REGULATIONS FOR TWO YEARS POSTGRADUATE DEGREE ONLINE PROGRAMMES

2024- 2025

Centre for Online Education (COE)

VISION AND MISSION

Vision

To become a leading global center of excellence in online education, empowering individuals and communities through accessible and innovative programs to foster holistic development by enhancing knowledge, creativity, entrepreneurship, and research, thereby transforming society.

Mission

- World-Class Education: To deliver diverse, cutting-edge online education aligned with maintaining standards in science, liberal arts, and technology.

- Accessibility and Inclusivity: To provide flexible, inclusive learning opportunities for a diverse student body, promoting lifelong learning with a focus on societal needs.

- Innovation and Research: To engage in impactful research and innovative practices in online education, addressing evolving societal demands.

- Personal and Professional Development: To create a global platform nurturing critical thinking and entrepreneurship, contributing to sustainable societal progress through continuous knowledge sharing and collaboration.

- Excellence and Collaboration: To maintain the highest standards in pedagogy and technology, fostering an environment of collaboration and

quality that drives research and innovation on an environment of collaboration and quality that drives research and innovation on a global scale.

1. Scope and Applicability

These regulations apply to all **postgraduate online degree programmes** offered through MAHER's Centre for Online Education (CFOE), in alignment with University Grants Commission (UGC) (ODL & Online) Regulations, 2020 and subsequent amendments.

2. Definitions

1. **Programme:** Postgraduate or undergraduate degree programs offered under Online Learning (OL).
2. **Course:** Subject or papers having specified units which comprises a specified programme of study.
3. **Institution:** Meenakshi Academy of Higher Education and Research (MAHER).
4. **Academic Council:** The apex statutory body on all academic matters of MAHER.
5. **Dean (Academic Affairs):** Administers academic matters at MAHER.
6. **Dean (Student Affairs):** Oversees the welfare and discipline of students.
7. **Controller of Examinations:** Responsible for the conduct of examinations and declaration of results.
8. **Director:** Director of the Centre for Online Education.
9. **Online Education:** Flexible learning opportunities using the internet, e-learning materials, and full-fledged program delivery through technology-assisted mechanisms.
10. **Self-Learning e-Module (SLM):** Modular e-learning content including e-text materials, video lectures, interactive materials, and self-assessment quizzes to achieve learning outcomes.
11. **Dual Mode University**: Offers both conventional and ODL/Online education.
12. **Credit**: Unit of learning based on a specified amount of study effort.
13. **Modes of Learning**:
    1. **Conventional Mode**: Traditional face-to-face classes.
    2. **Online Mode**: Internet-based learning using technology and resources.

3. Programmes offered and duration

The Centre for Online Education (COE) at MAHER offers postgraduate degree programmes in line with UGC guidelines.

- **Normal Duration of the course:** 2 years (4 semesters).
- **Maximum Duration:** 4 years.

4. Admission Regulations

The notification of admissions shall be made public through the official website of MAHER, national and regional advertisements, and social media platforms.

Intake for online programs shall happen twice a year: August and January of each year.

Interested candidates may download the admission forms available online on the official website of MAHER or contact the Admission office at MAHER directly to complete the admission process.

Candidates seeking admission to the first year of the M.A. Degree programme shall be required to have passed the BA English/ any Degree from a recognized University/Institution with a minimum marks: 50% in English language (as Foundation Course) or as English minor (45% for SC/ST candidates).

At the time of admission, students must upload/produce Aadhaar card or any government-issued photo ID for Indian nationals.

5. Programme Structure

5.1 Each programme shall have the following components:

i. Core Courses
ii. Elective courses
iii. Project/Internship.

6. Credit Distribution for each type of courses (Total- 92 credits)

Title of the Course / Course Components	No. of Courses	Total Credits
Core courses including Project*	16	64
Elective Courses (Theory)	4	12

Extra Disciplinary Courses (Theory)	2	6
Soft Skill Courses (Theory)	4	8
Internship**	1	2
Total Credits*		**92**

7. Learning Delivery & Pedagogy

7.1 Pedagogy

The PG Programs have a pedagogy comprising of appropriate combinations of learning from Theory & Practice. Interactive Audiovisual learning materials (Asynchronous), Self-learning Textual materials, Case Study, Live interactive session (Synchronous), OER (Open Educational Recourses), Formative and Summative assessments.

7.2 Delivery of Online Learning Materials (MAHER Online Learning Platform)

60% of the learning materials shall consist of in-house content, including videos, interactive content, and assignments.

The Learning materials (Four Quadrant Approach, UGC online Regulation 2020) are delivered through **Learning Management System (LMS), termed as MAHER online learning platform** using the following link:

https://online.maher.ac.in/

The courses shall follow the following four quadrant approach:

(a) Quadrant-I is e-Tutorial; which shall contain: Video and Audio Content in an organized form, Animation, Simulations, video demonstrations, Virtual Labs, etc, along with the transcription of the video.

(b) Quadrant-II is e-Content; which shall contain; self-instructional material (digital Self Learning Material), e-Books, illustrations, case studies, presentations etc, and also contain Web Resources such as further references, Related Links, Open source Content on Internet, Video, Case Studies, books including e-books, research papers and journals, Anecdotal information, Historical development of the subject, Articles, etc.

(c) Quadrant-III is the Discussion forum for raising of doubts and clarifying the same on real time basis by the Course Coordinator or his team.

(d) Quadrant-IV is Assessment, which shall contain; Problems and Solutions, which could be in the form of Multiple Choice Questions, Fill in the blanks, Matching Questions, Short Answer Questions, Long Answer Questions, Quizzes, Assignments and solutions, Discussion forum topics and setting up the FAQs, clarifications on general misconceptions.

Following table demonstrates the credit value of the courses and the required four quadrant effort as per UGC guidelines. This shall help the students to understand the academic effort required to successfully complete a course.

S. No.	Credit value of the course	No. of Weeks	No.of Interactive Sessions		Hours of Study Material		Self-Study hours including Assessment etc.	Total Hours Of Study (based on 30 hours per credit)
			Synchronous Online Counselling /Webinars/ Interactive Live Lectures (1hourperweek)	Discussion Forum/asynchronous Mentoring (2hours per week)	e-Tutorial in hours	e-Content hours		
1.	2credits	6weeks	6hours	12hours	10	10	22	60
2.	4credits	12 weeks	12 hours	24 hours	20	20	44	120
3.	6credits	14weeks	14hours	28hours	30	30	66	180
4.	8Credits	16weeks	16hours	32hours	40	40	88	240

The student must have minimum participation of 75 % in all activities of online program prior to end semester exam. The students who do not meet the above criteria shall not be allowed to take up the end semester examination.

8. Assessment & Evaluation

8.1 The complete academic performance of a student is evaluated by the internal /external examiners. In the case of practical / project work, an internal / external examiner shall be nominated for evaluation / viva voce by the course coordinator.

The student's performance in each course shall be evaluated based on **internal assessment (formative assessment) and end-semester examination (summative assessment).**

The formative assessment is spread through the duration of course and is done by the concerned course / program coordinator of the course through the online learning portal.

8.2 The formative assessment shall consist of the following components:

1. Assignments

2. Objective type Quizzes

3. Online Presentations

4. Projects

5. Online discussions / Group activities, etc.

8.3 The summative assessment shall consist of a detailed theory paper aimed to evaluate the knowledge, understanding, application and analytical skill of the students.

The question paper pattern for summative assessment includes descriptive questions as per the requirement of Proctored Examinations and / or as suggested in the table below:

Question paper pattern for summative assessment/ end semester examinations (ESE)

Section	No. of Questions	Marks
A	Answer any 5 Questions with either or Choice	5 X 5= 25
B	Answer any 5 Questions with either or Choice	5X 10 = 50
Total marks for ESE		75 Marks

8.4 The examination for online programs shall be conducted in a proctored manner **(Annexure- 1).**

8.5 The students must have completed all the units/modules of a course and have a minimum of 75% participation in online program activities for appearing in the end-term examination.

8.6 Online/ Offline Internship:

Internships (online/offline) during the first year will account for 2 credits and require a minimum of 60 hours of engagement. The internship must align with the student's field of study and be undertaken with approved organizations.Students also can do offline/ online

internships and must submit a report or portfolio showcasing outcomes, which will form the basis for evaluation.The student shall be required to submit an Internship Completion Certification after the completion of the internship issued by the respective organization. **Online/ Offline Internship will be carried out during the first year and marks should be sent to DOE which will be shared to Examination section and the same will be included in the Third Semester Marks Statement.

8.7 Evaluation of Project

The progress of the students in their final year Project Work will be assessed through periodical reviews. Upon completion of the project, the student will have to submit the project report, which will be evaluated by duly appointed examiner/s. The evaluation will be based on the report, the assessments during the periodical reviews, and a viva voce examination on the project work. (Project – 80 marks; Viva - 20 marks Total marks- 100 marks (for 4 credits))

9. Mark Distribution

Following shall be the marks distribution for the Formative and Summative assessments:

CATEGORY	THEORY	PROJECT
Formative assessment (Internal Assessment) ❖ Online Discussions: 10 ❖ Assignments/Quizzes: 10 ❖ Course Completion: 5	25	20
Summative assessment (End – Semester Examination)	75	80 (Project report - 60 +Viva -20)
Total	100	100

10. Passing Criteria

The passing minimum for the Formative assessments shall be 40% out of 25 Marks.

Failed candidates in the Internal Assessment are permitted to improve their Internal Assessment in their subsequent semesters by writing tests and by submitting Assignments.

For summative assessments, the passing minimum shall be 40% of the maximum marks prescribed for the course for each Paper / Practical / Project and Viva- Voce.

A candidate shall be declared to have passed the whole examination, if he/she passes in all the papers including practical examinations.

11. Grading System (UGC 10-Point Scale)

The 10-point grading system of the UGC, as described below, shall be adopted for assessment of the performance of students in various courses of the undergraduate programme. This shall be based on the aggregate of the marks obtained in the formative and the summative assessments of the evaluation process.

Letter Grade	Grade points	Range of marks
O (Outstanding	10	91-100
A+ (Excellent)	9	81-90
A (Very Good)	8	71-80
B+ (Good)	7	61-70
B (Above Average)	6	51-60
C (Average)	5	50
F (Fail	0	<50 Failure due to insufficient marks in the course
AB(ABSENT	0	Failure due to

				nonappearance in examination

12. Computation of SGPA and CGPA

MAHER shall adopt the UGC recommended procedure to compute the Semester Grade Point Average (SGPA) and Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA):

12.1 The SGPA is the ratio of the sum of the product of the number of credits with the grade points scored by a student in all the courses taken by a student and the sum of the number of credits of all the courses undergone by a student, i.e.

SGPA $(S_i) = \sum(C_i \times G_i) / \sum C_i$

Where C_i is the number of credits of the ith course and G_i is the grade point scored by the student in the ith course.

The following table demonstrates the computation of SGPA

Semester	Course	Credit	Letter Grade	Grade Points	Credit Point (Credit * Grade)
I	Course 1	3	A	8	3 * 8 = 24
I	Course 2	4	B+	7	4 *7 = 28
I	Course 3	3	B	6	3 * 6 = 18
I	Course 4	3	O	10	3 * 10 = 30
I	Course 5	3	C	5	3 * 5 = 15
I	Course 6	4	B	6	4 * 6 = 24
		20			139
				SGPA	139/20 = **6.95**

12.2 The Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) is also calculated in the same manner taking into account all the courses undergone by a student over all the semesters of a programme, i.e.

$$CGPA = \sum(C_i \times S_i) / \sum C_i$$

Where S_i is the SGPA of the ith semester and C_i is the total number of credits in that semester.

The following table demonstrates the computation of CGPA

Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 3	Semester 4	Semester 5	Semester 6
Credit: 21 SGPA: 6.9	Credit: 22 SGPA: 7.8	Credit: 25 SGPA: 5.6	Credit: 26 SGPA: 6.0	Credit: 26 SGPA: 6.3	Credit: 25 SGPA: 8.0
CGPA = **6.73** (21 x 6.9 + 22 x 7.8 + 25 x 5.6 + 26 x 6.0 + 26 x 6.3 + 25 x 8.0) / 145					

The SGPA and CGPA shall be rounded off to 2 decimal points and reported in the transcripts.

Transcript (Format): Based on the above system of Letter grades, grade points and calculation of SGPA and CGPA, the examination wing of MAHER shall issue the transcript for each semester and a consolidated transcript indicating the performance in all semesters.

13. Credit Accumulation & Transfer

The Credits earned by a student for the courses pursued at MAHER shall be uploaded in the Academic Bank Account of the student. The procedure for accumulation of credits earned, shelf life, redemption of credits, would be as per the UGC (Establishment and Operation of Academic Bank of Credits in Higher Education) Regulations, 2021 and their subsequent amendments. The validity of credits earned will be to a maximum period of seven years or as specified by the Academic Bank of Credits.

14. Temporary Break of Study

A student may be permitted by the Dean (Academic Affairs) to avail temporary break of study from the programme up to a maximum of one semester for medical reasons or other valid grounds. A student can avail the break of study before the start of first assessment of the ongoing semester. However, the total duration for completion of the programme shall not exceed the prescribed maximum number of seven years as specified by UGC. A student who has availed break of study has to rejoin in the same semester only in the subsequent year. The

student availing break of study shall be permitted to write examinations by paying the prescribed fees or as per the decision taken by the Director-online editor in discussion with the Vice Chancellor.

15. Re-joining after Break of Study

Candidates having break of study shall be considered for writing exams in the upcoming semester provided, they are not subjected to any disciplinary action and no charges pending are contemplated against them. All readmissions of candidates are subject to the approval of the Vice Chancellor of MAHER.

16. Maximum Period for Completion of the Programme to Qualify for a Degree

A Student who for whatever reasons is not able to complete the programme within the normal period (N) or the Minimum duration prescribed for the programme, may be allowed two years period beyond the normal period to clear the backlog to be qualified for the degree. (Time Span = N + 2 years for the completion of programme.)

17. Conduct & Discipline

Every student is required to demonstrate ethical, professional and exemplary conduct in the online classes. The students must maintain decorum during online discussions, sessions, and assessments. The students must refrain from academic dishonesty in their assignments and other assessments. (**Annexure- II**)

18. Power to modify

MAHER reserves the right to revise these regulations in line with UGC updates or institutional requirements. The revisions shall be approved by the Academic Council of MAHER from time to time.

ANNEXURE-I

Standard Operating Procedures for
Conducting Online Assessments

1. Preamble

1.1 This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) establishes a comprehensive framework for the secure and efficient conduct of online examinations for programmes offered by Centre for Online Education, MAHER.

1.2 The primary objective is to uphold academic integrity while ensuring accessibility and inclusivity for all students. With the increasing adoption of online education, the need for robust and reliable examination protocols has become critical. This SOP is designed to align with guidelines and best practices to facilitate a seamless examination experience. The online examination process will leverage advanced proctoring technologies, including Artificial Intelligence (AI) and human supervision, to monitor, record, and review examinations.

2. Purpose

2.1 To provide detailed, standardized guidelines for the preparation, execution, monitoring, and evaluation of online examinations.

2.2 To define the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders involved in the examination process.

2.3 To ensure the integrity, transparency, and reliability of online examinations while addressing technical and logistical challenges.

2.4 To outline procedures for addressing issues such as technical failures, misconduct, and accessibility requirements.

3. Roles and Responsibilities of Stakeholders

3.1 Examination Cell

3.1.1 To plan and define the examination schedule, including dates, timings, and duration for each exam.

3.1.2 To choose and set up a secure online examination platform following a thorough technical feasibility check and the approval of statutory committees.

3.1.3 To develop examination guidelines for students and invigilators, including technical requirements and code of conduct.

3.1.4 To coordinate with subject matter experts to finalize the question papers and ensure they meet the required standards.

3.1.5 To arrange mock tests to familiarize students and invigilators with the system.

3.1.6 To communicate detailed instructions to students regarding exam rules, login procedures, and system requirements.

3.1.7 To ensure proper integration of tools for identity verification, proctoring, and plagiarism detection.

3.1.8 To establish a helpdesk or support team to resolve technical issues during the exam.

3.1.9 To implement robust measures to prevent unauthorized access or data breaches.

3.1.10 To monitor for any suspicious activities or attempts to compromise the examination process.

3.1.11 To coordinate with evaluators for timely assessment and result preparation.

3.1.12 To address grievances or concerns raised by students post-exam.

3.1.13 To conduct a post-exam review to identify areas of improvement for future exams.

3.2   Examiner

A faculty member who is responsible for an individual study component and is appointed by the Examination Committee to assess students by setting examinations on the study component and determining the results.

3.3   Examination Coordinator

A faculty member who is responsible for the organization of the online examinations.

3.4   Assessor

3.4.1 Assessors are faculty members who are directly involved in conducting assessments. They interface with trainees, and assessment/proctoring agencies.

3.4.2 Candidate orientation: Assessors must orient candidates with the process to be followed for the assessment, including the functionalities of the assessment interface and requirements from the candidate.

3.4.3 Availability of domain infrastructure, tools, equipment and consumables: Ensuring that the domain requirements are available in sufficient quantity for the conduct of the assessment.

3.4.4 Invigilation: Assessors must uphold the integrity of the assessment by ensuring that no malpractice takes place during assessment.

3.4.5 Assessments with no accompanying Proctor: In assessments where there is no accompanying proctor on the day of assessment, assessors are also expected to perform the following functions:

3.4.6 Candidate verification: Original Government photo ID of candidates must be checked for identity verification before starting the assessment to ensure participation of only genuine candidates. In some cases, the assessor may need to check the eligibility of candidates through biometric attendance or other means, as per the direction in the scheme guidelines.

3.4.7 Evidence collection: Photos/videos or any other media should be captured as evidence prior to assessment (infrastructure check, documentation) and during the progression of the assessment (videos of candidates).

3.5 Proctor

3.5.1 Proctors are faculty members/technical support executives who participate in the assessment by ensuring readiness and assistance on technology and technology-enabled infrastructure requirements, fulfilling documentation requirements, invigilating the assessment and alerting authorities in case of any anomalies.

3.5.2 Technical readiness: If assessment is being administered on computer systems, then ensuring that the computer systems are compatible and configured for the assessment platform.

3.5.3 Technical assistance: Proctors are responsible for debugging and troubleshooting any technical issues or queries arising in the assessment platform during assessment.

3.5.4 Candidate verification: Proctors must check original government photo ID of candidates for identity verification before starting the assessment to ensure participation of only genuine candidates. In some cases, the proctor may need to check the eligibility of candidates through biometric attendance or other means, as per the direction in the scheme guidelines.

3.5.5 Invigilation: Proctors are responsible for invigilating assessments and ensuring that there is no malpractice/cheating during assessment.

3.5.6 Evidence collection: Proctors should capture photographs, videos or any other media as evidence, as per requirement. This could include images of infrastructure availability, video recording or practical skills assessment, audio recording of viva, intermittent images during theory examination, etc.

3.5.7 Assessments with no assessor: In assessments wherein there is no assessor, the proctor should brief candidates about the assessment procedure and share the instructions familiarizing the candidates with the assessment platform.

3.5.8 In Assessments where there is a remote assessor: In such cases, proctors are expected to video-record the assessment.

3.5.9 Remote online assessments: In remote online assessments, proctors must perform their functions remotely, including candidate verification, troubleshooting, invigilation with AI-enabled support, etc, during the assessment.

3.6   Proctoring Agency

The software company that provides the online proctoring software for MAHER and, hence, facilitates online proctored exams for MAHER.

3.7   Reviewer

3.7.1 After completion of the online examination, the recordings will be analyzed by a reviewer in order to detect possible fraud by students. The examiner waits until all recordings have been analyzed before giving final marks, taking the assessment terms into account.

3.7.2 If the reviewer suspects fraud, the reviewer records this suspicion in a review report. The reviewer sends the review report to the examiner who then determines to what extent there is suspicion of fraud and then forwarded to examination committee for further action. The reports from students, are taken into account by the Examination Cell when dealing with fraud.

3.8   Student

3.8.1 Examinations are proctored, which means that students are „followed" online to check that the examinations are taking place in the right conditions.

3.8.2 Students must take a practice test before each actual examination. For this, students shall receive a manual. The manual describes the conditions that students must meet when taking an examination. Students should use the manual to take the practice test. The practice tests ensure that:

3.8.3 Students have tested the system (operating system, browser, camera, microphone, internet connection, and so on).

3.8.4 Students have gone through every stage in the process at least once.

3.8.5 Students are familiar with the test system (to the extent that this was not previously the case).

3.8.6 If a student does not log in because of technical problems and does not take the examination, it will be registered as invalid, and will not count towards the student"s annual examination attempts.

3.8.7 If a student encounters technical problems because of circumstances beyond his or her control (such as a regional power cut) and is consequently unable to take or complete an examination, he or she must inform the examiner as quickly as possible and collect relevant evidence.

3.8.8 Each examination must be started and completed within the designated period of time.

3.8.9 Students shall use approved IDs to log into the test system.

3.8.10 No result will be recorded for students who have committed fraud, apart from exceptional cases. Decisions on whether fraud has been committed and on what sanction is to be imposed shall be taken by the Examination Cell or other relevant committee. This is not decided on by the proctoring system or test system – they only provide the data.

3.8.11 Students are not permitted to do the following:

3.8.12 Use, or attempt to use, unauthorised sources and tools such as the internet, mobile phones, or other devices when taking an examination.

3.8.13 Share answer with others while taking an examination.

3.8.14 Call in the help of third parties during an examination.

3.8.15 Be outside the range of vision of the webcam during the examination or turn off the microphone, except during any authorised breaks.

3.8.16 Deliberate (temporary) disconnection.

3.8.17 Carry out, or attempt to carry out, technical alterations that undermine the proctoring system or test system.

3.8.18 If an online proctored examination is to be held, a limited number of students can be offered an opt-out option, i.e. the option of taking the examination digitally on campus at the same time with proctoring being done by invigilators rather than online proctoring.

3.8.19 If any student has compelling reasons or serious objections, they can submit a motivated request to make use of this opt-out option. Such

reasons are technical problems students cannot solve themselves, privacy objections or special personal circumstances.

Assessment

4.1 **Definition**: For the purpose of this SOP, online assessments can be considered to be any means of evaluating student achievement, providing feedback, or moving the students forward in their learning process in fully online credit courses. These assessments can be completely online (such as online exams) or just require online submission (such as essays). Assessments can be either formative, designed to monitor students" progress in a low or no stakes environment, or summative, designed to evaluate students against a standard or criteria.

Mode of Assessment Delivery

4.2.1 Depending on the differentiated needs across various programmes, coupled with technological advancements in the field of assessments, a range of assessment delivery modes are available. The delivery modes are derived taking into consideration factors such as:

4.2.2 Requirement of an Assessor (physically present, remotely present, or not present)

4.2.3 Requirement of a Proctor (physically present, remotely present, or not present)

4.2.4 Internet availability at assessment location

4.2.5 Requirement of domain infrastructure, equipment & tools for practical skills assessment

4.2.6 Digital literacy level of candidates to be assessed

4.2.7 Availability of technological solution (infrastructure or software) for administration of assessment.

4.2.8 Depending on a combination of the above factors, the modes of administering assessments fall broadly within the following twp categories:

Remote online assessments

Center-based digital assessments

Remote Assessments

4.3.1 Remote Assessment (online) are those assessments that can be undertaken from any location (home, assessment center) and be assessed

effectively on a technology device, using proctoring solutions like AI-enabled tools and invigilation through a live video-stream by a remotely situated proctor. Depending on the evaluation requirements, remote assessments (online) may or may not have the involvement of a remote assessor. This delivery method is preferred when:

4.3.1 The assessment does not require domain infrastructure, equipment or tools for assessing competency

4.3.2 The assessment can be administered on a technology device that is available with the candidates to be assessed

4.3.3 The technology device specifications should be provided well in advance.

4.3.4 Uninterrupted internet is available at the assessment location at the speed and bandwidth requirement of assessment platform

4.3.5 AI-enabled auto-proctoring tools are available for assessment

4.3.6 Candidates are comfortable with technology

4.3.7 The scheme under which the assessment falls permits the conduct of remote online assessment

Center-based Digital Assessment

4.4.1 Center-based Digital Assessment (online or offline) are those assessments that are undertaken at a Center (assessment center, campus), with at least one person (Assessor and/or Proctor) on-ground to invigilate and administer the assessment.

4.4.2 There are various modes of assessment within this category, which are largely characterized based on the involvement of the personnel on-ground. Proctors are recommended for this type of assessment. Such assessments can be conducted online (using internet) or offline (using LAN or pre-loaded software), depending on the availability of internet. In case of non-availability of internet hindering real-time upload of information – the assessment data logs are recorded and synced with the server at a later period. AI-based auto proctoring is recommended for all cases wherein internet is available. This delivery method is preferred when:

4.4.3 The assessment requires domain infrastructure, equipment or tools for assessing competency

4.4.4 The IT infrastructure is to be provided to the candidate by the Center/Assessment Agency

4.4.5 Internet is available at the Assessment location at the required bandwidth and speed of the technology platform (online) and when internet is not available (offline)

4.4.6 An assessor is required to evaluate the assessment

4.4.7 There is a mandatory requirement to conduct center-based assessment.

Digital Assessment Interface

5.1 Based on infrastructure and equipment availability, as well as availability of internet at the assessment location, the following interfaces can be leveraged for digital assessments:

5.2 **Browser-based**: Browser-based assessments can be administered on any device (Computers, Tablets or Smartphones) leveraging available browsers such as Google Chrome, Safari, Firefox Mozilla, Internet Explorer, Opera, etc. These assessments are conducted online using candidate-specific log-in credentials and do not require an additional application to be downloaded or installed.

5.3 **Application-based**: Application-based assessments are administered through a proctoring agency application installed on a device such as a tablet or smartphone. These assessments have the advantage of including checks such as disabling copy-paste functionality, sharing, flagging violations, etc.

Types of Proctoring Solutions for Online Examinations

6.1 **Online Proctoring**: Online or e-proctoring involves the systematic monitoring of student behaviour in real time during examinations administered electronically to verify the identity of the student, that the work completed is the student"s own, and to ensure test conditions and academic integrity are maintained.

6.2 Monitoring is usually carried out through the camera/webcam and/ or microphone on the device on which the student is completing the online examination and can include monitoring of the student"s screen and computer activity.

6.3 E-proctoring can be conducted live by an invigilator or through Artificial Intelligence (AI) software or a combination of both, or is based on a recording of the student"s activity through video, photographs,

microphone, keyboard or mouse use during the examination which can be reviewed at a later date.

6.4 **Main Online Proctoring Approaches:** There are basically three major approaches to e-proctoring offered by commercial services, or developed in-house by HE institutions.

6.5 **Human-led, live invigilation/proctoring**: Online invigilators (either staff of the institution or employees of the proctoring vendor} use audio and video during the actual examination to supervise the exam virtually, online, and identify issues as they arise. These can be dealt with at the time, with possibilities to stop testing, or later after review.

6.6 This approach most closely resembles traditional, exam hall, invigilation with the invigilator/proctor monitoring the exam remotely. Proctors are usually trained professionals. Varying levels of service may be offered by commercial services to (a) verify test taker identity, (b) observe the test taker behaviour to minimize cheating, and (c) secure test content.

6.7 A proctor can potentially monitor up to 16-32 candidates at a time depending on the provider although some companies offer lower ratios which can make higher levels of scrutiny possible.

6.8 A number of drawbacks to this approach have been highlighted, such as limited scalability (e.g., the size of the exam class is limited by the number of available proctors), the need to have a fixed examination schedule within which all students commence and must complete the exam, and cost (this is the most expensive of the e-proctoring solutions as this has equal human involvement to traditional on-site examinations). Live online proctoring also requires competence by proctors in the use of the technology and intricacies of the system.

6.9 **Recorded invigilation/proctoring:** Audio, camera (video or stills) and other data from the online assessment are recorded and reviewed at a later date after the examination, to assess the integrity of the exam and identify any suspicious activity. This review can be undertaken by a proctor (from the commercial service provider or the institution) with recordings played back in fast forward mode (3X-20X speed is usual) or through automated proctoring.

6.10 Artificial Intelligence software can monitor behaviours it is programmed to flag as suspicious for review later by a human. Recording the examination overcomes the need for fixed exam schedules and means the student can potentially sit the exam whenever they are ready.

6.11 This approach is also more scalable, potentially with large numbers of students able to sit exams at the same time and assessment of the recordings can take place over a longer time frame as required. Proctors

are still required however and hence cost can be a drawback if sourced from the vendor. Without the live proctoring, no intervention is possible during the exam, for example to alert the student to a potential issue or highlight incorrect positioning of the camera etc.

6.12 **Artificial Intelligence approaches [fully or semiautomated proctoring]:** Software developments have led to the possibility of AI bots, using advanced video and audio analytics and algorithms, replacing proctors during live proctoring or during review of recorded examinations. With AI proctoring, two general types of protocol are offered:

(a) during live proctoring the AI bot can authenticate the test taker"s identity, provide standardized instructions, check room conditions, monitor internet browsing history, searches and online interactions etc, and observe the test taker, searching for pre-programmed behaviours that may constitute an integrity breach. If the algorithm identifies an irregularity, it flags the testing event and takes a specified action e.g., in the event of a serious issue bring the assessment to a halt.

(b) Artificial Intelligence software can monitor behaviours it is programmed or „trained" to flag as suspicious for review of the recorded activity later by a human proctor to determine the appropriate follow up action. A combined approach is part of „premium" online proctoring packages and is claimed to be more secure with live human invigilation and student access to technical help during the test as well as monitoring by AI.

7.0 Online Proctored Examination Rules, Requirements and Sanctions

7.1 Before entering the proctored environment

7.1.1 To ensure computer or laptop meets the minimum system requirements for running smoothly.

7.1.2 To test internet connection to ensure it is stable and strong enough to support video streaming.

7.1.3 To check webcam, microphone, and speakers/headphones to ensure they are functioning properly.

7.1.4 Download and install the requisite software/app on computer or laptop.

7.1.5 To log in to account using approved ID proof and provided credentials and familiarize oneself with its features, such as video settings.

7.1.6 To choose a quiet and well-lit location for taking exam, preferably with minimal distraction.

7.1.7 To clear workspace of any unauthorized materials, books, notes, or devices not permitted during the exam.

7.1.8 To close any unnecessary applications or browser tabs on your computer to avoid distractions and conserve system resources.

7.1.9 To ensure that a valid ID Proof for verification is available.

7.1.10 The computer used to take the exam should not have more than one display or monitor. (For example, if monitor is connected to a laptop, disconnect monitor, and use only the laptop screen.) Shared screen or desktop sharing is prohibited.

7.1.11 All other programmes or windows on the computer must be closed before starting the exam.

7.1.12 The following tools are not to be displayed on the menu, task, or status bar of your computer.

7.1.13 (Not limited to) communication programs such as Skype, Google Meet, Zoom, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and AI apps like ChatGPT.

7.1.14 No website page(s) other than the exam window is allowed.

7.2   Before starting the examination

7.2.1 Candidates are required to familiarize themselves with the online exam manual.

7.2.2 Candidates are advised to read carefully the instructions given on the cover page of the question paper and on the assessment pages.

7.2.3 No extra examination time will be allowed for late start or for any other reason/s.

7.2.4 The use of cellular phones and other electronic devices, not limited to smart watches, headsets, headphones, ear pods, or ear buds, are prohibited. They should not be in use or seen on the desk or on person during the examination.

7.2.5 Only candidates completing math-based exams are allowed handwritten submissions or/and to photograph their work for upload.

7.2.6 Only non-programmable scientific calculators, blank paper where permitted, pens, pencils and erasers are allowed while taking the examination.

7.2.7 Candidates are required to provide a 360 degree, or a complete room scan of their environment.

7.2.8 Candidates are not permitted to submit their work before one hour after the start of the examination.

7.2.9 Please upload the necessary documents, if any, before the end of the examination.

7.3 Exam Room Requirements/Guide

7.3.1 No other person(s) is/are allowed to enter the room while taking the proctored exam.

7.3.2 The lighting in the room must be bright enough to be considered "daylight" quality. Overhead lighting is preferred. If overhead lighting is not available, the source of light must not be directly behind the examinee.

7.3.3 The desk, floor or walls around the examinee must not have any writing.

7.3.4 The room must be as quiet as possible. Sounds such as music or television are not permitted.

7.3.5 Candidates are not allowed to wear head gear – including but not limited to hats, tams, caps, or scarves - while taking the exam. An exception is made for headgear worn for religious purposes.

7.3.6 The following items must not be on your desk or be used during the proctored examination unless the posted rules for the exam specifically permit these materials (not limited to): Books (Notebook, Textbooks, Notepad), papers or items with notes (post-it, papers with written or typed notes, / information of any sort.) and electronic devices (phones, smart watches, tablets, more than one monitor) which are not required by the assessment.

7.4 Examination Conduct

7.4.1 Photo ID-Candidate must submit to verification using a valid photo ID that has name and photograph on the same side. The name must match the full name as in the records.

7.4.2 Attire- Candidate must dress as though participating in a face-to-face examination setting.

7.4.3 Candidate must not use headphones, ear buds, or any other type of listening equipment.

7.4.4 Leaving Room- Candidates are advised that they SHOULD NOT leave the room after starting the examination or otherwise focus their attention elsewhere; this will be interpreted as an attempt to cheat. In the case of an emergency, the proctor should be advised that the student is leaving the room. If the candidate leaves the room or is offline in excess of two minutes the examination will be aborted.

7.4.5 Talking- Candidates are not allowed to communicate with any other individuals during the examination.

7.4.6 Eating- Candidates are not allowed to eat or drink during the examination.

7.4.7 Prescribed Medications- If an exception is made for prescribed medications, permission must be granted. Student should request in writing to the examiner before the examination date and submit the request accompanied by the relevant substantiating documentation.

7.4.8 Prescribed Food- Please note that if a candidate medically requires food, drink, or a break during an examination, a request in writing should be submitted along with the appropriate documentation.

7.4.9 Cell Phones - The use of cellular phones and other electronic devices, not limited to smart watches or ear pods or ear buds, is prohibited and should not be used or seen during the examination.

7.4.10 Disability - If a candidate has a disability and need additional time or any other specific requirements, please contact the faculty in charge at least one month in advance.

ANNEXURE- II

Academic Integrity Violation	Characteristics/Examples of Violations	Sanctions
Category 1- Violations • Violations are minor • Violations occurring for the first time, in the first semester of a student"s course • Violations for a small portion of the student"s course grade	• Extent of copied material considered so slight that it does not justify disciplinary proceedings or a penalty. • Engaging in collaboration on an assignment even when the rules were unclear. • Involves collaboration or poor citation practice. • Student not appreciating the rules of academic writing • A limited material or copied text expressing ideas or concepts taken from the work of others in the student"s own words but without appropriate citation. • A limited material or copied text referenced in the bibliography but not properly cited or not in quotation marks • Limited collaboration between students as evidenced by structure, source or copied text; or where the written work is original throughout.	Students are likely to: • Written warning Letter • Sit an Alternative Exam • Sit on-line Plagiarism Tutorial/ and or Information Literacy Course. • Write a reflection paper • Grade reduction. **Note: Category 1 Repeat offenders will attract Category 2 penalties**

	Online Proctored Exam Infractions • Students not willing to share their screen • Leaving room without informing Proctor • Candidate"s internet service is frequently interrupted for in excess of two (2) minutes. • Students leaving Room more than 2-10 mins • Noisy Background • Frequently looking away from screen & typing • Notebook on Desk • Paper on the ground • Disruptive, Loud outburst, drinking • Voices/sound heard in background • Accessing another device (eg. headset) • Submitted Script via email • Student looking away from screen • Using Smart Watch • Left the room multiple times • Extensive similarity • Script sent to Program Coordinator • Loss of connectivity, offline or computer restart in excess of mins. • Television and or radio in use or turned on • Candidate is using abusive language out loud or in the chat • Candidate changes space during the examination • Reading the questions aloud or speaking aloud	
	• Improper placement of the webcam so that it does not provide ideal viewing for the proctor. • The lighting is inadequate or too strong for the proctor to see.	
Category 2- Violations • Violations are dishonest in character • Violations for a significant portion of the assignment or course grade	• Plagiarism- All types of plagiarism • Unauthorized collaboration • Possessing unauthorised aids **Online Proctored Exam Infractions** • Possessing unauthorised aids • Accessing another online device • Students Leaving Room for more than 10 mins • Phone in use, on person and/or ringing • Multiple online infractions • Noisy environment or dark room	• Students are likely to: • Mark of zero • Failure of assignment/course • Resubmit the assessment for a capped course mark. Cap maybe set at the passed mark • Placed on disciplinary probation. • Grade reduction

		Note: Category 2 Repeat offenders will attract Category 3 penalties
Category 3-Violations • Violations are flagrantly dishonest in character • Violation impact a major or essential portion of the course work	• Plagiarism- extensive copying and pasting from secondary (published or unpublished) sources (including Internet) without citation. • Collaboration • Possessing unauthorised aids for assignments • Cheating- Extensive copying during an exam or quiz • Cheating- Permitting another • Student extensively copy during a quiz or exam • Altering a graded exam or quiz for re-grade • Fabricating data for a Lab or research paper. • Falsification- Presenting false excuse to miss a class or absence from a assignment, exam, quiz, to receive unfair advantage • Ignoring lecturers' instructions regarding the unauthorized use of certain AI tools is a serious. • Submit as your own someone else"s unpublished work, either with or without permission. • Submit work which has already been assessed / graded	• Suspended for at least a semester • Placed on disciplinary probation • Reduction of course grade that cannot be replaced or retake class • Reduce the degree classification at the end of the programme by one class (as decided by Examinations Committee) **Note: Category 3 Repeat offenders will attract Category 4 penalties**

| | | **Online Exam Infractions**
• Multiple online infractions
• Browsing local computer or other websites.
• Using any form of artificial intelligence application or tool to aid or complete an assessment
• Insertion of previously completed responses or any form of plagiarism
• Copying exam content on paper or on the computer
• Covering the camera / webcam
• Not focusing the camera on your face and desk
• Inappropriate or questionable behaviour (such as looking away from the computer screen or leaving the room)
• Inappropriate materials on the desktop (for example, "post-it" or "sticky "notes)
• Using a computer or phone calculator is not allowed by the examination rules
• Opening Instant Messaging or another computer-based application
• Having additional person(s) in the room (including children) or speaking to someone else in the room during the examination; candidate asking for or receiving help from someone else
• Taking pictures, screenshots, or video recordings of the screen
• Using another computer or a second monitor
• Noisy environment or dark room. Inappropriate or questionable behaviour (such as looking away from the computer screen or leaving the room)
• Inappropriate materials on the desktop (for example, "post-it" or "sticky "notes)
• Using a computer or phone calculator is not allowed by the examination rules
• Opening Instant Messaging or another computer-based application
• Having additional person(s) in the room (including children) or speaking to someone else in the room during the examination; candidate asking for or receiving help from someone else
• Taking pictures, screenshots, or video recordings of the screen
• Using another computer or a second monitor | |
| | | • Plagiarism- Limited copyright and | Students are likely |

Category 4- Violations		
• Violations are flagrantly dishonest and serious breaches of professional • integrity • Multiple repeat offences	pasting from secondary sources without citation • Second Violation, especially after suspension • Violation committed by a graduate student • Cheating- Sitting exam for another person or writing exam for another person • Changing /assisting to change any assignment or course grade on Lecturer"s record or Institution system • Replacing the name on another"s assignment and submitting as it as one"s own (Reproduce someone else"s assessment paper) • Purchasing work (written or electronic paper) or soliciting to do • Selling or distributing previously administered exams, assignments and other records **Online Exam Infractions** • Failure to comply with proctor requests and/or instructions (For example, to display ID, the candidate fails to perform a room scan or yield in conducting actions that may be classified as a breach of the examination rules) • Improper/Invalid/No ID provided, or expired ID provided ID does not match the name on the proctor"s examination list. • ID does not match the candidate"s Photo ID (unable to be verified by proctor) • Unauthorised examination material (such as reference materials – notebook / textbook / note pads / any material typed or written, smart or electronic devices present)	to • Suspension • Expulsion, permanent separation from institution • Placed on disciplinary probation • Denial of degree • Bar against readmission • Revocation of credentials or failing programme (as decided by Examinations Committee) • Other sanctions as deemed appropriate