

Document Title	COLLEGE BOARD PROCEDURES			Page 1 of 9
Document Number	188	Document Revision	A	Date Issued 26/03/15

GENERAL INFORMATION

1	Document type	Rules and Regulations		
2	Document Owner/Approver	COI		
3	Minimum list of document users to be notified upon release of document update	All Academic Staff and Students		
4	Document change history			
	A	DCTN #	Date released	Change originator
		030/2015	26/03/15	Dalmas Pierre
	Change history (Section/change details)			
Text transferred from Doc 009 'General Rules and Regulations' and Doc 018 Assignments, Assessments, Appeals Policies and Procedures for Levels 1 to5'.				

PLEASE READ BELOW BEFORE REFERRING TO THIS DOCUMENT

Instructions for document users with access to College SharePoint System

All MCAST employees can access current, controlled and approved documents related to the Quality Management System from the College SharePoint system URL <http://eportal.mcast.edu.mt/Main/Pages/DocumetControl>.

Document users who do have access to SharePoint are therefore encouraged **NOT** to retain printed hard copies of the Quality Management System documents.

If however a hard copy of the document is required, the user is to ensure that the printed document is the current revision.

Continuous Improvement

Procedures are meant to be 'living' documents that need to be followed, implemented and maintained. If the procedure does not reflect the current, correct work practice, it needs to be updated! Contact your Document Controller on Ext 7121 **today** !

Document Title	COLLEGE BOARD PROCEDURES			Page 2 of 9	
Document Number	188	Document Revision	A	Date Issued	26/03/15

A INSTITUTE ASSESSMENT BOARD

A.1 Assessment reports and records

- 1.1 The MCAST Institute Assessment Boards are made up of subject lecturers and internal/external verifiers. Lecturers shall ensure that all assessments benefit from verification endorsements and standardisation before any results are processed and/or forwarded for publishing purposes.
- 1.2 The Director, through the MCAST Institute Officer or, in the latter's absence, through the institute's administration, is responsible for forwarding the decisions of the Institute Assessment Boards direct to the MCAST Registrar for processing and for the issuing of certificates and diplomas.
- 1.3 The Director of Institute shall keep a copy of all results in case of any arising queries. In order to avoid complications, results should be completed clearly, accurately and in a timely manner, in accordance with existing templates and/or documents.

A.2 Authority of Assessment Boards

- 2.1 Assessment Boards derive their authority from the MCAST Council of Institutes, and are responsible for the assessment of students. The QA office, in conjunction with the Registrar, is entitled to oversee the operations of Institute Assessment Boards and to nominate, for the approval of the Col, both internal and external subject experts and/or verifiers if and when such need arises
- 2.2 For each candidate the grades for each examination paper or other form of assessment shall be considered and recommended by the Institute Assessment Board.
- 2.3 During meetings of an Assessment Board, every effort shall be made to reach a decision by consensus, taking into account the views of internal verifiers. The Assessment Board shall normally be made up of an odd number of examiners so that if it proves necessary to vote on any matter, it shall be determined by a simple majority. Each member present shall have one vote.
- 2.4 For courses between Level 1 and Level 5, both inclusive, no qualification shall be considered for an award without the written consent of the Director and the External Examiner where applicable.
- 2.5 All members of the institute assessment teams shall make known any personal relationships, or other potential conflicts of interest they may have with any candidates whom they are assessing. Any doubts in this regard shall be raised with the MCAST QA office, which shall formally consider whether members with some personal interest should absent themselves from all or part of the proceedings and the person/s concerned shall abide by any decision on this matter.

A.3 Record of proceedings

- 3.1 A record shall be kept of the proceedings of the meetings of the Assessment Board. The confidentiality of individual students shall be respected, but should it become necessary, this regulation shall not be so interpreted as to impede the work of an appeals board.
- 3.2 The records of the Assessment Board shall include the minutes of the meeting/s and as

Document Title	COLLEGE BOARD PROCEDURES			Page 3 of 9
Document Number	188	Document Revision	A	Date Issued 26/03/15

separate items:

- (a) standardization records;
- (b) the agreed grades for each candidate;
- (c) any recommendations necessary in respect of any candidate or all candidates;
- (d) the result of any vote;
- (e) a note that any claim for extenuating circumstances made by a candidate has been considered, whether or not the recommendation was effected.

A.4 General discretion

- 4.1 An Assessment Board may exceptionally recommend, to the Col that they wish to exercise discretion in a student's favour, where it appears that strict interpretation of a particular assessment regulation would cause injustice, serious or otherwise, to the student.
- 4.2 Whenever the Assessment Board wishes to use this discretionary power to modify the interpretation of an assessment regulation, an appropriate request in writing must be made to the MCAST QA Office, stating reasons for such a recommendation. The MCAST QA Officer shall be responsible for bringing this to the attention of the COI.

A.5 Interpretation of assessment regulations for programmes of study

5.1 Formal interpretation

(a) In case of disagreement, formal interpretation of assessment regulations and any issues arising therefore shall only be made by the QA office in consultation with the Registrar. Such interpretation shall be submitted formally and in writing to the Col for consideration. The Director of Institute shall in turn inform the institute assessment team of the final outcome. The Assessment Board shall abide by the decision.

(b) Such interpretation by the QA office and the Registrar shall not be concerned with academic judgement *per se*, and shall be without prejudice to the authority of the subject experts, external examiners or any external awarding body.

(c) In matters concerning academic judgement, and notwithstanding D5.1 clause (c), the MCAST Col presided by the Principal, shall have absolute jurisdiction on the award of final results and the publication thereof.

A.6 Circumstances not considered to be extenuating circumstances

- 6.1 Extenuating circumstances are exceptional short-term events which have a serious impact upon a student's assessment in two ways:
 - a. Being unable to attend, complete or submit work in good time.
 - b. Significantly affect performance in any assignment.
- 6.2 Extenuating circumstances shall not include:
 - (i) proximity or number of examinations or assessments;
 - (ii) pressure of work;
 - (iii) misreading of examination or assessments timetables;
 - (iv) poor time management;
 - (v) scheduling of holidays or time abroad;
 - (vi) issues, e.g., constraints, resulting from part-time jobs.

Document Title	COLLEGE BOARD PROCEDURES			Page 4 of 9
Document Number	188	Document Revision	A	Date Issued 26/03/15

A.7 Guidelines and Criteria for action by the Board considering extenuating circumstances

- 7.1 In considering extenuating circumstances, the Board of Studies shall:
- (a) note whether acceptable evidence has been supplied;
 - (b) consider whether the student has performed unexpectedly badly in a given module or modules;
 - (c) consider whether there is a significant difference between the students' performance in the year in which they experienced difficulties and their previous or later performance; and whether it correlates with the evidence provided.
- 7.2 The Board of Studies may require a candidate to be orally examined (viva voce) in addition to taking those assessments prescribed in the programme specifications. Reasons for such action shall be communicated to the student/s. Viva voce examinations shall be conducted by more than one examiner and record of the examination questions and examination outcomes kept.

Document Title	COLLEGE BOARD PROCEDURES			Page 5 of 9	
Document Number	188	Document Revision	A	Date Issued	26/03/15

B INSTITUTE APPEALS BOARD

- 1 Appeals shall be lodged in the first instance with the Institute Appeals Board (IAB). This shall be made up of the Director, one deputy Director and a third board member nominated by the Deputy Principal (QA).
- 2 Appeals may be based upon one or more of the following:
 - a. Grounds to suspect that there was an error in the assessment or grading of the work submitted by the student.
 - b. The assessment/examination procedures have not been conducted fairly or in accordance with MCAST approved regulations. In other words, proof exists there has been some administrative error, misdirection or irregularity.
 - c. The assessor/assessment board has been unaware of, or have given insufficient weight to extenuating circumstances supported by appropriate evidence, as verified and accepted by the College itself, which circumstances have adversely affected the students/candidate's performance.
 - d. Discrimination is alleged.
- 3 Appeals on the appropriate form (Appendix A) must be signed by the student making the appeal and will be accepted directly from the student. Appeals made on behalf of a student by a third party will not normally be accepted.
- 4 The appeals form must be submitted within ten college days from the day when the contested result became known or was first published.
- 5 Revisions of paper and/or reassessment of student work shall normally be processed within ten college days.
- 6 Within five college days, following the revision of the examination paper and/or the reassessment of student's work by an independent examiner/assessor or team of assessors, the Director shall inform the student of the final outcome of the appeal.
- 7 Appeals submitted outside the specified deadlines, will normally be ruled invalid.
- 8 During the Institute Appeals Board session, the student lodging the appeal is entitled to be present during the entire hearing session. The student may be accompanied by a person of his/her choice and he/she may also wish to produce any witnesses she/he chooses.
- 9 Lecturers shall ensure that any relevant documentation the IAB may require in connection with the case, shall be in place at all times during the processing of the case.
- 10 The IAB has the power to request attendance and further information from lecturers and/or assessors and other institute staff. The Board may make the following recommendations to the Registrar:
 - a. To uphold the decision of the Assessor/Assessment Board.
 - b. Direct the Assessor/Assessment Board to review the assessment decision, taking into account certain facts.

Document Title	COLLEGE BOARD PROCEDURES			Page 6 of 9
Document Number	188	Document Revision	A	Date Issued 26/03/15

c. To amend or suspend the decision of the Assessment Board or Assessor.

- 11 The decision of the IAB shall also be communicated in writing by the Registrar via a short formal report, to the student/candidate and the relative lecturer / lecturers within five College days. A copy of the report shall be sent to the institute director.

Document Title	COLLEGE BOARD PROCEDURES			Page 7 of 9
Document Number	188	Document Revision	A	Date Issued 26/03/15

C CORPORATE APPEALS BOARD

- 1 If the student still feels aggrieved by the decision, they may still wish their case to be heard by the MCAST Corporate Appeals Board (CAB). This shall be made up of the Deputy Principal (QA), the Registrar and a director of institute who is different from the one where the student attends and who is appointed by the Principal.
- 2 Students who opt to appeal to the MCAST Corporate Appeals Board shall write a letter to the Deputy Principal QA within ten (10) college days from the date of the communication to the student by the Registrar.
- 3 Directors shall ensure that all documentation relevant to the case is forwarded to the CAB before the appeal is heard.
- 4 The decision of the CAB shall be final.

Document Title	COLLEGE BOARD PROCEDURES			Page 8 of 9
Document Number	188	Document Revision	A	Date Issued 26/03/15

D INSTITUTE REVIEW BOARD

- 1 The automatic review system for students following programmes at Levels 3, 4 and 5 is applied at the end of the course.

The Institute Review Board (IRB) does not apply to repeating students.

The Institute Review Board System comes into effect as from the Academic Year 2012/2013.

- 2 Students who attempt all pass criteria of their programme of studies are eligible for a Review Board as follows:

- (a) Students on all Level 3 programmes who fail in not more than TWO pass criteria will be the subject of a meeting with the Institute Review Board (IRB) to ascertain the knowledge and competence of the student in the subject/s.

- (b) Students on all Level 4 and 5 programmes who fail in not more than THREE pass criteria overall but not more than TWO criteria in any one unit will be the subject of a meeting with the Institute Review Board (IRB) to ascertain the knowledge and competence of the student in the subject/s.

- 3 Students do not need to request to appear before the Institute Review Board since it will be the Institute who will communicate with the students entitled to such review. The decision of the IRB cannot be the subject of an appeal. However, appeals on the basis of discrimination, unfair treatment, etc., such as those submitted to the Institute Appeals Board and the MCAST Corporate Appeals Board, will remain.

- 4 Each Institute will have its own 'Review Board' (IRB). This is different from the Institute Appeals Board (IAB) and the MCAST Corporate Appeals Board (CAB).

The Institute 'Review Board' (IRB) is made up of a Chairperson (usually the Institute Director or his delegate), the Deputy Director (or the Institute Officer) who is the Institute's Quality Nominee, the Internal Verifier of the assignment under review, and the assessor of the assignment under review.

The Institute Officer, or any other Institute member from the administrative support staff, will act as Secretary to the IRB. The secretary will keep the minutes and all records of the 'Review Board.'

- 5 By the end of the academic year after all assessments for the completed programmes have been concluded (that is, at the end of the year for Level 3 programmes and at the end of the second year for Level 4 and Level 5 programmes) but before your programme's result is posted to you in early summer, each Institute will identify the students who are eligible for review. The institute will then set up the IRB and ensure that all its decisions are taken by September. Students who will be asked to take part in a Review Board may apply for progression provisionally.

- 6 The 'Review Board' will set up a meeting with the eligible student, such that the student will be offered the opportunity to show that he / she can actually obtain the pass criterion/criteria through his / her clarification. The Board may either decide that the student has obtained the pass criterion/criteria or it **may decide that the criteria/criterion has still not been obtained**. This decision cannot be appealed to the IAB or the CAB.

Document Title	COLLEGE BOARD PROCEDURES			Page 9 of 9
Document Number	188	Document Revision	A	Date Issued 26/03/15

- 7 Students who are called up to appear before the IRB will be advised at least 5 clear days before the hearing is set to take place.

If a student fails to turn up for the appointment, he/she will not have a second opportunity to meet the Board, thus missing this 'Review Board' meeting. A second appointment may be issued if the student can prove that he / she had a justifiable reason for not attending and could not have informed the institute beforehand of his/her inability to attend.

The meeting with the 'Review Board' members provides students with the opportunity to have a brief 'viva voce' session that can prove their ability to obtain the failed criteria by correctly responding to the questions asked by the Board.

Students from the Institute of Art & Design may present new work during their Review Board session.

- 8 The 'Review Board' members decide whether you deserve to be awarded the pass criteria on the basis of the performance during the 'Review Board' session. If their conclusion is positive, the 'amended pass criteria' will be reflected in the student's result.

In case the 'Review Board' decides that a student still does not merit to be awarded a pass in any of the failed criteria, the result will be issued without any amendments. This decision cannot be appealed at either the IAB or the CAB. As already stated above, in all cases students may always appeal to the IAB and the CAB for unfair or preferential treatment, discrimination, etc.

The student' right to refer the case to the University Ombudsman is retained.