



## UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION

COMMISSION CIRCULAR NO. 11/2020

No. 20, Ward Place,  
Colombo 07.

1<sup>st</sup> December, 2020

Vice Chancellors of Universities  
Rectors of Campuses  
Directors of Institutes

### **Guidelines for Conducting Alternative Assessments in Universities and HEIs.**

University Grants Commission (UGC) has discussed the importance of conducting Alternative Assessment at various forums including the Sub Committee on Presidential Task Force (PTF) for Higher Education and the Committee of the Vice-Chancellors and the Directors (CVCD), Quality Assurance Council (QAC/UGC). Based on these discussions, the UGC has formulated the following guidelines to be adopted by the State Universities to implement. These alternative methods of assessments have been adopted globally especially the trend has been increased significantly during the Covid-19 pandemic period due to the inability of holding face to face closed book written examinations.

1. General Guidelines for Conducting Alternative Assessments (Attached)
2. Specific Guidelines for Online Assessments (Attached)

The University Grants Commission (UGC) expects the Universities to adhere to aforesaid guidelines in order to continue with the academic activities in the Universities without much delay and interruptions to facilitate student learning process.

**Senior Prof. Sampath Amaratunge**  
Chairman

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File No. UGC/AC9/2020/Assesments

## **University Grants Commission**

### **General Guidelines for Conducting Alternative Assessments**

Assessment is the most important single component that serves as a tool which makes students learn in any education system. Traditionally, in Sri Lanka, closed book written examination is being practiced in schools and HEIs as the main mode of evaluation. This type of evaluation has many shortcomings and world over educational institutes are resorting to other types of authentic alternative evaluations to assess, whether the students have achieved the intended course learning outcomes. This trend has drastically increased during the Covid-19 pandemic period due to the inability of holding face to face closed book written examinations.

University Grants Commission (UGC) has discussed this issue at various forums including the Presidential Task Force (PTF) on Sub Committee for Higher Education and the Committee of the Vice-Chancellors and the Directors (CVCD), Quality Assurance Council/(QAC/UGC). Based on these discussions, the UGC has formulated the following guidelines to be adopted by the State Universities to implement alternative evaluation methods to assess the achievement of intended course learning outcomes by the students.

1. The University Grants Commission (UGC) expects the Universities to continue with the academic activities in the Universities without much delay.
2. Decision to hold either alternative examinations or on-site year-end examinations as opposed to semester-end examinations, or amalgamated examinations expecting the situation in the country to improve shall be taken by the individual Faculty Boards.
3. However, if the Faculty Boards decide to conduct alternative assessments to measure student achievement instead of closed book written examinations, there are many possibilities. Some of the authentic alternative assessments include: Open book examinations, Take home examinations, Student portfolios, Performance Tests, Examinations via zoom, Online Quizzes, Timed quizzes, Online Group and individual Presentations, Online Debates, Time bound examinations, Mini-Projects, Reflective Journals, Collaborative/Cooperative Team-based Assessments, Participatory Co-creations, Online Viva and Online presentations, Proctored examinations, Self and peer assessments, e-portfolios, Project based assignments and presentations, Design



projects, Case studies, Practical examinations based on presentations being done via zoom, etc.

4. The type of alternative evaluation method for both formative and summative assessments depend on the subject matter and the level of the course. Therefore, the type of alternative assessment to be introduced for a particular course should be decided by the individual Faculty Boards and Senates of the universities.
5. All such alternative assessment methods must meet the same learning outcomes expected from the respective course unit/module as per the approved curriculum of the programme.
6. The Faculty Boards and Senates may change the weightages given for assessment components of course units/modules: For example, Continuous Assessment marks can be increased up to 60% of the total and the Final Examination mark can be reduced to not less than 40% of the total with due approval from the Statutory Bodies within the University.
7. Any changes to the assessment criteria should be informed to the students in advance and the students must be awarded the grade they earn through the revised scheme of assessment for each course unit/module.
8. Students should be given sufficient time to adjust to the new evaluation formats and they should be treated fairly while maintaining the quality and standards of such assessment tasks and outcomes.
9. When students submit responses to online assessments, he/she must sign and agree to an academic integrity declaration of the respective Universities and confirm the work is his/her own, and he/she has not communicated with any person, persons or organization about the assessment before the submission deadline.
10. In case a student is unwilling to take part in the proposed alternative assessment method, the University may allow the student to defer the required assessments up until the immediate next semester/academic year and complete the course unit/module on-site (if it is applicable) without any academic penalty.

