

INSTITUT  
CATHOLIQUE  
DE KABGAYI



# ACADEMIC QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY

*Kabgayi, August 2016*

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## Preamble

Since its creation, the *Institut Catholique de Kabgayi* has an important three-fold mission : teaching, research and community outreach aimed at contributing to development of the country taking into account the needs for the population development.

Quality assurance of Institution academic programs has been adopted around the world and is widely recognized as a vital component of every viable educational system.

ICK Academic Quality policy is designed as a guide to, and a source of reference for, the principles, procedures and administrative practices upon which the Institution quality assurance mechanisms are based.

This quality assurance policy outlines our belief and commitment to ensure that ongoing quality improvement is an integral part of our Institution.

We recognise that ultimately the achievement of excellence depends upon the ability and commitment of our staff and students, but it depends too on the setting of appropriate standards, the existence of policies, procedures and resources to ensure that these standards are met and the development of mechanisms to monitor the achievement of standards and to enhance quality.

*Institut Catholique de Kabgayi ( ICK)* will aim for continuous improvement in the quality of all aspects of its work as part of its determination to help learners achieve the highest possible standards.

Institut Catholique de Kabgayi ( ICK) is a dynamic community of students, scholars and staff committed to performing at the highest standards. The Institution's aim is to provide a stimulating and innovative environment for teaching, learning, research and research training through a regular review and improvement process. Its approach to quality assurance and continuous improvement is to learn from best practice, locally and internationally.

The Quality Assurance Policy have been developed in key areas in order to facilitate a high quality environment for teaching, learning and research.

This policy specifies the Institution's approach to quality assurance and continuous improvement as well as its principles, features, structures and standards.

# 1. Introduction

Higher education institutions have profoundly been changed in the last five/six decades. The developments of most higher education institutions have not only altered the purposes and organization of higher education institutions, but also have brought about concerns for standards and quality.

Issues of quality assurance and quality enhancement have been a major focus of attention for most higher education institutions in the world within those decades, and worldwide developments relating to quality in higher education have been rapid. This is because no university and Institution of Higher Learning will survive the present competition with other universities in the country, in the region and in the world without paying attention to quality assurance.

The *Institut Catholique de Kabgayi* (ICK) is entrusted with the task of producing graduates of high quality for the country. In addition to this high responsibility vested in the Institution, the changing landscape of higher education nationally and internationally has added urgency to the need to improve and transform its core and support processes. Cognizant of this, ICK has entered in to a process of radical transformation gearing all its efforts to assure quality teaching, learning, research, and the services delivery through a regular review and improvement process.

Considering this, *Institut Catholique de Kabgayi* (ICK) has established the Directorate of Academic Quality Assurance which is responsible to assure and maintain the quality of the entire academic and support activities in the Institution. In order to assure and maintain quality and standards of its programs, ICK develops the Academic Quality Assurance policy. The policy contains aims and objectives, guiding principles, frameworks, focus areas, a set of proposed performance indicators for quality assurance in the Institution.

## **1.1. Definitions of key concepts**

### **➤ Quality**

In this document and in the context of academic programmes at ICK, the term quality refers to .fitness for purpose. (i.e. the institution and its components of activities have .quality. if they conform to the purpose for which they were designed).

### **➤ Quality Assurance**

The process whereby measures are established which ensure that outcomes of academic programmes and activities are of a prescribed standard.

### **➤ Academic Quality Assurance**

Academic quality assurance is a collection of systematic evaluation processes to monitor and review performance, identify quality outcomes, and recommend improvement of the academic units and programs of the Institution

### **➤ Assessment**

In the context of Academic quality assurance, assessment is the process of identifying and ensuring that appropriate internal procedures are in place and operational and that outcomes of academic programmes and activities are in accord with established standards.

➤ **Self-assessment:** Self-assessment is the process of critically reviewing the quality of one's own performance and provision.

### **➤ Self-evaluation**

Each university or college produces a self-evaluation document before the external review visit. This document draws upon the results of internal reviews, evaluates the effectiveness of how standards and quality are managed, and identifies strengths and areas for improvement. The self-evaluation is also a key reference point for the review team and sets the context for the visit.

### **➤ Audit**

Audit is a process of identifying and ensuring that appropriate internal quality assurance processes are in place and operational.

### ➤ **Academic audit**

Academic audit is a quality assurance review process that focuses on the procedures a university or an Institution uses to assure its academic standards and quality. It evaluates how the university or Institution satisfies itself that its chosen standards are being achieved and makes a judgement about threshold standards.

### ➤ **Programme Review**

Programme review is a process of holistic appraisal of a course/programme and resources, with a view to its further evolution and improvement.

### ➤ **Quality control**

This is the process whereby outcomes are assessed to determine whether they are of the prescribed standard.

### ➤ **Quality Management**

Quality management refers to all the processes that are in place to facilitate achievement of quality in an institution

## ***1.2. ICK vision and mission***

The vision of ICK is “to be a centre of academic and professional excellence”. Its mission as stipulated is “to advance and promote knowledge and development of skills in professionalism and innovativeness through quality education, research and community services for transformation of society and sustainable development”.

## ***1.3. ICK academic quality assurance***

### **1.3.1. Purpose of academic quality assurance**

The primary purpose of academic quality assurance is to ensure continuous improvement in all academic programs and units, in research and community services , through a process of internal reflection and constructive, and formative criticism by qualified external reviewers.

### **1.3.2. Mission of Academic Quality Assurance**

ICK’s Academic Quality Assurance Mission therefore is:

To promote confidence in the academic provision (teaching, research and outreach services) that the quality and the standards of awards of the Institut Catholique de Kabgayi (ICK) are safeguarded, enhanced and effectively managed.

This mission statement provides Institut Catholique de Kabgayi (ICK) with ample opportunities against which to build further and develop its quality of teaching, learning, and research base.

### **1.3.3. Role of the Directorate of Academic Quality Assurance**

The Directorate of Academic Quality Assurance plays a central role in the management and coordination of academic quality enhancement activities. Specifically, it develops, coordinates and monitors the institutional quality assurance and quality management system and its processes, in close association with the Quality Assurance Committee and other units within the Institution.

*It will:*

1. Ensure that the quality of academic programmes meets the standards and expectations of the stakeholders;
2. Assist in maintaining and developing quality through the development of support and administrative services;
3. Conduct workshops and training on matters related to quality assurance management;
4. Assist faculties and centres with the compilation or documentation of data related to the identified quality areas, as required for programme review or auditing processes;
5. Coordinate internal review processes;
6. Coordinate responses to external reviews or auditing processes;
7. Etc

## **2. Quality assurance policy**

### **2.1. Purpose**

The Academic Quality Assurance Policy work to ensure the high quality of, and promote standards of excellence in the Institution's new and existing academic programs.

The aim of the Institut Catholique de Kabgayi's quality assurance policy is to enhance the



effectiveness of its core activities of learning, teaching, research performance, research training and management. The policy addresses all areas of the Institution's activities focusing on their contribution to and in alignment with the Institution's Strategic Goals.

The purpose of the Quality Assurance Policy at ICK is to ensure continuous improvement through a process of self-evaluation and action planning.

## **2.2. Goals**

The Academic Quality Assurance Policy has three main goals:

- (1) Ensure high standards and continuous improvement of the academic units and programs of the Institut Catholique de Kabgayi (ICK);
- (2) Standardize the process of evaluating academic units and programs;
- (3) Document and communicate the results of academic quality assurance processes.

## **2.3. Aims and objectives of the policy**

The policy is implemented and carried out in the context of the Institution's Vision, Mission and Values. The policy is based on the expectation that high quality standards shall be achieved and maintained and that academic programmes shall be internationally recognized.

The Academic Quality Assurance Policy aim is to support the Institution's efforts to achieve its Mission and Vision through development and implementation of academic programmes that meet national, regional and international standards.

## **2.4. Objectives of the Academic Quality Assurance Policy**

- (i) To provide guidance in development and implementation of internal and external quality assurance procedures and practices;
- (ii) To ensure that the quality of academic programmes at Institut Catholique de Kabgayi (ICK) meet standards expected by stakeholders;
- (iii) To ensure that graduates have attained skills and knowledge through academic programmes that are valued by stakeholders;

(iv) To enable Institut Catholique de Kabgayi (ICK) to assure itself, its stakeholders and the Higher Education Council that the Institution's policies, systems and processes for the development, maintenance and enhancement of quality in all its educational provisions are functioning effectively;

(vi) To assist in maintaining and developing quality of academic programmes through enhanced support processes;

(vii) To facilitate development of a culture of continuous quality improvement to achieve academic excellence;

(viii) To enable identify areas of strength and excellence as well as areas in need of focused attention for continuous improvement in the short, medium and long-term.

## ***2.5. Principles underpinning the Academic Quality Assurance policy at ICK***

The key principles incorporated into this policy related to the quality framework and processes outlined in the policy are clarified in this section.

### ***➤ Holistic approach***

All aspects of the institution's activities, academic, administrative and managerial, will be subject to audit and reporting.

### ***➤ Ownership***

Responsibility for quality is shared by all staff and students. Students have a responsibility to contribute their views through their programme and school representatives.

### ***➤ Based on self-assessment***

The institution will be judged according to its own objectives, that is, on whether or not it is achieving its own mission in a purposeful and clear fashion.

### ***➤ Improvement focus***

Institut Catholique de Kabgayi (ICK)'s Quality Assurance will have a focus on assisting and facilitating improvement within the Institution. It sees audits as a value tool to assist ICK to enhance quality education.

➤ ***Standards***

Institut Catholique de Kabgayi (ICK) awards are set at the appropriate level and are developed with reference to the HEC standards.

➤ ***Quality teaching, learning, research***

Quality teaching, learning, research are essential to the Institution's mission, goals and activities. The Institution's quality assurance processes are intrinsic to the work of all staff, who are undertaking or supporting teaching and the promotion of learning and research.

➤ ***Collegiality and Team spirit***

The Institution's procedures reflect the principles of rigorous peer review, in order to identify areas for improvement, foster collaboration, and team spirit, exchange of best practice, and encourage a culture of critical self-evaluation.

➤ ***Student engagement and representation***

Participation by students is a key element of quality management processes and is used to inform the development, improvement and enhancement of the academic provision. Student engagement in academic quality takes a number of forms including involvement in validation and periodic review events, module evaluation and committee representation, and takes place both directly and through the student representative system.

### **3. Areas for Academic Quality Assurance**

#### ***3.1. Quality of Programmes and Courses***

Assessment of quality in the design and implementation of programmes and courses ensure that well-qualified staff members carry out such activities, which are based on the guidelines and procedures approved by Senate.

### **3.2. Quality of Academic Staff**

Assessment of quality in academic staff includes expectations with regard to qualifications, scholarly work and continuing professional development.

### **3.3. Quality in Teaching and Learning Experience**

At Institut Catholique de Kabgayi (ICK), assessment of quality in teaching and learning is based on the following principles:

- Create an engaging, motivating, and intellectually stimulating learning experience;
- Encourage the spirit of critical inquiry and creative innovation informed by current research;
- Emphasise the importance, relevance, and integration of theory and knowledge with professional practice to develop solutions to real world issues;
- Provide learning experiences that develop inter-culturally capable graduates who can make a difference as socially and ethically responsible global citizens;
- Enhance student engagement and learning through effective curriculum design, pedagogy and assessment strategies;
- Continuously improve teaching practice through academic staff professional development, and critical reflection informed by a range of evaluation approaches.

### **3.4. Course evaluation**

The Directorate of Academic Quality Assurance develops reviews and monitors the unit/ module and teacher evaluation survey, for the evaluation of courses and teaching. Academic Senate approves the survey.

The Institution evaluates each unit/ module each time it is offered, or if offered more than once in an academic year, at least annually, using the approved course and teacher evaluation survey.

### **3.5. Quality in Student Assessment: Internal Moderation**

Quality assurance mechanism for determining quality of student assessments, both continuous and final is developed. In the absence of external examiners, departments develop systems that are

coherent with the QA framework approved by Senate. These include a minimum of internal moderation procedures that ensure validity of student assessment and reliability of marking.

### ***The Assessment Process***

Institut Catholique de Kabgayi (ICK) is committed to promoting good practice, consistency and rigour in assessment by ensuring that:

- assessment is reliable, with clear and consistent processes for the setting, marking, and moderation of assignments;
- assessment is valid and effectively measures student attainment of the intended learning outcomes;
- assessment is inclusive and equitable, ensuring that tasks and procedures do not put into a disadvantage any group or individual;
- assessment procedures are transparent, and criteria and methods by which students' work is being judged are made clear to students, staff and external examiners;
- the amount of assessed work is manageable;
- each programme includes a variety of assessment types, in order to promote effective learning and allow a range of learning outcomes to be appropriately addressed.

### **Purposes of Assessment**

Assessment in Institut Catholique de Kabgayi (ICK) is at the heart of the learning experience for students and serves many purposes:

- Promoting student learning by providing appropriate feedback on performance;
- Evaluating the extent to which students have achieved the desired learning outcomes of their programme or study-unit, in terms of knowledge, skills, understanding or abilities;
- Providing a mark or grade that enables a student's performance to be established and which may be used to make progress decisions;

- Providing opportunities for staff to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching.

### **3.6. Quality of resources and facilities**

Assessment of quality of resources and facilities at Institut Catholique de Kabgayi (ICK) includes measures of the availability and appropriateness of lecture rooms, library book, ICTs, laboratory or practical facilities and equipment, etc

### **3.7. Quality of research**

In order for ICK to keep an outstanding national and international reputation in research, it is committed to maintaining and expanding its research capacity to achieve research and research training of international distinction. Quality of research includes for the following:

- Assessment of capacity to perform research at the individual and Department/ Faculty/ Institute level;
- Assessment of the research relevance to the discipline, locally and globally;
- Assessment of external research;
- Assessment of research findings and dissemination;
- Assessment of research & research training strategies whether they reflect international best practices.

### **3.8. Periodic Programme Review**

All departments and other academic entities within the Institution which provide teaching services are required to undertake a Periodic Programme Review, which essentially involves an evaluation of the complete portfolio of taught programmes on offer. This process is an important aspect of the ICK 's quality assurance procedures, and serves to ensure that programmes on offer are and remain of acceptable quality, appropriate academic standard and relevant to the needs of society.

A program is normally reviewed once every three years. In consultation with the Deans and Senior

Management, the Institution's Academic Quality Assurance selects the programs to be reviewed and recommends the order of their review.

➤ **Purpose**

The primary purpose of a program review at Institut Catholique de Kabgayi (ICK) is to evaluate five aspects of a program;

- i. Quality;
- ii. Resource use;
- iii. Contribution to the Mission and Vision of the institution;
- iv. Adaptability;

The purposes of undertaking Periodic Programme Review are therefore:

- to evaluate the effectiveness of programmes and the extent to which the intended learning outcomes are being achieved by students;
- to review feedback from students, staff, external examiners, professional bodies and other external stakeholders;
- to ensure that programmes remain current and valid in light of developing knowledge in the discipline, and practice in its application;
- to develop, as a result of the review process, improvements to the programme structure and curriculum;
- to identify areas for improvement/enhancement and to ensure that appropriate actions are taken in response to perceived weaknesses.

## **4. Responsibility in the academic quality assurance process**

### ***4.1. Responsibility of Academic Quality Assurance Directorate***

Institut Catholique de Kabgayi (ICK) has established the Academic Quality Assurance Directorate which has an overall responsibility for quality assurance function. ICK has set out the approaches to managing the quality and standards of the academic work including teaching and learning, research, consultancy, and community engagement in line with its mission. The Directorate of Academic Quality Assurance at ICK plays a central role in the management and coordination of academic

quality enhancement activities.

The main duties of the Director of Academic Quality Assurance are to:

- Ensure that all academic programmes are validated, delivered and assessed in line with the requirements of the Rwandan National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and the associated Code of Practice;
- Ensure that teaching, learning, assessment and student support services in ICK remain at the desired national and international standards;
- Ensure that timetabling and examination process, including internal and external moderation of examinations, are appropriate, effective and up to the standards;
- Organize Seminars, workshops and trainings on matters related to the academic topics;
- Ensure the implementation of ICK's policies, regulations and strategies related to continuous improvement of academic quality norms and standards;
- Coordinate internal review and self assessment processes; etc

## ***4.2. Roles and responsibilities in the quality assurance process***

All members of the Institution community and its organs are sensitized to strive for high quality in their activities. All members of ICK, including teaching staff, support staff and students themselves-contribute directly or indirectly to the quality of the teaching, research and outreach services.

### **4.2.1. Roles of Students in contributing to the quality of their own learning**

Students can make a significant contribution to the quality of their own learning and that of their fellow students. They can also contribute to the improvement of the learning opportunities of future students on similar programmes.

Students' responsibilities are defined in the Academic Regulations. To maintain and enhance the quality of their own learning and that of others, students also have a responsibility to:



- i) Attend regularly;
- ii) Spend the recommended time in student managed learning;
- iii) Use the information and guidance provided;
- iv) Take up available opportunities to receive academic advice and feed back on their work;
- v) Use the system of academic boards, class representatives, and representations through the students' Union to raise issues for improvement.

#### **4.2.2. Roles of Academic staff in contributing to the quality**

It is the responsibility of academic staff to:

- i) undertake scholarly activities which underpin teaching and research;
- ii) be well prepared for teaching;
- iii) provide students with clear information and academic guidance in accordance with Institution regulations, both through written information and by making themselves accessible to students;
- iv) pursue professional development whether in the subject area or in pedagogic techniques which supports teaching.

#### **4.2.3. Roles of Deans/Directors and Heads of Departments**

Deans, Directors and Heads of Departments have the primary responsibility for ensuring that the programme portfolio is developed and enhanced, and that subject specific resources and operational systems appropriately support the quality of the learning experience. Faculty/Directorate, and Departmental roles include:

- a) Ensuring that the teaching and learning environment meets students and staff needs as fully as possible;
- b) promoting with the wider academic community, supervision and monitoring policies and procedures for selecting students and for assessing prior learning;
- c) identifying and disseminating good practice within and from outside the Faculty /Directorate or Department.

#### **4.1.1.4. Role of the Quality Assurance Directorate in Best Practice.**

The Academic Quality Assurance Unit shares best practice with key stakeholders in quality assurance implementation at ICK. This is done by organizing Workshops to disseminate lessons learned, successful innovations, and difficulties encountered in implementing academic quality assurance system. The Directorate also put in place mechanism for an annual conference on quality assurance implementation and research for the Institution.

As a means to control and monitor how quality assurance is complied with internally, ICK regularly conducts Pedagogic Seminars which bring together all academic staff to share and exchange their teaching practices for improvement.

These seminars are organized as part continuing professional development, which is usually considered as an integral part of teacher education because it assures a high level of expertise and enables the teachers to keep their professional skills and knowledge up-to-date.

## **5. Monitoring, Students' Feedback, Evaluation and Improvement**

Students' evaluation of their learning experience is an integral and necessary component of any quality assurance system as by adopted ICK. It allows the institution to evaluate how its service provision is viewed by its most important group of stakeholders, namely, its students. Besides providing them with an opportunity to comment on the quality of courses, feedback ensures that lecturers are made aware of problems perceived or encountered by students and affords an opportunity for tutors to conduct self-evaluation and introspection for improvement.

In each semester, towards the end of class in selected study-units, students are invited by to complete a survey questionnaire, on an anonymous basis. Similarly, the results of the feedback exercise are only communicated to the lecturer/s concerned after the result of the assessment has been published.

### ***5.1. Importance of Student Feedback***

Students play a critical part in the evaluation, development and enhancement of the quality of this learning experience. Feedback from students allows the Institution to evaluate how its service provision is viewed by its most important group of stakeholders, namely its students. Student

involvement requires that students act as collaborators in, rather than merely passive receivers of, teaching and learning.

### **5.1.1. Objectives of Student Feedback on Study-units**

Student feedback on study-units has three main objectives:

1. To provide students with the opportunity to comment on the quality of their learning experiences, as required in preparation for and as part of review processes;
2. To assess the success of academic provision in relation to the expectations of students;
3. To provide feedback to lecturers in order to improve delivery and/or content of the study-unit/module.

### **5.1.2. How is Student Feedback used in the Academic Quality Assurance Process?**

After each semester, only a selection of study-units are evaluated to avoid student fatigue associated with this exercise, however all study-units will eventually be evaluated over a definite period. Results of the feedback process are made available to the lecturers of the study-units concerned, Heads of Departments, Deans of Faculties Academic Secretaries, Academic Vice Rector and the Rector, and areas for appropriate follow-up action are identified and communicated to the Departments. The results of the student feedback process, as well as the recommendations and the action taken on the basis of such recommendations are important considerations for the Programme Review which each Department is required to undertake.

## **6. Responsibility for Implementation**

The responsibility for implementing the arrangements outlined in this policy rests jointly with the (Departments, Faculties, Centers, Directorates, Academic and administrative staff, support staff, Academic Quality Assurance and Senior Management.

# APPENDICES

## Appendix 1: Exam marks recovery process



### EXAM MARKS RECOVERY PROCESS

ACADEMIC YEAR .....

FACULTY .....

SECTION

.....

DEPARTMENT .....

CLASS LEVEL

.....

Date of exam	Module assessed	Names of examiners	N° of exam scripts to mark	Date of collection of exam scripts	Date of return of marked scripts	Observations

Done at Kabgayi, on .....

Signed .....

Names (Head of Department) .....

## Appendix 2: Weekly record on the regularity and punctuality of lecturers

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### WEEKLY RECORD ON THE REGULARITY AND PUNCTUALITY OF LECTURERS

ACADEMIC YEAR .....

FACULTY .....

DEPARTMENT

.....

SECTION .....

TEACHING PERIOD

(DATES) .....

Date	Class level	Names of lecturer	Module unit taught	Starting and ending hour	Observations by the Courses and Exams Coordination Office	Comments by the lecturer

Done at Kabgayi, on .....

Signed .....

Mr Vital NSANZINEZA,  
Coordinator of Courses and Exams

# Appendix 3: Authorization to submit a complete dissertation for public defence

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## **AUTHORIZATION TO SUBMIT A COMPLETE DISSERTATION FOR PUBLIC DEFENCE**

ACADEMIC YEAR .....  
FACULTY .....  
DEPARTMENT .....  
SECTION .....

I, Prof./Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms .....  
confirm that Mr/Mrs/Ms  
.....,

Registration Number ..... who wrote the dissertation entitled  
.....  
.....  
.....

under my supervision, is now authorized to submit it to the Faculty for public  
defence.

Done at Kabgayi, on .....

Signed .....

Names .....

# Appendix 4: Authorization to submit a corrected copy of the dissertation to the library

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## **AUTHORIZATION TO SUBMIT A CORRECTED COPY OF THE DISSERTATION TO THE LIBRARY**

**ACADEMIC YEAR** .....  
**FACULTY** .....  
**DEPARTMENT** .....  
**SECTION** .....

We, members of the defence panel (main reader and chairperson) confirm that  
Mr/Mrs/Ms

.....

Registration Number ..... has corrected his/her dissertation  
entitled

.....

.....

.....

according to the observations and remarks given to him/her by the defence panel.

Done at Kabgayi, on .....

Signed .....

Names (main reader) .....

Signed .....

Names (Chairperson) .....



# Appendix 5: Moderation of assessment

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## MODERATION OF ASSESSMENT

ACADEMIC YEAR .....  
FACULTY .....  
DEPARTMENT .....  
CLASS LEVEL .....  
SECTION .....

- **Module title and number of credits:**
- **Copy of the final assessment** (to be availed by the exam setter)
- **Moderator’s comments** (if the space provided below is not enough, please attach a separate sheet):
  
- **Action to be taken:**

Signed .....

Signed

Names (**Exam setter**) .....

Names (**Moderator**)

.....

## Appendix 6 : Moderation of marking

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### MODERATION OF MARKING

ACADEMIC YEAR .....

FACULTY .....

DEPARTMENT .....

CLASS LEVEL .....

SECTION .....

- **Module title and number of credits:**
  - **Copy of the final assessment** (to be availed by the exam setter)
  - **Marking guide and marking scheme**
  - **Sample of marked exam scripts** (selected from the best, the worst and the average scores)
  - **Moderator's comments and the marks given to the sample by both markers** (please attach a separate sheet for a comparative table)
- 
- **Action to be taken:**

Signed .....

Signed

.....

Names (**Exam setter**) ..... Names (**Moderator**)