

Section 13 PUBLIC EXAMINATION MARKING BOARD

The public examinations marking board consists of panels of practising teachers of the various public examination courses. These teachers are hired each year to mark the examinations. Marking begins immediately following completion of the examinations and normally is completed within two weeks.

13.1 Qualifications and Selection Procedures

(a) Eligibility

- i. A minimum of a Grade V teaching certificate with at least three university semester courses in the subject.
- ii. A minimum of three years teaching experience, including the present year, teaching the pertinent course. If there is a shortage of applicants, consideration will be given to applicants who have taught the pertinent course in the preceding school year.
- iii. Evaluation of past performance with item writing, validation, and marking board scoring is also considered.

(b) Marking Board Administrators

One or two individual(s) shall be appointed to provide on-site administration of the board. Applicants for this position will be required to be practising teachers with administrative experience, and preference will be given to candidates with marking board experience. Selection will be on the basis of favourable reference checks.

(c) Chief Marker Selection

Chief markers with no marking responsibilities are appointed for boards having four or more markers. Smaller boards may be combined under one chief marker for two or more courses or chief markers may be assigned marking responsibilities on boards having three or less markers.

Associate chief markers are appointed for larger boards such as English to lead tables, train markers, ensure consistency, etc.

The following special conditions apply with respect to chief marker appointments:

- i. Selection is made on the basis of the following:
 - Teaching certificate VI with a degree in the pertinent subject area
 - Minimum of five years' experience teaching the course
 - Favourable reference checks

- Previous marking board experience
 - Experience in item writing and validation of exams is also considered
- ii. Chief markers should not serve as the chief marker for more than five consecutive years unless circumstances dictate otherwise.
- (d) **Associate Marker Selection**
- Marker selection is carried out to ensure consistency from year to year as well as provide the opportunity for all interested teachers to participate in the marking board process. To facilitate this, markers are selected such that:
- (i) each board includes returning markers from the previous year;
 - (ii) each board includes new markers; and,
 - (iii) markers should not serve on a marking board for more than three consecutive years unless circumstances dictate otherwise.

13.2 Duties of Marking Board Personnel

(a) Marking Board Administrators

The marking board administrator's act as administrative assistants to the Manager of Evaluation with responsibility for all general administrative functions as outlined below:

- (i) Room assignments for individual boards
- (ii) Deployment and supervision of clerical staff
- (iii) Preparing and administering the working day schedule, including opening and closing, lunch and rest breaks. (The work day is 7½ hours, including one hour for lunch and a half hour total for breaks)
- (iv) Communication with the department regarding matters related to personnel
- (v) Organization and direction of procedures for handling mail, distributing papers among the various boards, sorting materials for record and storage purposes, and other related work
- (vi) Maintaining an attendance record for all markers and clerical staff
- (vii) Coordination of the recording and submitting of exam marks by chief markers

- (viii) Assistance to the Manager of Evaluation in appraising the general conduct of the various boards
- (ix) Reporting on the administrative aspects of the board to the Manager of Evaluation immediately following the closing of the board

(b) **Chief Markers**

Chief markers are responsible, under the direction of Department of Education and Early Childhood Development staff, for the following:

- (i) To oversee and assist in applying security protocols for all examinations (i.e.; exams are not to be copied, duplicated or distributed in any way)
- (ii) The general organization of the board, including the assignment of markers, and the monitoring of progress
- (iii) Preparation of a marking key to present to markers on the first day of marking board to vet and validate examinations. Acting as leaders of their boards for the confirmation and/or refinement of the marking key, the development of the marking system, and advising on the resolution of special contingencies in the marking
- (iv) Assisting the marking board administrator as directed in maintaining a record of markers' attendance
- (v) Monitoring the computer entry of marks
- (vi) Conducting reliability checks for consistency of marking standards according to established department procedures
- (vii) Supervising the conduct of markers and clerical staff, ensuring that appropriate order and decorum are maintained by all personnel
- (viii) Maintaining the confidentiality of all information regarding the results generally or of any individual or school
- (ix) Where deemed appropriate, oversee the identification of exemplars for questions in their courses
- (x) On completion of marking, preparing a report for the Manager of Evaluation. This report will include an evaluation of all markers and clerical staff and a student response analysis
- (xi) Upon completion, reviewing the section of public examination report for their course (applicable to public exam boards)

(c) **Associate Markers**

Markers are responsible, under the direction of the chief marker, for the following:

- (i) Diligently marking exams with a focus on accuracy and consistency according to the system established at the commencement of marking
- (ii) Abiding by the new protocols established in relation to exam security (i.e.; exams are not to be copied, duplicated or distributed in any way)
- (iii) Bringing to the attention of the chief marker any problem encountered in the marking that appears to require special consideration, (e.g., an error in the examination)
- (iv) Serving on the board until all papers have been marked, including any extension of time beyond the tentative termination date initially stated
- (v) Maintaining continuous, punctual attendance throughout the duration of the board
- (vi) Maintaining the confidentiality of all information regarding the results generally or of any individual or school
- (vii) Ensuring all exams are appropriately boxed and ready to be couriered back to the Department at the conclusion of the marking board,
- (viii) Conducting themselves in accordance with all rules, regulations and schedules established for the board. Failure to adhere to the above mentioned responsibilities constitutes sufficient reason for dismissal from the marking board

13.3. Marking Guidelines

(a) **Marking Keys**

Standard procedure involves the preparation and submission of a key as part of the development process. The first duty of each marking board is to confirm, refine, and/or create a key to guide the marking.

An appropriate marking key should contain:

- (i) A model or description of answers that would receive full marks. A model answer, where this is appropriate, may include objectives, mathematics solutions, answers consisting of a specific itemization, etc. For more open-ended or subjective items, a description with examples may be more helpful;

- (ii) Where feasible, a listing of all pertinent facts the answer may require, or which may be cited in the answer, for value
- (iii) Detailed suggestions for evaluating partial or less than perfect answers, specifying a system for awarding partial marks; and
- (iv) Specific suggestions for distribution of the given value in answers calling for discussion, synthesis and essay writing.

(b) **General Guidelines**

A marking system should be developed during the first session(s) and should be followed as consistently as possible by all markers throughout the marking. Guidelines and points of policy which should be followed in developing and maintaining an appropriate marking system include:

- (i) Before marking commences, attempt to identify any errors or other difficulties on the examination which could affect marking. For any such contingencies, contact the Manager of Evaluation.
- (ii) Identify the examinations for which special treatment has been directed by the Manager of Evaluation, and ensure that the directions for marking these examinations are followed.
- (i) Mechanics of English and French will be evaluated in accordance with course outcomes. Where the outcomes being assessed do not relate to the conventions of writing or to the surface features of language such as the physical character of the handwriting, such conventions or features should not be specifically evaluated, nor be allowed to influence the marks awarded.
- (iv) As a general rule, each board should be organized as a single panel so that each item is marked by the same marker(s) throughout the entirety of the marking board.
- (v) Markers are expected to work at a reasonable pace, but without jeopardizing quality and consistency. It is the responsibility of the chief marker to see that all markers are appropriately deployed to avoid the necessity of any marker having to rush to keep pace with others.
- (vi) Markers are to use the following procedure in placing markings on the examinations:
 - Once an answer has been read, block off along the left margin.
 - When each item has been marked, enter the mark on the back flap.
- (vii) After each examination has been marked, it is to be checked for each of the following:

- That all items have been marked, as indicated by blocking off and the notation of a mark for each part; and
- That marks for each item have been correctly transferred to the end flap.

It is the responsibility of chief markers to see that clerical staff assigned to their boards are properly instructed and supervised in the performance of this work. The checker making the check should initial each examination as it is completed.

(c) **Reread Guidelines**

For a reread, a qualified marker will review the marking of an examination paper to determine whether the standard **originally intended** had been accurately adhered to. A clerical recheck of the paper is also made in conjunction with each reread. In performing rereads, markers are to adhere to the following policies and procedures:

- (i) Each item or item part is to be considered separately, and item discrepancies are to be aggregated at the end to determine whether a change is warranted.
- (ii) It is important for markers to understand that they are not to change the marking standard in any way, nor to make any change to the key.
- (iii) The essential objective in rereading each item is to determine whether the original mark is in accordance with the intended standard for the item, or whether the original marker erred in grading the item relative to the standard.
- (iv) Actual reread markings may be placed on a separate sheet in order to clearly distinguish them from the original markings. Reread item scores should be placed on the examination flap.