

Examination Paper Handling Policy

POLICY DDS

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

(1) The security and integrity of examinations can be placed at risk when handling exam papers during transit. These risks can occur:

- a. during the delivery of papers to and from domestic and overseas exam venues;
- b. when academic staff transport, store and remove papers from office to home for marking;
- c. when exam papers are distributed to casual marking staff; and
- d. as a consequence of the need to transport papers between stakeholders as quickly as possible to meet marking deadlines.

(2) The purpose of this Policy and Procedure is to mitigate the above risks by:

- a. providing a University-wide standard for transporting exam papers, examination scripts and related documents between campuses, intra campus and off campus; and
- b. identifying the possible courses of action available in the event that exam papers are lost, stolen or inadvertently destroyed.

Scope

(3) This policy applies to all staff.

Section 2 - Definitions

(4) For the purpose of this Policy:

- a. 'Examination' means the formally invigilated examination held at the end of a study period.

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(5) Examination papers must be transported between locations in a secure, efficient and timely manner.

Section 4 - Procedures

(6) Examination (exam) papers may only be handled on behalf of the University by:

- a. staff of the Exams and Progression Team of Student Administration Services;
- b. staff of a Shared Service Hub;
- c. School based staff responsible for administering examination or marking; and/or

- d. authorised offshore collaboration staff members.

Packaging of Sensitive Materials

(7) In all cases, packages containing completed exam papers must be clearly addressed to the unit assessor or marker and labelled "Private and Confidential".

(8) Packages must not be labelled as containing 'examination material'.

Dispatching sensitive materials from the University

(9) Packages containing completed exam papers may be transported in person (by a staff member listed at clause (6)):

- a. within each SCU campus;
- b. between SCU campuses; and/or
- c. between an SCU campus and a staff member's residence, but only for marking purposes and excluding where travel involves the loss of continuous and personal supervision of the package (e.g. where luggage is checked in or left in unattended vehicle etc.).

(10) In all cases where exam papers are not delivered in person and are dispatched from the University, staff must:

- a. dispatch exam papers via the overnight courier service; or
- b. send packages to Street addresses where possible (i.e. not Post Office box numbers); and
- c. label packages "OPC" (Overnight Parcel Courier) before sending them to the mailroom.

(11) Adherence to clause (10) ensures that a separate tracking number is assigned, and that the sender can monitor the progress of the shipment and its safe arrival at the destination.

Dispatching sensitive materials to the University

(12) In all cases where exam papers are not delivered in person and are dispatched to the University (including from overseas), exam papers must be dispatched via secure and registered post (or international post equivalent), and packaged according to clause (7) and (8).

Exam Paper Barcode Scanning

(13) Each completed exam paper will be individually identified using a bar code.

(14) Upon receipt by the Exams and Progression Team or Shared Service Hub, each exam paper will be scanned and Exam Attendance Lists and Exam Absentee Lists created.

(15) If exam papers are believed to be missing, the Exam Attendance Lists and Exam Absentee Lists must be reconciled to identify any exam papers unaccounted for.

Log Keeping

(16) Unit assessors located at the Lismore campus must:

- a. collect any exam papers to be undertaken by students at the Lismore campus from the Exams and Progression Team; and
- b. sign for the number of exam papers collected.

(17) For unit assessors located at the Lismore campus, external exam papers will be hand delivered by an Exams and Progression Team member to each School on the day they are received by the University.

(18) An Exam Paper Delivery log must be generated by the delivering staff member to provide a number summary of all exam papers that are delivered.

(19) Exams papers for unit assessors located at other campuses are to be dispatched in accordance with clause (9) and (10) on a daily basis. The Exam Paper Delivery log must be notated accordingly to identify the campus to which the package is being sent and date of dispatch.

(20) All unit assessors will produce an Exam Attendance List or Exam Absentee Lists to enable them to reconcile this listing against the relevant grade sheets and determine if any exam papers are missing.

Communication

(21) Unit assessors must contact the Exams and Progression Team immediately if exam papers are determined to be missing.

(22) Staff sending exam papers between campuses or off campus must advise the recipient of the impending delivery and follow up if successful delivery is not confirmed as expected. The recipient must advise the sender of the successful or unsuccessful delivery of exam papers.

Responsibilities

(23) The Exams and Progression Team are responsible for:

- a. securely distributing all exam papers to on-campus and external exam venues at all University campuses and external exam centres prior to the commencement of exams;
- b. receipting and logging all completed exam papers and exam scripts from both on campus and external exam centres (using a barcode tracking system);
- c. distributing and delivering completed exam papers and exam scripts to the on campus location of each relevant unit assessor or a Shared Service Hub; and
- d. once a unit assessor, Shared Service Hub or other School representative takes delivery of exam papers, they become responsible for safe carriage of the received papers on behalf of that Organisational unit.

(24) School/College staff are responsible for:

- a. delivering or dispatching multiple choice answer sheets to the relevant marking service;
- b. organising the dispatch of exam papers to unit assessors and markers located on or off campus; and

(25) A Shared Service Hub are responsible for:

- a. when requested, organising dispatch of exam papers to unit assessors and markers located on or off campus; and
- b. scanning exam paper barcodes for the purpose of producing examination attendance and absentee lists.

(26) All staff are responsible for ensuring the security of examination material transported to and from their respective place or residence for marking.

Section 5 - Guidelines

Missing (Lost/Stolen/Destroyed) Exam Papers

Communication protocol:

(27) When exam papers have been lost, destroyed or suspected stolen, liaison should be undertaken with the key staff listed below before a course of action is decided:

- a. relevant unit assessor and other academic staff;
- b. Head of School;
- c. School Administrative Officer;
- d. Manager, Examinations and Progression;
- e. Director, Student Services;
- f. Senior Manager, Planning and Operations;
- g. Pro Vice Chancellor, Academic; and
- h. Safety and Security (in the case of stolen papers only).

(28) The affected student should be notified in writing once a course of action has been determined.

Course of Action

(29) The following questions should be asked to inform the final decision:

- a. What number of students is affected?
- b. Are we dealing with one lost paper or an entire cohort or part of a cohort?
- c. What percentage of the overall assessment does the exam component of the unit represent?
- d. What other items of assessment have already been completed.
- e. Does the examination cover aspects of the unit that have not been previously covered in other summative assessment?
- f. Does the unit assessor feel that there has been sufficient rigour in the assessment process to determine a final grade without an examination?

(30) The following principles should apply in reaching the final decision:

- a. The option decided upon should be applied equally to all students in a cohort (if a number are affected).
- b. Students should not be unreasonably disrupted or disadvantaged.
- c. The unit will still be assessed with appropriate rigour.

(31) The final decision may be one of the following, or an alternative action, as determined by the relevant unit assessor, course co-ordinator and Head of School:

- a. The unit has been assessed with appropriate academic rigour and a final grade in the unit can be awarded.
- b. The student is required to re-sit an examination.
- c. The student is required to submit an alternative item of assessment.

****SCU acknowledges that the Guidelines from clause (27) onwards are based on policy provided by the**

Status and Details

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