



NSS COLLEGE

CHERTHALA

E-LEARNING PROGRAMME



E-EXAMINATION HAND BOOK

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I. PREFACE

Amidst the fear created by the Covid 19 pandemic, educational institutions remain shut but have been endeavouring to prevent the spread of the corona virus by switching over to the virtual world of academics. It is high time that our college plan our academic calendar according to the current rules of social distancing. Here, we take the first step towards the fulfilment of our duty. At this juncture, we must think about either a Home to Home or a College to Home educational programme. In the contemporary situation which is highly volatile and unpredictable, the teachers as well as the students may be forced to continue in their houses. Home to Home e-learning facility may be facilitated in such a situation. The homely space and time can be utilized by the teachers and the students to communicate academic as well as non-academic matters online. On the other hand, if the college re opens as per the orders of the higher education department, the same activities shall be done as a College to Home e-learning programme.

The first instalment of this e-learning programme gets inaugurated with the E- examination of semester II students. The exams will be conducted after preparing an adequate time table and question papers according to the strict guidelines provided by the college and the students are supposed to write the exams from their homes.

As part of the discussions, several view points, opinions and suggestions relating to the conducting of examination were taken into account. The major apprehension raised was in connection with the transparency of examination.

- The transparent nature of examination will be questioned, therefore its credibility too.
- Students will develop the tendency to copy down answers from text books and other sources.

These apprehensions were put to scrutiny.

- E-examination is not a continuation or extension of the current pattern of examination. It is entirely a novel approach.
- Exams usually conducted in the traditional pattern evaluate the memory power of each student. E-examination does not aim at testing a student's memory power.
- Credibility, secrecy/transparency of examination etc. are related to the codes of social morality. Higher education, in no way, is designed to follow these social norms.

- Knowledge, knowledge production and dissemination are the major concerns of the higher education sector. E-examination focuses on this particular perspective.
- E-exams are not meant to evaluate the credibility of a student. On the other hand, they analyse whether a student is well equipped to reflect and reproduce the ideas learned and accumulated as part of the teaching-learning process.
- The objective of examination is supposed to be the evaluation of the overall academic progress of a student. It may analyse if s/he is acute enough to articulate a text, an idea, a philosophical problem or a theory effectively and rationally.

In such a context, which pattern of examination-evaluation scheme are we supposed to follow?

Currently, there exist three different patterns of examinations in the teaching-learning sector.

- Objective/ MCQ pattern
- Descriptive pattern
- Objective/ descriptive pattern

As e-exams are designed to evaluate the effective and logical articulation of knowledge gained by each student:

- It would be ideal to follow the descriptive pattern rather than the objective pattern.
- The questions prepared by the teachers must cater to analyse the above mentioned abilities of the students.

II. BACKGROUND FACILITIES

In order to conduct online exams, the background facilities provided by the modern information technology are essential. Each student must have access to internet connection, s/he must be accustomed to the basics of e-education, must be familiar with the tools of information technology.

- Do we have enough background facilities?
- How many students have access to internet?
- Do the students have adequate technological skill to write online exams?

These are the primary concerns related to e-education and online examination.

- Online classrooms and exams are not supposed to be the replacements or continuation of classroom teaching. On the other hand, they may be deemed as one among the many criteria of Continuous Evaluation which is a major concern of higher education. A virtual space which is accessible within or outside the physical classroom is one of its key possibilities. Maintaining communication with the students locked down at home, keeping in touch with them by following the rules of social distancing and thereby engaging them in regular academic and non-academic activities, evaluating the students

through virtual communication and thus retaining an academic bond with the student community... all these are possibilities opened up by online classrooms and exams. Moreover, these virtual spaces subvert the superior/inferior dichotomy existing in the student-teacher relationship and transform it into a relationship based on reciprocity.

In order to evaluate the necessary background facilities essential for conducting online examination, the details of semester II students were collected with the help of the concerned class tutors.

Department	Number of Students	Number of students having internet facility	Number of students having phone only (without internet)	Number of students who can be contacted (through parents, relatives, neighbours etc..)	Number of students who cannot be contacted
English	45	45	0	0	0
Malayalam	37	28	9	0	0
Economics	59	49	10	0	0
History	59	53	6	0	0
Physics	33	32	0	1	0
Chemistry	31	28	2	1	0
E V S	27	22	2	3	0
Botany	32	32	0	0	0
Mathematics	40	40	0	0	0
Zoology	36	34	2	0	0
Commerce	71	64	7	0	0
Total	470	427	38	5	0

- Total number of students in the second semester: 470.
- Among them, the number of students having internet accessibility: 427 (approximately 91%)
- Total number of students using mobile phones without internet connection: 38 (approximately 8%)
- Total number of students without personal mobile number but has mobile phone facility at home: 5 (approximately 1%)

These details show that it is possible to maintain communication with all the students and no student is outside the limits of communication. The e-examination should be designed after taking all the students into consideration, particularly, the small percentage without internet facility.

III. QUESTION PAPER

One of the major challenges faced by e-examination/home examination is not the availability of information but its abundance. Nowadays, students have easy access to all kinds of information which are readily available in the text books as well as on the internet. Hence, what is expected from a student is not the skill to memorise all the answers but the proficiency to research, comprehend and articulate answers suitably. Therefore, there is no relevance in asking fact-based questions for an e-exam as the students may find it very much easier to copy down answers from text books or the internet or any other sources. Instead, primacy may be given to critical analysis and creative approach while we prepare questions for an e-exam.

Teachers must take utmost care while preparing question papers for an e-exam. The following matters should be taken into account:

- The questions may not be structured in such a way that their answers can easily be copied down from various knowledge sources.
- The questions may evaluate the students' aptitude to use, interpret and analyse knowledge. These questions may also test their critical and creative faculties as well as their problem solving skill.
- The questions asked for e-exams may analyse whether the students are able to problematize and critically examine their study materials. Care must be given to assess the students' approaches, viewpoints, perspectives and responses to each question.
- In order to understand the unique creative faculty of each student, it is advisable to maintain a healthy teacher-student relationship. This may also help the teacher to evaluate the answer papers in a better manner.
- Strictness followed while designing the question paper (restrictions in number of pages and number of words used to write the exam) and setting time duration for the exams may prevent the students' lazy approach in writing exams.

Based on these assumptions, the below instructions may be followed:

- The duration of the E-exam: 3 hours
- Maximum marks: 80
- Number of short questions not exceeding 200 words (two pages): 8 (NB: in courses coming under the Science stream, certain questions may focus on answers which give priority to the content and the depth of ideas rather than the required length. In such cases, the criteria for valuation may be discussed and decided together by the teachers) $8 \times 10 = 80$
- Every student has the right to choose, hence choice based pattern may be followed. Twelve questions may be given out of which the students have to answer any eight.

IV. TIME SCHEDULE OF THE EXAMINATION

The time table of the E-exams may be scheduled in such a way that the teachers get ample time to fulfil all the responsibilities related to conducting and organising the exams as well as

collecting the answer papers. For this, required interval time shall be allotted in between the exams.

- Exams may be conducted on alternative days from 9.30 AM to 12.30 PM.
- Exams of core subjects may be conducted in the former days and exams of Second Language and General English (Common Course) may be conducted in the latter days of the examination schedule.
- Two days interval time may be allotted in between the exams of Second Language and General English.
- Two days interval time may be allotted in between the two exams of the General English course.

V. DISTRIBUTION OF QUESTION PAPERS

Distribution of scanned copies of hand written question papers may do away with the professionalism of the E-examination. Therefore, teachers are advised to prepare and distribute typed question papers in pdf format. The question papers must be made available before the scheduled date of the exams.

- Teachers in charge may prepare the question papers and hand them over to the tutors of the concerned classes.
- Question papers of General English, Second Language and the Complimentary Papers may be send to the Heads of the Departments via e-mail or WhatsApp.
- The HODs may send the question papers to the tutors of the concerned classes.
- The tutors may send the question papers of the different subjects to the WhatsApp groups of the students at 9.25 AM on the days scheduled for the exams.

Case of the students without internet accessibility:

- On the scheduled date of the exam, the tutors may contact the students over the phone between 9AM and 9.25 AM and dictate the questions. (There is a possibility of getting delayed if the number of students without internet facility is 10 or more than 10. The tutor can overcome this difficulty by preparing a contact tree. Through this contact tree, the tutor may communicate with two immediate students on the first branch of the tree and dictate the questions. These two students may further contact two students on the next branch of the tree and pass the questions to them. This process may continue. Preparing a contact tree may reduce the wastage of time. The tutor shall also make sure whether all the students got the question papers before the exam commences.)
- Tutors may share this responsibility with the other teachers in the department. The concerned HODs may monitor the same.

VI. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STUDENTS

In the wake of the recent unprecedented catastrophe throughout the world, we enter into a different but innovative phase of academic exercise. Apart from making use of the classrooms, this new phase also experiments with the modern tools of information technology which can effectively and incessantly assist the academic arena. This venture can become successful only with the wholehearted support and responsible behaviour from the part of the student community. Even while the students remain at their houses, E-examination provide them with a chance to be part of the teaching-learning process by following the rules of social distancing. For this, each responsible student must get ready to follow the instructions provided by their teachers.

- The students shall get prepared to write the exams according to the time table given by their tutors. Their houses shall be the examination centres.
- Staying at home, each student may participate online in the examination-learning process from 9 AM in the morning till 1 PM in the afternoon.
- Question papers shall be made available in the students' WhatsApp groups at 9.25 AM on the scheduled dates.
- Students without internet accessibility shall get prepared at 9 AM itself. The concerned tutor will dictate the questions over the phone. Note down the questions.
- The exam will commence at 9.30 AM
- Before writing the exam, each student is directed to write her/his name, class number and name of the Department on the top right of the A4/foolscap paper. The name of the subject shall be written at the centre of the page.
- The exam will end at 12.30 PM.
- Using a mobile scanner, the answer sheets may be scanned and compressed into a single pdf file. Send the pdf file to the provided e-mail id of the concerned department.

VII. STUDENTS WITHOUT INTERNET FACILITY

- If the student can access scanning facility from home, scan the answer sheets in the above described format and send the file to the e-mail id of the concerned department.
- If the student has no access to scanning facility, s/he may enclose the answer sheets in an envelope, write the name of the concerned department over it and post the same to The Principal, NSS College, K R Puram PO, Cherthala.

VIII. HOW TO SCAN?

- Students may use any of the available mobile App to scan the answer papers. A tutorial shall also be provided to teach them how to use a mobile scanner.
- For further queries regarding the scanning process, the students may consult their tutors or other teachers recommended by the tutor.

IX. COLLECTING ANSWER PAPERS

- Answer papers shall be collected only via e-mail. For this, the official mail address of each department may be circulated among the students.

- Tutors shall make sure that all the students have their own individual e mail addresses. Those students who do not have a personal e mail id shall be instructed to create one. As it is for a common purpose, the tutor shall also confirm that the students use Gmail of Google.
- The students shall be instructed to use ‘student_name, class, subject_name’ format on the subject line of the email. For example: if a student named Sreelakshmi of S2 Chemistry sends the answer paper of Physics via email, she must use the format ‘Sreelakshmi, S2 Chemistry, Physics’ to fill the subject line. If needed, this instruction can be provided on the question papers too.

E MAIL ADDRESSES OF THE DEPARTMENTS

Department	e-mail id
English	englishcherthalansscollege@gmail.com
Malayalam	malcherthalansscollege@gmail.com
Economics	economicscherthalansscollege@gmail.com
History	historycherthalansscollege@gmail.com
Botany	botanycherthalansscollege@gmail.com
chemistry	chemistrycherthalansscollege@gmail.com
E V S	envsciencecherthalansscollege@gmail.com
Physics	physicscherthalansscollege@gmail.com
Mathematics	mathscherthalansscollege@gmail.com
Zoology	zoologycherthalansscollege@gmail.com
Commerce	commercecherthalansscollege@gmail.com
Hindi	hindicherthalansscollege@gmail.com
Sanskrit	snskritchertalansscollege@gmail.com

- After each exam, students shall mail their answer papers to the provided official e mail address any time till 1.30 PM

CORE AND COMPLIMENTARY ANSWER PAPERS: Concerned tutors shall download the answer scripts, provide each of them with the respective student’s name and save them in a newly created

folder. After downloading/collecting all the answer sheets, zip (zip/.rar) the folder and mail the same to the respective teachers-in-charge.

- **GENERAL ENGLISH AND SECOND LANGUAGE ANSWER PAPERS:** Concerned tutors shall download the answer scripts, provide each of them with the respective student’s name and save them in a newly created folder. After downloading/collecting all the answer sheets, zip (zip/.rar) the folder and mail it the official e-mail address of the concerned department.
- The received folders may be unzipped before opening. Within the opened folder, the teachers may access the digital copies of the scanned answer sheets which may be used for valuation.
- All the teachers are supposed to have the technological skill needed to download files from the mailbox, save them in folders, convert them into zip.rar format and reconvert the zip.rar files into the folders without errors. If needed, tutorials shall be arranged.
- Instead of downloading the answer scripts, tutors shall attach them directly from the mailbox into the google drive. For attaching the answer papers of a particular subject, a unique folder may be created in the Google drive. After attaching all the answer scripts,

that particular folder may be shared with the official mail address of the concerned department. Each department shall access the shared folder using its own official mail id. For instance: the tutor of S2 Botany shall access the official mailbox of the department of Botany and attach the answer sheets of General English into a folder created and named as 'S2 Botany- English' in Goole drive. This folder can be shared with the official mail address of the department of English. The English teacher in charge of the paper shall access the shared folder via the official mail address of her/his department and download the digital copies of the answer sheets for valuation. For convenience, Gmail of Google shall be used by all the teachers. (Tutorial shall be conducted to demonstrate the process)

X. VALUATION

- The valuation duty of a particular subject shall be assigned to a single teacher.
- In case of subjects handled by more than one teacher, the total number of answer sheets may be divided among the teachers-in-charge instead of allowing many teachers to value a single paper.
- If needed, tutors may arrange answer keys for valuation.
- Valuation of all the subjects must be completed within ten days after the last exam. Mark lists must be prepared and mailed to the official mail addresses of the departments.
- Mark lists may be circulated in the WhatsApp groups of the students for their perusal. They shall be given two days' time to address grievances and suggestions.
- If no student turn up to register any complaint/suggestion within two days, it may be assumed that the students are satisfied with the marks.
- Print outs of mark lists approved by the students may be undersigned by the concerned tutor, Head of the Department and the Principal. These print outs can be filed and later uploaded on the University website as per orders.

This is obviously a great but challenging step into the future. Amidst these unpredictable times which cause turbulences in our teaching-learning processes, we are inaugurating a new session in academics that may revolutionize and enlarge the classrooms into vast social spaces. Today's inevitability might become tomorrow's necessity and it is essential that each of us get prepared to face the challenge. In today's world packed with uncertainties on one side but prospects on the other, the academic domains too have become spaces of experiences and experiments. The classrooms that used to be physical realities are now getting transformed into virtual realities where teacher-student relationships open up new prospects and possibilities. The distance between home and college or home and university is diminishing, taking us to explore the new techniques and technologies of communication and education. We enter into a novel and innovative space of knowledge in which anywhere and everywhere can be a classroom, a college, a university. Let's begin with the e-exam which is going to be a new beginning, a new approach, a new journey.

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