of the examination subjects in an Examination, may, nevertheless, at the discretion of the Board of Examiners, pass the examination by compensation.

**B5.2** Compensation may be applied on the following basis, at the discretion of the Board of Examiners:-

- (1) Where the examination consists of:
  - (a) five or more Examination Subjects, compensation may apply in the case of two;
  - (b) fewer than five Examination Subjects, compensation may apply in the case of one only.
- (2) The marks obtained in the Examination Subject(s) listed on the approved course schedule, being considered for compensation must not be lower than 35%, where the pass standard is 40%; in the case of Examination Subjects where the Approved Course Schedule provides for a pass standard other than 40%, the minimum compensation level shall be as specified in the Approved Course Schedule, and shall normally be at a level which is 5% (of the maximum marks) below the pass standard.
- (3) The pass standard must be reached in the remaining Examination Subjects requiring to be passed.
- (4) Aggregate excess gross marks above the pass standard obtained in Examination Subjects requiring to be passed must be at least double the deficiency in the Examination Subject(s) being considered for compensation.
- (5) Compensation can only apply where all the Examination Subjects/Modules as listed on the approved course schedule for a stage or semester, are presented at the same sitting e.g. a candidate who has been granted exemptions at a previous examination, and is presenting the remaining Examination Subjects/Modules, may not pass the repeat examination by compensation. Such a candidate may, however, by waiving exemptions in accordance with Paragraph B6.4 below, opt to present in all Examination Subjects/Modules requiring to be passed at that stage/semester of the examination, and thereby be eligible for consideration for the exercise of compensation.
- (6) Compensation may be applied only to enable a candidate to pass in the examination as a whole. It may not be applied to grant exemptions or additional exemptions.
- (7) Compensation may not apply from subjects/modules in one semester/trimester to subjects/modules in another semester/trimester.

**B6. Exemptions**

**B6.1** Subject to normal course update and modification via periodic programmatic review or otherwise, subjects passed shall accrue for the purposes of award and need not be retaken. This shall not apply in respect of any sub-unit of an examination subject e.g. in respect of a component subject within an examination subject.

**B6.2** The passing of a subject at any examination is governed by the right of an institution to admit or re-admit students to its examinations or to present or re-present such students to the purview of the Council for the purposes of awards.

**B6.3 Additional Exemptions**

**B6.3.1** Additional exemptions may be granted to a candidate in respect of additional Examination Subjects passed by virtue of further attempts at the examination. In order to complete the examination stage concerned, the candidate must obtain a clear pass in all required Examination Subjects.

**B6.3.2** In recording exemptions on the Broadsheet of Results, in respect of attempts subsequent to a candidate's first attempt at the examination, only the additional exemptions gained should be recorded in the overall result column; exemptions awarded by virtue of previous attempts should not be repeated in the overall result column on a current Broadsheet. They should however be recorded in the subject mark/grade column(s) as 'ex'.

**B6.4 Waiver of Exemptions**

A candidate to whom exemptions have been granted, and who presents for further examination in any or all of the exempted Examination Subjects, shall be deemed to have waived the exemptions granted. A candidate exercising such right of waiver may be granted the benefit of compensation at the repeat examination in accordance with the provisions of Section B5 of the General Marks and Standards. The waiver of exemptions cancels the original result(s) which cannot be restored for the purpose of further attempts at the examination.

**B6.5** A candidate who has presented for an examination as a full-time candidate, and has been granted exemptions on that basis, will be deemed to be a full-time candidate until the candidate has completed that examination stage. The candidate's results will meanwhile be determined in accordance with the regulations for full-time candidates. Such a candidate, however, may, at any time waive the exemptions in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph B6.4 above and opt to present as a part-time candidate for subsequent attempts, in which case the candidate's subsequent results will be considered and determined as those of a part-time candidate.

**B7. Requirements for Progression**

**B7.1** A candidate should not be admitted to a second or subsequent examination stage without first having passed all Examination Subjects requiring to be passed at the previous examination stage.

**B7.2** Where, in exceptional circumstances, it is proposed to admit a candidate to a second or subsequent examination stage, who has not fulfilled the requirement set out in the immediately preceding paragraph, the institution should inform the Council, and seek its prior approval, at least seven days before commencement of the stage of the course leading to the second or subsequent examination stage.

**B7.3** The performance in a second or subsequent examination, by a candidate who has been admitted under this procedure, will not be considered unless the candidate has completed the requirements of the previous examination stage.

## **B8. Standards for Awards at Different Classifications**

### **B8.1 Ordinary Degree; Higher Certificate; awards lower than Level 7**

**B8.1.1** Council awards other than degrees may be made at **Pass**, **Merit** (Merit Grade 1, and Merit Grade 2) or **Distinction** classification.

**B8.1.2** To be eligible for an award (other than a degree or graduate diploma) at **Pass** classification, a candidate must:-

- (1) satisfy all the examination and other requirements set for the course, and
- (2) pass the final examination as a whole in accordance with these Marks and Standards.

**B8.1.3** To be eligible for consideration for an award of **Merit** or **Distinction** classification, a candidate must:-

- (1) satisfy all the examination and other requirements set for the course,  
and
- (2) pass the final examination as a whole in accordance with these Marks and Standards,  
and
- (3) obtain, at the final examination, an average mark (based on the total marks available as specified in the Approved Course Schedule), as follows,

#### **Average Mark**

**Merit Grade 2:** at least **50%** of the total marks available as specified in the Approved Course Schedule

**Merit Grade 1:** at least **60%** of the total marks available as specified in the Approved Course Schedule

**Distinction:** at least **70%** of the total marks available as specified in the Approved Course Schedule

**B8.1.4** An Award at **Merit** or **Distinction** classification may not be considered unless the candidate has passed the final examination:-

- (a) in the case of full-time candidates, at the first attempt, and in one sitting,  
or
- (b) in the case of part-time candidates, by virtue of passing in each required Examination Subject at the first attempt. In such cases the Examination Subject marks/grade to be included in the average result shall be those obtained at the candidate's first attempt at the respective Examination Subjects.

**B8.1.5** Normally, Merits and Distinctions may be awarded on the results of the final year examination only; however any weighted contributions from previous years' examinations shall be indicated in the Approved Course Schedule.

**B8.2** **Honours Bachelor Degree and Higher Diploma**

**B8.2.1** The award of a Bachelor Degree and Higher Diploma may be made at Pass or Honours classifications (First Class Honours, Second Class Honours, Grade 1, and Second Class Honours, Grade 2).

**B8.2.2** In order to be eligible for consideration for the award of a Bachelor Degree and Higher Diploma at Pass classification, a candidate must:-

- (1) satisfy all the examination and other requirements set for the course, and
- (2) pass the final examination as a whole in accordance with these Marks and Standards.

**B8.2.3** To be eligible for consideration for the award of a Bachelor Degree and Higher Diploma at Honours classification, a candidate must:-

- (1) satisfy all the examination and other requirements set for the course, and
- (2) pass the final examination as a whole in accordance with these Marks and Standards, and
- (3) obtain, at the final examination, an average mark (based on the total marks available as specified in the Approved Course Schedule), as follows,

**Average Mark**

Second Class Honours, Grade 2	at least 50%
Second Class Honours, Grade 1	at least 60%
First Class Honours	at least 70%

**B8.2.4** An Award with Honours may not be considered unless the candidate has passed the final examination:-

- (a) in the case of full-time candidates, at the first attempt, and in one sitting,

or

- (b) in the case of part-time candidates, by virtue of passing in each required examination subject at the first attempt. In such cases the Examination Subject marks/grades to be included in the average result shall be those obtained at the candidate's first attempt at the respective Examination Subjects.

**B8.2.5** Normally, an award with Honours may be recommended on the results of the final examination only; however any weighted contributions from previous years' examinations shall be indicated in the Approved Course Schedule.

**B8.2.6** At non-final examination stages, candidates' results may be declared with Honours, where the standards set out at Paragraphs B8.2.2 to B8.2.3 above have been met in relation to the examinations appropriate to the stage; such declaration is without prejudice to the final classification of a candidate's degree award, if any.

### **B8.3 Master's Degree (Research)**

The Degree of Master (Research) (*formerly referred to as Degree of Master – Mode A (Research and Thesis)*) is of Honours standard and is awarded without classification. In the case of successful candidates, the Broadsheet of Results should be annotated "Recommended" and signed by the Examiner(s) concerned.

### **B8.4 Master's Degree (Taught)**

**B8.4.1** The Degree of Master (Taught) (*formerly referred to as Degree of Master - Mode B (Coursework and Dissertation)*) may be awarded at Pass or Honours classifications (First Class Honours and Second Class Honours).

**B8.4.2** To be eligible for consideration for the award of a Master's Degree (Taught) at Pass classification, a candidate must:-

- (1) satisfy all the examination and other requirements set for the course, and
- (2) pass the final examination as a whole in accordance with these Marks and Standards.

**B8.4.3** To be eligible for consideration for the award of a Master's Degree (Taught) at Honours classification, a candidate must:-

- (1) satisfy all the examination and other requirements set for the course, and
- (2) pass the final examination as a whole in accordance with these Marks and Standards, and
- (3) obtain, at the final examination, an average mark (based on the allocation of marks as approved by the Council in each case), as follows:-

#### **Average Mark**

**Second Class Honours**  
**First Class Honours**

**at least 60%**  
**at least 70%**

**B8.4.4** An Award with Honours may not be considered unless the candidate has passed the final examination:-

(a) in the case of full-time candidates, at the first attempt, and in one sitting,

or

(b) in the case of part-time candidates, by virtue of passing in each required examination subject at the first attempt. In such cases the Examination Subject marks/grades to be included in the average result shall be those obtained at the candidate's first attempt at the respective Examination Subjects

**B8.4.5** The foregoing paragraphs, B8.4, shall also be applicable to examinations where alphabetic grades are used in assessing student performance in accordance with the provisions of Part E attached to this document.

### **B8.5** Doctor of Philosophy

The Degree of Doctor of Philosophy is awarded without classification. In the case of successful candidates, the Broadsheet of Results should be annotated "Recommended" and signed by the Examiner(s) concerned.

### **B9.** Subjects Taken in Addition to Requirements

**B9.1** Normally, a candidate may present in not more than one additional Examination Subject over and above the number of Examination Subjects requiring to be passed.

**B9.2** Where the result obtained in an additional Examination Subject in a final examination, when added to the total marks/grades obtained in required Examination Subjects, is such as to increase the overall average to a level which would merit consideration for a higher classification award of Merit, Distinction or Honours, this additional result may be so taken into account.

### **B10** Post Award Achievements

**B10.1** An individual holder of a Council award may present for a further award at the same level within the same generic area of study but with a different area of specialisation. If the area of specialisation is not adequately different and/or if the quantum of new work to be undertaken is not sufficient for the granting of a second award, the applicant should be registered as an ACCS candidate and shall receive single subject certification which will specify the nature and extent of new studies satisfactorily completed.

**B10.2** The following minimum entry requirements over and above the award currently held, will apply to a candidate seeking to qualify for an additional NCEA award at the same level:-

<b>ADDITIONAL AWARD SOUGHT</b>	<b>ADDITIONAL WORK REQUIRED</b>
--------------------------------	---------------------------------

<b>(a)</b> National Certificate and National Diploma	A minimum of 60 credits or an equivalent of 1 years full-time additional study satisfactorily completed.
--	--

Bachelor's Degree	A minimum of 120 credits or an equivalent of two years additional full-time study satisfactorily completed.
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Master's Degree	Complete
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**(b)** Normally the additional credits will be taken at the award stage of a course. Where necessary and in exceptional circumstances it may be possible to complete pre-requisite studies in accordance with section B10.2(a) at the non-award stage to a maximum of 50%.

**(c)** Under no circumstances should a candidate be presented for an examination subject(s) previously passed.

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**PART E : ALPHABETIC GRADING SCHEME**

**E1. General**

- 1.1 This Alphabetic Grading Scheme uses the 60 Credit Year/30 Credit Semester, as described in the Council's ACCS scheme, as its basis.
- 1.2 This scheme may apply to students following courses on a full-time basis.
- 1.3 This scheme will apply to students participating in the ACCS scheme.

**E2. Assessment and Grading Individual Subjects**

- 2.1 A grade, representative of the quality of a student's performance in a particular subject/module shall be awarded at the end of each stage or semester for which a student is registered.
- 2.2 Table 1 lists the grades which can be awarded.
- 2.3 When assigning grades to subjects/modules internal examiners should use the definitions in Table 1, except for Pass by compensation.

**Table 1: Grades to be awarded to each subject/module**

<b>GRADE</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE BAND</b>	<b>CREDITS AWARDED</b>	<b>INDICATIVE QUALITY OF PERFORMANCE</b>
A	80 - 100	Yes	Excellent
B+	70 - 79	Yes	Very Good
B	60 - 69	Yes	Good
B-	55 - 59	Yes	Above Average
C+	50 - 54	Yes	Fair
C	40 - 49	Yes	Pass
D	35 - 39	Yes	Poor
F		No	Fail
* I		No	Deferral of Result (Section A7.14)
X		Yes	Student exempted From the requirements of the subject/module because of previous equivalent learning
W			Withdrew
NP			Absent/Not Present
WH			Withhold

### **E3. Assessment of Aggregate Performance**

The aggregate performance of an individual student is represented by the student's Grade Point Average (GPA) in the examination for each stage or semester of the course followed.

In order to determine the GPA for a particular student, the following calculation is carried out.

- (a) A Grade Point Value is assigned to the alphabetic grade a student has gained for each subject, as follows:

<b>Alphabetic Grade</b>	<b>Grade Point Value</b>
A	4.0
B+	3.5
B	3.0
B-	2.75
C+	2.5
C	2.0
D	1.5
F	0

- (b) The Grade Point Value is multiplied by the Credits to arrive at a Grade Credit Score for each subject/module.
- (c) The Grade Credit Scores are then added together and divided by the credits for the stage or semester to arrive at the GPA.
- (d) Credits gained as a result of being awarded an X in a subject/module are not included in the calculation of GPA.

#### **E4. Award Classifications**

**E4.1** An inherent feature of all modern examination systems allows for minimally acceptable performance in individual subjects/modules to be less than that required for the course as a whole provided that the weaker performance in those subjects/modules is compensated for by superior performance in the remaining subjects/modules.

In the Alphabetic Grading Scheme while a “D” is the minimally acceptable performance in any individual subject/module an average performance at “C” level (GPA of 2.0) over the entire course is required to pass an examination as a whole. Therefore, in general, a “D” grade will need to be compensated for by sufficient grades higher than “C” in individual subjects/modules.

**E4.2** To be eligible for consideration for an award at Pass classification, a candidate must:

(a) Satisfy all the examination requirements, credits and other requirements for the course as specified in the Approved Course Schedule

and

(b) Pass the final examination as a whole, by attaining a GPA of 2.0, in accordance with Marks & Standards.

**E4.3** To be eligible for consideration for an award at Merit, Distinction or Honours classification a candidate must:

(a) Satisfy all examination requirements, credits and other requirements for the course specified in the Approved Course Schedule

and

(b) Have attained a GPA in the award stage of the course in accordance with the requirements in Table 2

and

(c) Pass the final examination in the case of full-time candidates, at the first attempt and in one sitting or in the case of part-time ACCS candidates, by virtue of passing in each required Examination Subject/Module of the Award stage at the first attempt.

**Table 2 : GPA required for award classification**

<b>Certificate Diploma Classification</b>	<b>GPA REQUIRED</b>	<b>DEGREE CLASSIFICATION</b>	<b>GPA REQUIRED</b>
Pass	2.00	Pass	2.00
Pass with Merit - Grade 2	2.5	2nd Class Honours - Grade 2	2.5
Pass with Merit - Grade 1	3.00	2nd Class Honours - Grade 1	3.00
Pass with Distinction	3.25	1st Class Honours	3.25
		2nd Class Honours (Masters Degree Mode B Only)	2.90

**E5. Borderline Cases**

Notwithstanding the above provisions, an Examination Board may consider as a borderline case, any candidate presenting for an award, whose GPA is within 0.10 of any of the above thresholds, provided the candidate has achieved full credits in all the prescribed subjects/modules.

**E6.** Where a candidate's GPA is below the minimum pass threshold or the number of credits gained are insufficient for a particular award as a result of Grades D or F in particular subjects/modules then:

(a) Only those subjects/modules where a grade D or F has been recorded can be repeated

or

(b) If any of the subjects/modules referred to in (a) above are elective subjects/modules then other subjects/modules may be taken to enable a student to pass in the examination as a whole.

**E7. Courses Structured in Semesters**

Where courses are structured in semesters, the GPA to be used when determining the classification of an award shall be the cumulative average of the GPA's awarded for each of the two semesters, in the award stage of the course.

**E8. Examples of Calculation of GPA**

**E8.1 Calculation of GPA for an award stage**

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>(A) CREDITS</b>	<b>(B) GRADE</b>	<b>(C) GRADE POINT VALUE</b>	<b>(D) GRADE POINT SCORE (AxC=D)</b>
Construction Technology	10	D	1.5	15
Site Management	5	C	2.0	10
Civil Engineering Design	10	C+	2.5	25
Mathematics	5	B	3.0	15
Advanced Surveying	10	B	3.0	30
Quality Management	5	C	2.0	10
Project	15	B	3.0	45
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>			<b>150</b>

The candidate's GPA is calculated as,

$$\frac{\text{Total Grade Score}}{\text{Total Credits}} = \frac{150}{60} = 2.5 \text{ - Merit Grade 2}$$

(See Table 2)

**E8.2 Calculation of GPA for an award stage where the candidate has an exemption in one subject (see 3 (d) above)**

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>(A) CREDITS</b>	<b>(B) GRADE</b>	<b>(C) GRADE POINT VALUE</b>	<b>(D) GRADE POINT SCORE (AxC = D)</b>
Construction Technology	10	C	2.0	20
Site Management	5*	X	-	-
Civil Engineering Design	10	C+	2.5	25
Mathematics	5	A	4.0	20
Advanced Surveying	10	A	4.0	40
Quality Management	5	C	2.0	10
Project	15	B+	3.5	52.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>			<b>167.5</b>

The candidate's GPA is calculated as:-

$$\begin{array}{rclcl}
 \text{Total Grade Score} & & 167.5 & & 167.5 \\
 \hline & = & \hline & = & \hline \\
 \text{Total Credits} & & 60-5^* & & 55 \\
 & = & & & \\
 & & 3.05 & - & \text{Pass with Merit, Grade 1} \\
 & & & & \text{(See Table 2)}
 \end{array}$$

**E8.3 Calculation of GPA for the award stage of a course structured in semesters.**

<b>SUBJECT/MODULE</b>	<b>(A) CREDITS</b>	<b>(B) GRAD E</b>	<b>(C) GRADE POINT VALUE</b>	<b>(D) GRADE CREDIT SCORE (AxC=D)</b>
<b>SEMESTER 1</b>				
Financial Management 1	10	B	3.0	30
Management 1	5	C+	2.5	12.5
Accounting & Audit Control 1	5	D	1.5	7.5
Taxation 1	5	C	2.0	10
Company Law 1	5	A	4.0	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>			<b>80</b>

$$\text{Candidate's GPA for Semester 1} = \frac{80}{30} = 2.67$$

<b>SEMESTER 2</b>				
Financial Management 2	10	A	4.0	40
Management 2	5	B+	3.5	17.5
Accounting & Audit Control 2	5	C	2.0	10
Taxation 2	5	B	3.0	15
Company Law 2	5	A	4.0	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>			<b>102.5</b>

$$\text{Candidate's GPA for semester 2} = \frac{102.5}{30} = 3.42$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Candidate's cumulative GPA for Award Stage} &= \text{Average of GPA's for Semesters 1 and 2} \\ &= \frac{2.67 + 3.42}{2} \\ &= 3.05 \text{ Pass with Merit, Grade 1} \\ &\quad \text{(See table 2)} \end{aligned}$$

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**PART F : GUIDELINES FOR NCEA DESIGNATED INSTITUTIONS**  
**REGARDING RE-CHECKS AND REVIEWS**

**F1. Introduction**

The National Council for Educational Awards believes that everyone involved in the examination process which leads to NCEA awards should be fully informed as to the regulations and procedures in accordance with which the process is conducted. Accordingly the Council puts forward the following broad guidelines in relation to the context within which the examinations leading to its awards should be conducted and within which the mechanism for the review of examination results within the designated institutions themselves should best function.

The Council proposes to its designated institutions that whatever review mechanism is put in place by them, it should be uniform throughout the range of institutions which provide courses leading to NCEA awards. To this end, the Council proposes to its designated institutions in this document a model for such a mechanism based on current practice in a number of them.

**F2. Definitions**

**F2.1 Re-check** means the administrative operation of checking the recording and the addition of marks.

**F2.2 Review** means the re-consideration in detail of all or part of the existing examination material where feasible by the internal and external examiner(s) and re-consideration.

**F3. Procedures to be followed to request a Re-check**

- F3.1** A request for a re-check must be received by the Director/Principal/President of the Institutions or his/her nominee not later than five working days after the exam results have been displayed on the college notice boards.
- F3.2** Only a written request for a re-check signed by the person concerned will be considered.
- F3.3** The College may wish to charge a fee for a re-check which in the event of a successful re-check, would be refunded.

**F4. Procedures to be followed to request a Review**

- F4.1** A request for a review must be received by the Director/Principal/President of the Institution or his/her nominee not later than five working days after the Examination Board meeting.
- F4.2** Only a written request for a review from the person concerned will be considered.
- F4.3** Formal processing of reviews should be completed in time for the appropriate meeting of the Council (see also Paragraph F10 below.)
- F4.4** A review will automatically include a re-check. The College may wish to charge a fee which in the event of a successful review, would be refunded.

**F5. The Grounds for Review**

- F5.1** Before a review procedure is initiated a detailed submission in the format specified by the College must be received by recorded post from the candidate.

**F5.2** The submission must identify the element or elements of the examination for which the review is being sought. It must also specify the grounds on which the review is sought and must contain all information which the candidate requires to have taken into account in the review.

**F5.3** The grounds for review should be specified under three headings:-

- (i) The examination regulations of the College have not been properly implemented.
- (ii) The regulations do not adequately cover the candidate's case.
- (iii) Compassionate circumstances related to the candidate's examination situation were made known to the college by the candidate prior or during the course of the examination concerned of which the Board of Examiners were unaware.

**F6. Availability of Marks and Standards Regulations**

The up-to-date version of NCEA Marks and Standards should be available in the Library of each designated institution, and all students should be advised to familiarise themselves with them.

**F7. 'POST-MORTEM' after issuing of Results**

The Council recommends that during the period following the issuing of provisional results Colleges should afford students the opportunity of discussing their results with appropriate staff. Such consultations should aim (i) to give guidance to students regarding future performance, repeats etc. or (ii) to discuss results being questioned with a view to avoiding acrimonious appeals or legal proceedings.

**F8. The Issuing of Marks**

Colleges are urged to provide appropriate information to students regarding their results bearing in mind that other educational institutions and employers regularly seek detailed information concerning marks and grades.

**F9. Status of Results**

A provisional examination result remains in force unless it is withdrawn in writing by the College. An approved examination result remains in force unless it is withdrawn in writing by the NCEA.

Changes to approved examination results arising from re-checks and reviews will be considered by the academic committee of the Council on the basis of a recommendation made by the appropriate examination board or appeals committee. Any such recommendation should be forwarded to the Director of the Council from the Director/Principal/President of the Institution.

**F10. Date(s) of the Council meetings approving the examination results**

The following will be the normal dates on which the bulk of examination results are approved:

Summer	:	Mid July
Autumn	:	First week in October

Approved results will issue within two weeks of the appropriate Council meeting.

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