

Oral Examination Rubric Notes to Examiners





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to offer excellent face to face and online academic courses with the aim of providing students with a learning experience comprising of quality of teaching, learning facilities and a positive education experience.

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The Purpose of Oral Examination

The three major goals of an oral examination are:

1. Providing a better approach to assess the depth of knowledge of the theory acquired in the particular unit.
2. To delve further into data analysis of the written assessment, judging the student's capability to interpret data analysis and also to ensure there is no contract cheating.
3. Assess the progress of students' communication abilities through the study of theory, that is, evaluate how well students have learned to verbally explain what they have learned in the unit of the selected course. Major learning outcomes include enhanced communication abilities.

1. The structure of an Oral Examination

It is advisable that oral examinations be organised in:

- blocks of 10 to 20-minute blocks per student;
- sessions possibly not exceeding two days;
- time slots chosen by the students themselves on a first come, first served basis.

During the oral examination it is advisable that:

- students should be asked not to use any virtual backgrounds and examiner should make sure that they are not accompanied.
- the examiner asks the student two randomly chosen questions from a list prepared by the examiner which has been previously sent to the Academy, to be answered within a two-minute time frame for each question.
- in the case where there is an applied project, students should be asked questions regarding their interpretation of the data they collected, and the approach adopted to collect such data.
- follow up questions should take a minimum of five minutes up to a maximum of ten minutes.
- the last five minutes should be dedicated to providing feedback to the student and assigning a grade to the answers given.

It is also advisable to follow the provided rubric-based form and complete this form at the moment of conclusion of each individual interview. This will allow a fast issue of all the students' results on completion of all examinations.

In order to ensure the unlikely event of academic dishonesty, each student should be asked to provide adequate identification. This may be in the form of an ID Card, passport, or driving licence.

2. Grading Criteria

The rubric for oral examinations recommends that each section should carry a maximum of 4 marks up to a total of 20 for the whole examination.

In order to ensure the uniformity of student grading method and fairness, the Academy will appoint a Moderator who may assess any examination, notwithstanding the grade given. With the student's permission, oral examinations may be recorded and submitted for review by the moderator.

Guidelines to be followed while carrying out Oral Examinations with reference to the supplied rubric

Fluency of the subject

Although oral assessment is used to test students' level whatever the level, it helps the examiner to grasp better the students' understanding of the subject under examination and their ability to apply theory to the context presented.

The way students communicate with the examiners exposes the interpersonal skills of the students in interacting with the examiners themselves, in an audience or with a client or patient in a mock setting. This will give the examiner an insight as to how the student has adapted the skills and theory learned and how they will be applied in real life situations.

Interaction is one of the main traits of an oral examination. The examiner should interact with the student in such a way as to delve further into the knowledge acquired by the person being examined. Interaction is recommended; however it is important that the same methods and fairness are applied to all students. It is also recommended that further questioning be planned beforehand and not be sporadic. This will also ensure further fairness and uniformity with all students. In this context it is also important to also decide on the method and tone of the interaction beforehand and always keep uniformity with all students.

Vocabulary of Subject

In this section the examiner must assess the grasp of the student on technical jargon relating to the discipline learned and under examination. The proper use of such jargon indicates a good understanding of the subject under examination and gives insight into how the student will put theory into practice when dealing with clients or in real life situations where decisions must be made or advice to be given.

Argument of Subject

The examiner should present a hypothetical situation to the student in order to assess ability to think and apply theory into practice. The situation presented may be totally made up or refer to a real life situation. Students should be encouraged to form a diagnosis of the problem and make their recommendations about which course of action should be taken to solve the situation. They should do this with reference to their knowledge and basing their diagnosis and solutions on skills acquired. The examiner should assess the fluidity of the answers given, the way students articulate the argument at hand and how they reach their diagnosis and solutions through the correct adaptation of theory learned.

Structure of thoughts

This part relates to how the students structure their arguments, step by step in order to reach their final conclusions. The logical build-up is assessed by the examiner, with attention to gradual yet steady progression in forming the argument. The examiner must keep a close watch for hesitation, fragmented and disjointed patterns in structure and grade accordingly.

Prompting

Ideally, every student should be able to evolve an answer to questions or tackle pseudo situations without the minimum prodding by the examiner. While examiners are not precluded from trying to help the student being examined to get on the right track with the answers or direction to solve a given problem, it is only natural that students who do not need to benefit from this push obtain the better score according to rubric guidelines.

3. Who may serve as an examiner

In most cases, professionals who lecture our students also serve as examiners. The academy however reserves the right to appoint other professionals in the same study field who are experienced in roles of judgment and examination in the same respective field of profession.

4. Other Essential Considerations

Validity

The validity of a proper oral assessment relies on allowing students to give a comprehensive view of the skills and knowledge acquired during their course of study. For this reason, the questions asked by the examiner must well reflect the academic content of the course itself and must include as many important aspects of the course content as possible. It is equally important that references to subjects which have not formed part of the studies included in the course are not included in the set of questions.

The questioning must have the aim of encouraging students to study harder and prepare themselves better to tackle complex situations brought up during the oral examination. The results should also be clearly indicative of excellence or otherwise with reasons given for each score.

Reliability

It is important to preserve and reinforce the reliability of oral examinations, especially since they carry a considerable percentage of the final examination grade. The following guidelines are intended to boost the reliability of oral examinations.

This guide and the related rubric have been developed to enforce the reliability of oral examinations and are provided to the students before the examination to promote fairness.

As mentioned before, oral examinations should be made on a set of pre agreed questions. Increasing the number of agreed questions ensures better reliability.

While many oral examinations are based on discussing one particular case, where possible it is advisable that more cases are randomly questioned about, always making sure that the scenario represented in the case relates to the field of study under examination.

Fairness

It is imperative that students who prove themselves equally prepared and knowledgeable in the subject examined, should be assessed in the same way and graded in a similar manner. Students should be given equal opportunities to prove their proficiency and preparation and their grading should be devoid of any bias. The examiner should never base assessment on motives extraneous to the subject examined and must never be influenced by differences in age, gender, ethnicity, educational background. Most importantly examiners must not allow their judgment to be influenced either consciously or subconsciously.

Questions or case scenarios should never favour one student over another. To counter this, it is always advisable that two examining colleagues conduct the questioning and review each other's judgment.



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