

Policy Title: Policy on Assessment of Students' Learning

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Acronyms

AC: Academic Commission

CEP: Continuing Education Program

DEC : Department Executive Committee

EC : Exam Committee

HEI : Higher Education Institution

ID : Identification Card

SASAMD : Students Academic Service & Alumni Management Directorate



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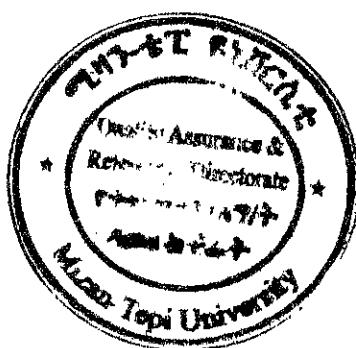
1. Rationale

Assessment is a central element in the overall quality of teaching and learning in higher education. Well designed assessment sets clear expectations, establishes a reasonable workload, and provides opportunities for students to self-monitor, rehearse, practice, and receive feedback. The outcomes of assessment have a profound effect on students' future careers. It is therefore important that assessment is carried out professionally at all times and takes into account the extensive knowledge that exists about testing and examination processes.

In most HEIs the method of assessment being used for measuring student- learning outcome in most cases lacks harmony. It faces a general problem of addressing the issue of validity, reliability, transparency, and accountability. Assessment criterion is applied inconsistently from instructor to instructor. The situation implies the absence of clear procedure for marking and grading of students' learning achievement.

Consequently, the need for creating an institutional policy that guides individuals' assessment practices becomes clear. Thus, introducing a working institutional assessment policy has become imperative for our University. This policy serves as a basic document for guiding assessment of student learning. It is expected to be instrumental to enhance transparency in handling assessment related issues. In fact, the need for this policy has come concerns of quality.

This policy puts in place its relationship to the concerned national policy.



2. Short Title

This policy shall be cited as:

“Mizan-Tepi University, Policy on Assessment of Students’ Learning.”

3. Scope of the policy

This policy will be applied to all colleges and schools of the University.

4. Aims

This policy document:

- Lays a foundation to treat assessment as an integral and prominent part of the entire teaching and learning process rather than a final adjunct to it;
- Aligns the expected learning outcomes, what is taught and learnt, and knowledge and skills assessed;
- Provides procedures to be followed in assessing student learning;
- Gives provisions to enhance quality and standards across institutions programs.

5. Definition and Gender Reference

5.1 Definition

In this policy, unless the context otherwise requires:



- 5.1.1 “University” shall mean Mizan-Tepi University.
- 5.1.2 “Senate legislation” shall mean Mizan-Tepi Senate Legislation.
- 5.1.3 “College/school” shall mean an academic unit of the University which may constitute departments and other units that offer courses of study and conduct research in which a degree may be obtained.
- 5.1.4 “Academic Commission” shall mean the Academic Commission of each College/School.
- 5.1.5 “Department” shall mean a unit of a college/ a school that offers courses and conduct research and render community service.
- 5.1.6 “Module” shall mean a course or set of courses with in a program. A set of modules would enable one to finish a program of study and graduate thereof.
- 5.1.7 “Dean” shall mean an executive manager of a college/school.

- 5.1.8 "Head" shall mean an executive manager of a department/coordination.
- 5.1.9 "Student" shall mean any person admitted and registered at the University in the regular, CEP or any other program.

5.2 Gender Reference

Unless the context requires otherwise, the provisions of this policy set out in the masculine gender shall also apply to the feminine gender.

6. Functions

This policy document serves as an overall guiding and governing document in line with the Senate legislation of the University on matters of assessment of students' learning. Assessment of students' learning is believed to serve the following functions:

- To harmonize assessment procedures
- To enhance improvement of learning and teaching process



7. Procedures

7.1 Establishing Committee

Departments should establish examination committee to scrutinize assessment tasks set to ensure assessments are of an appropriate standard, and are consistent with the programme aims and goals, contents, learning outcomes and assessment methods.

7.2 Exam Committee

7.2.1 Members of the committee: The exam committee is composed of 3-5 academic staff members depending on the nature of the department /number of students in the department/ out of which one chairperson and one secretary will be assigned.

7.2.2 Accountability of the committee: the committee is accountable to the department head.

7.2.3 Duties and Responsibilities of the committee:

7.2.4 Makes instructors to prepare assessment plan and announces for the students;

7.2.5 Follows –up the proper implementation of the plan;

- 7.2.6 Follows -up the proper and timely feedback giving system and documents evidences;
- 7.2.7 Ensures that assessment tools are varied and measures process-based skills, attitudes as well as knowledge;
- 7.2.8 Ensures that there is a transparent , fair, ethical and responsible mechanism for marking;
- 7.2.9 Ensures that the assessment enables effective and appropriate measurement of students' achievements;
- 7.2.10 Assigns invigilators in consultation with the respective department head;
- 7.2.11 Makes sure that every instructor sticks to the schedule except with the permission of the department head in consultation with the EC.
- 7.2.12 Follows-up the proper implementation of continuous assessment and files any document of the process.
- 7.2.13 Reports any apparent misuses of assessment information to the respective department head.

8. Conduct of Assessment

8.1 Reliability

There should be a range of formative and summative assessment tasks and methods, which ensure that all learning outcomes are accurately assessed and to minimize the limitation of any particular methods. For quality assessment, teachers must select from a range of assessment methods for each course, and should use a combination of methods that meets the criteria of validity, fairness, and appropriateness for subject goals. To this effect, for each course, there must be at least one integrated assessment procedure CONTINUOUS, which is FORMATIVE Assessment; and FINAL, which is SUMMATIVE Assessment.

FORMATIVE or CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT includes tests, quizzes, assignments, projects , group works or any similar techniques which indicate and support the development of learners in the program. Nonetheless, there will not be a mid-term exam in all courses.

MTU, Policy on Assessment of Students' Learning



8.2 Adequacy

Unless there is exceptional case for a particular course which shall be endorsed by EC of the respective department ; for the sake of maintaining the reliability and validity of the exam, adequate number of items should be prepared so that:

8.2.1 In both formative and summative assessments in which it accounts at least 60% and at most 40% respectively of the students' achievement :

8.2.1.1 More than one mark should not be given for every objective question.

8.2.1.2 More than 7 marks should not be given for every subjective question.

8.2.2 Each examination shall consist of at least 3 types of test items.

8.2.2.1 At least two objective type (which may be T/F, or matching, or multiple choice, or short answer type) and

8.2.2.2 Essay type.

8.3 Validity

There should be a clear alignment between expected learning outcomes, what is taught and learnt, and the knowledge and the skills to be assessed.

8.3.1 Syllabus coverage

Items should be prepared from each content under consideration, depending upon the emphasis given on teaching. Exams should align with objectives and contents covered in the course.

8.3.2 Fair

Tests/exams should be unbiased against gender, religion, culture, admission categories, disabilities, etc.

8.3.3 Higher order skills

Tests/exams should assess student knowledge, skills and attitude development at different levels, especially higher order cognitive objectives.



8.3.4 Developing table of specification

One means of assuring the validity of items is developing table of specification. Therefore, teachers shall develop table of specification and submit to the Examination Committee as shown below:

Table of specification (Example)

Name of the instructor(s) _____

Course title _____

Course coverage _____

Date of the Exam

Content	TF	Matching	Multiple choice	Short answer	Essay	Total
Ch 1						
Ch 2						
	Total					

8.4 Relevant

Assessment needs to be equally as relevant as curricula. It should test the skills, qualities, attitudes, and deep learning outcomes.



8.4.1 Exam Time

8.4.1.1 Unless there is exceptional case for a particular course which shall be endorsed by EC of the respective department; the total time allotted for the exam should be determined by calculating the number of questions times the time needed for each type of items. Considering difficulty level :

- 8.4.1.1.1 For T/F and fill in the blank type, up to 1 minute
- 8.4.1.1.2 For Multiple choice and Matching, up to 2 minutes; and
- 8.4.1.1.3 For essay type, up to 15 minutes per question should be allocated.

8.4.2 Exam Book layout

8.4.2.1 The exam booklet should have a cover page whereby general information about the exam is indicated, such as:

- 8.4.2.1.1 The name of the university, college/ school and department,
- 8.4.2.1.2 The course title,
- 8.4.2.1.3 The type of exam: formative/summative (test, quiz.../final exam),
- 8.4.2.1.4 Identity of the examinee,
- 8.4.2.1.5 Date,
- 8.4.2.1.6 Time allotted,
- 8.4.2.1.7 General instruction whereby information, such as the number of pages, types of items, and where the answer is provided etc would be written.

8.4.2.2 The exam items should be arranged in logical order-from simple to complex among different item types

8.4.2.3 Each type of items should have its own specific direction and should indicate the value it accounts.



8.5 Transparency

8.5.1 Assessment plan

Colleges and schools ensure that assessment plan is in place in all departments for each course and communicated to the students' right at the beginning of the semester. Students should be advised accordingly.

Students should be clearly informed about the assessment strategy being used for their programme, what assessment methods they will be subjected to, what will be expected of them, and the criteria that will be applied to the assessment of their performance.

9. Procedures for Continuous Assessment

Each department would have the following application of formative or continuous assessments:

9.1 Questions in the continuous assessments shall keep standards to the level students can express their developments in terms of knowledge, understanding and ability or skill. The level of difficulty of questions shall not be below standard that affects quality of education.

9.2 Formative or continuous assessments shall have at least a share of 60% out of the total marks of each course;

9.3 The amount and timing of assessment affects the effective and appropriate measurement of students' achievement of intended learning outcomes. Therefore, within a course, **at least**, any three types of formative assessments shall be given before the final exam. In case when chapters in a single course are numerous, course teachers can arrange the appropriate time to give the assessments;

9.4 The three continuous assessments shall have the following forms: for a course two tests with a total of 20% marks each; plus two assignments/ project works /field or lab reports, etc with a total of 10% marks each of the total;



9.5 The assessment procedure shall also be publicized on the course outlines given to students at the beginning of each course in advance;

9.6 A teacher of a specific course shall prepare any one type of the above stated formative assessment and announce it to students prior to the end of the latest chapter at hand;

9.7 Where there are more formative assessments given in a single course, the marks given to each formative assessment shall be less than 20 %. Uses of assessments with a frequency of more than three shall be encouraged,

9.8 Continuous assessments shall be checked and results be returned to the students within a week.

9.9 While returning the assessment results, instructors shall put their **feedback** on the exam sheet including possible ways to promote students learning.

9.10 Each formative assessment results report shall be submitted to exam committee within ten working days after giving feedback.

9.11 Whenever a student misses one of the continuous assessments, he shall deliver a valid medical or other justifiable evidence for why he misses and the instructor can decide on that in consultation with the exam committee.

9.12 Whenever a student is accepted for compensation test due to a valid evidence for why he misses an assessment, the teacher shall arrange another assessment containing the contents covered by the previous assessment of which that student has missed;



10. Procedures for Final Exam

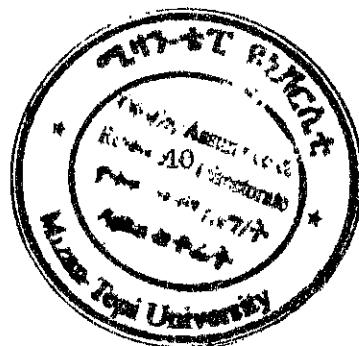
- 10.1 Questions in the final exam shall keep standards to the level of course objectives in which students can express their developments in terms of knowledge, understanding and ability or skill.
- 10.2 The level of difficulty of questions shall not be below standard to affect quality of education.
- 10.3 The share of final exam shall be at most 40% of the total marks given in a specific course.
- 10.4 Like the continuous assessment, final exam shall be made of both objective and subjective question types.
- 10.5 Final exam shall cover all the chapters included in a course; however, more emphasis shall be given to chapters not covered by the continuous assessments.
- 10.6 Under normal circumstance, only one final examination shall be given in a day for a batch of students in a department.

11. REGULATIONS FOR THE CONDUCT OF EXAMINATIONS

Every examination shall be kept secured before, during, and after the administration in every department. Question papers shall be kept safely until submitting them to EC.

11.1 General Regulations

- 11.1.1 This code of conduct relates to tests / examinations.
- 11.1.2 Draft test/ final examination question paper shall be submitted to the exam committee for approval at least a day before.
- 11.1.3 The exam committee should give the question paper back to the teacher upon commenting within reasonable time after submission of it.
- 11.1.4 Members of the exam committee and the teacher should be responsible for any frauds during the process of commenting; returning the exam back to the teacher and till the exam is delivered.



11.1.5 Students' complaints over the security of an exam (stolen exam fully or partly) shall be properly handled by EC together with the department head and appropriate measures be taken timely as per senate legislation and any specific rule and regulation set for this purpose.

11.1.6 Invigilation shall be carried out based on the schedule designed by exam committee.

11.1.7 Under normal circumstances one invigilator must be assigned for an examination room having a maximum of 40 students.

11.1.8 Subject teachers should not be invigilators for final examination and for tests that will be delivered for more than one section.

11.1.9 Subject teachers should be available until the test/exam is over.

11.1.10 Invigilators are responsible for taking the question papers before the commencement of the test/examination, collecting the answer sheets from each student after completion and submitting the number of answer sheets collected to the course instructor.

11.1.11 An invigilator may require a student to leave the examination if, in the opinion of the invigilator, the student's conduct is disturbing other students or is disrupting the smooth progress of examination.

11.1.12 Any irregularities of conduct within the examination room shall strictly be reported to EC to effect appropriate measure for that particular test/exam.

11.1.13 Invigilators are not permitted to smoke in an examination room and must not permit other persons to do so.

11.2 Security before exam

11.2.1 The invigilator shall collect all test/exam papers, answer sheets and other relevant materials from the course instructor 5 minutes before the start of the examination. Any apparent deficiency should be reported to exam committee.

11.2.2 Students not entitled to sit will be excluded. The invigilator shall organize the entry of students in good order and take a register. Students will be required to present their ID card as proof of identity. The ID card must be displayed face up on the desk throughout the test/examination.

11.2.3 Students are forbidden to take any unauthorized book, manuscript, other article or other material , such as bags, a mobile phone, electronic material except allowed for the test/exam by the course instructor into an examination room.



11.2.4 The invigilator shall distribute the examination paper on time and shall announce the start and end time of examination in addition to other instructions for the completion of answer sheet.

11.3 Security during exam

This refers to the process of controlling during exams, collecting, test/exam administrations facilitating and monitoring properly, including taking of attendance, etc.

The following should be given due attention:

11.3.1 After the invigilator has received the question paper from the subject teacher, and/or the Exam Committee, he is responsible to effectively administer the exam.

11.3.2 Students shouldn't come late than 5' after the exam has been started.

11.3.3 Students should not start writing until instructed to do so by the invigilator;

11.3.4 The invigilator should request all the examinees to check the number of items and pages included in the exam.

11.3.5 The invigilator must make any other necessary announcements (if given by the course instructor) relating to errors or modifications in the examination paper;

11.3.6 The invigilator shall be responsible for ensuring that examination discipline is maintained in accordance with the regulations for the conduct of examination;

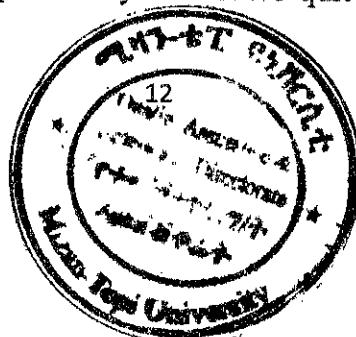
11.3.7 The invigilator shall be responsible for maintaining continuous and adequate supervision of the students. At no time shall the invigilator leave the examination room containing students unless another invigilator is substituted.

11.3.8 Invigilators who suspect that breaches of examination regulations have occurred shall warn the student first. If the action continues, the invigilator shall sign and write the case on the exam-paper of the student. A student who has been signed can be permitted to complete the examination.

11.3.9 If it is necessary for a student to leave the examination room for any justifiable reason during the examination, he will be escorted by another invigilator from waiting list of invigilators during the whole period of absence.

11.3.10 Students are forbidden to communicate with each other or to pass anything to each other during an examination.

11.3.11 If a student finishes the examination before the end of the allocated time, he should raise his hand so that the invigilator can collect the script he may then leave quietly without disturbing other students.



No additional time will be allowed to students who arrive at the examination room after the commencement of the examination.

11.4 At the end of exam:

11.4.1 The invigilator must remind students 5 minutes before the end of the examination to check the number of booklets of the exam paper, writing name, ID number and section on the exam paper;

11.4.2 The invigilator must instruct all students to stop writing immediately the time ends; and must ensure that all students remain sit in silence until all exam papers will be collected in;

11.4.3 Invigilator will, after the close of the examination, ensure that all answer papers are collected from all the students and return them to the respective course instructor together with the attendance sheet;

11.4.4 The invigilators shall officially submit to the exam team and the course instructor immediately any unsatisfactory conditions or activities which he consider detrimental to the conduct of examinations using the format prepared for this purpose;

12 Marking

12.1 Marking procedures

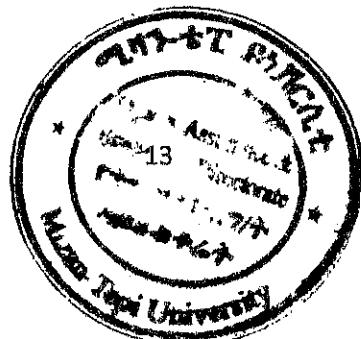
For exam papers and reports that are liable to subjective judgments could be moderated by means of blind marking and/or double marking.

12.1.1 Blind marking

- If possible, a code should be given for the question papers and students should write the code both on the answer sheets and the attendance sheet, they should write their names on the attendance sheet but not on the question paper. The teacher should refer to the attendance sheet when he requires the name of the students after marking.

12.1.2 Double Marking

- If possible (if there is more than one teacher and of students number is convenient), subjective items should be marked by two or three teachers. In doing so, the first markers shouldn't put the mark on the answer sheet, rather on a separate list.
- Double marking shall be utilized when demanded (e, g due to frequent and/or strong complaints).



- For the purpose of accuracy of marking at least 10% of the exam paper shall be double marked by colleagues,
- There should be transparent and fair mechanisms for marking and for moderating marks.
- Each course instructor is accountable for marking his own students' exam paper.

13 Grading Criteria

Grading criteria should be made clear to the students. The department should notify the cut-off point of the grade.

14 Moderation

14.1 Departments in the colleges/schools shall involve internal examiners in assessing some senior courses such as senior essay, project works, action research etc; evaluate the quality of assessment of each other.

15 Handling Grade Complaints & Appeals

15.1 Students should have the right to complain of their grade without being fear of penalty by presenting formal letter at any lower and higher level.

15.2 Upon receipt of the petition for remarking, the head of the department will, after consulting with the course teacher, decide on whether or not there exists a basis for granting the request and where the request is denied the student shall be informed in writing the reasons for the denial.

15.3 If it is decided that a student's examination shall be re-marked, the head of the department shall:

15.3.1 Obtain all relevant exam papers and grade distribution scale employed by the teacher;

15.3.2 Obtain the answer sheets or papers written by the petitioning and other students in the section to which the student belongs.

15.3.3 The head of the department shall then assign at least two teachers from members of the department who shall do the remarking separately and who, if



necessary, may consult with the course teacher who originally did the marking and report separately to the head with a recommended grade.

15.3.4 The head of the department shall then decide what grade to give to the student taking into consideration the grades given by the teachers assigned to do it.

15.4 The course teacher submits the final result to the head in three copies. The head then:

15.4.1 Signs and sends the hard and soft copy to the students' academic & alumni management directorate, one copy to the course instructor and put one copy to the department.

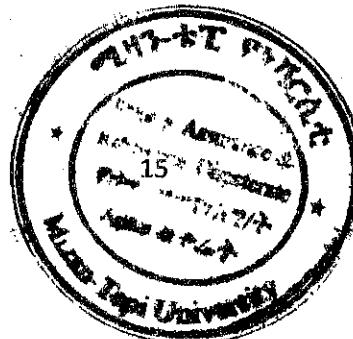
15.5 If, at the end of the remarking process, there is conviction beyond reasonable doubt that the first marking was prejudicial to a particular student in ways that prove that the teacher was deliberately intending on harming the student academically, the head shall take up the matter through proper channels for disciplinary action against the course teacher in question.

15.6 If a student, upon petitioning for remarking, had claimed that there might be motives for which the teacher unfairly graded the student's papers, and if, upon the completion of remarking the paper, no evidence of unfairness is found, the teacher concerned shall receive a letter from the head of the department exonerating the student of any allegations.

15.7 The case of a student who had filed unfounded allegations against a teacher in connection with the marking of examination papers shall be forwarded by the course team leader which offers the course to the head of the department in which the student is enrolled for disciplinary measures.

15.8 Any appeal other than the above shall be treated by department council if not by AC through the department head.

15.9 A student dissatisfied with the findings and recommendations of the DEC and AC and action taken by the department head and dean of respective college/school may appeal in writing to the LTRCDS V/President for reconsideration within a week time. The decision of the V/President shall be final.



16. Archiving of Scripts / Student Results

- 16.1 Grades and other necessary scripts (answer sheets, grade report, and question paper) need to be archived properly.
- 16.2 Copies of all exams, tests and quizzes, along with their answer keys and marking schemes, which go into the determination of a student's final grade in a course, shall be kept with the instructor for at least one year. However, copies of the periodic exams along with their answer keys and marking schemes shall be deposited with the department within five days following the administration of the exams.
- 16.3 The summary list of results (scores) and letter grades should be also kept in the department.
- 16.4 A copy of grade report of each course should be submitted to and archived in the department
- 16.5 A copy of exam paper should be submitted to and archived in the department within two weeks of the beginning of the next semester.

17. Malpractice

17.1 Student: Any academic misconduct including plagiarism, cheating, etc should be penalized as per the rule and regulation set for this purpose and the University senate legislation.

17.2 Teachers: Any teacher who commits malpractices like: absenteeism from exam, late coming during exam, carelessness during exam, late grade reporting, unfair support to students during invigilation, doing other tasks during invigilation, exposing exam papers/items to students before exam, unfair marking and grading, problem of time keeping (forcing the students to submit the exam paper before the given exam or allows them to use extra time) should be penalized as per the rule and regulation set for this purpose and the University senate legislation.

