



## **PROTESTANT INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (PIASS)**

*P.O. Box 619 Butare-Rwanda - Phone: (+ 250)788310811*

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### **PIASS EXAMINATION POLICY**

May-2022



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PIASS examination policy provides the guidelines regarding the preparation, administration, management of examination as well as marking process. First and foremost, it starts with the orientations of PIASS in terms of vision, mission, motto and core principles. Additionally, aims of the policy, guidelines for students' participation, methods and nature of assessment, preparation, organization, administration, invigilation of examinations are highlighted. More than that, procedures for dealing cheating, unexpected cases like interruptions of examination, marking weighting credits and disqualification of the final examination are provided.

### INTRODUCTION

As the core brand of PIASS, examination policy starts with vision, mission, motto and core principles of PIASS.

#### Vision

PIASS is a reference university, fostering knowledge development and innovative research that are relevant for the society and inspired by Christian ethics and values.

#### Mission

PIASS provides to Society and Churches well trained personnel who are inquisitive, solution oriented, committed and equipped with intellectual tools, knowhow and ethical values that enable them to meeting specific needs of societies that are on a reconciliation path and moving towards a global, modern and pluralistic world.

#### Motto

Faith and Science for Life

#### Principles and values

Action of PIASS is based on principles and values. As a Christian institution, it is oriented towards:

- **Liberation:** as the Gospel of Christ liberates from all human alienations here and now, being witness to it cannot be successful without running social dialogue with the society and serving the poor people in the society.
- **Relevance:** higher education has received the considerable interest due to its potential contribution in the construction and development of accountability, equitability and stability of society *via* training of committed, responsible, professional and competent citizens.



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- **Unity in Diversity:** open and respectful exchange of ideas and discussion along with evidence based on documentation is essential to Higher Learning Education in contributing positively to a pluralistic society.
- **Effectiveness and efficiency:** finding out the optimal effort and cost effective way to reach objectives in changing environment and society and keep on being result and solution oriented should be applied all levels of the institution in order to achieve the expected productivity for a Higher Learning Institution.
- **Quality:** training, research and services to both national and international community must be qualitative and competitive.
- **Innovation:** teaching and learning processes are taken into consideration in changing the needs of the churches and society. Therefore programmes are continually assessed and accordingly improved in a spirit of creativity and entrepreneurship at all levels.
- **Responsibility:** administrative staff, lecturers and students are expected to take positive and peaceful decisions to the community upon their choice without a special supervisor or delegate.
- **Solidarity:** promoting the unity between administrative staff, lecturers and students as a community with a common interest is the responsibility of each PIASS member. Gender balanced culture especially in both administrative staff and lecturer will continue to be taken account to all levels of the institution.
- **Collaboration:** fostering team spirit and looking for win-win partnerships with other national and international institutions of higher learning education are promoted to all levels of the institution.
- **Transparency:** managing resources of the institution in a rigorous, integrity and transparent manner.
- **Good Governance:** fairness, equity without discrimination, clear delegation, facilities for people with disability, decentralization and respecting human right are adopted at all levels of the institution.

### AIM OF THE POLICY

PIASS aspires to developing practical and applicable knowledge and improving the quality of its teaching and learning process. To achieve that goal, PIASS looks forward to have a practice that



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avoids all kind of fraud. Thus, examination policy outlines minimum standards for the handling of examination papers and the conduct of examinations to avoid cheating and suspicion that results are unsafe.

PIASS Examination Policy deals with the infrastructure, invigilation responsibilities, student behaviour, and other aspects of the examination process for examinations held on campus. For purposes of this policy, “examination” is defined as a comprehensive form of testing and assessing a student’s level of proficiency in some combination of the following domains: Knowledge and understanding, Practice: applied knowledge and understanding, Generic cognitive skills, Communication, ICT and numeracy skills and general transferable skills like Autonomy, responsibility and working with others. While the focus of this policy is progressive and final examinations, the following basic principles should apply to all tests and examinations. This policy has to be implemented in tandem with PIASS Academic Regulations, especially with regard to the assessment and conduct of examinations. Directorate of Academic Affairs in collaboration with faculties holds the responsibility to safeguard this policy in particular.

### CLASS ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE FROM TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS

**Article 1:** A student’s class attendance, practical work/tutorials and examinations shall be mandatory. When a lecture session has started, the lecturer has the right to deny entrance to late students. Likewise, a student will not leave the classroom while the class is in session without the lecturer’s consent. In an offline class lasting two hours or more, there shall be allowance for a 10 to 15 minutes break. In an online class session, 90 minutes should be followed by 30 minutes of a break.

**Article 2:** Students are expected to participate in all continuous assessments tests including take home assignments, group discussions, group assignments, term tests, and any other work that may be assigned by the lecturer to the students. Not attending any of the assessments including the final examination without prior official permission will be treated as an intentional unexcused absence, and will attract a note of zero.

**Article 3:** A request for permission to be absent from any kind of assessment shall be addressed to the Dean, at latest 3 working days before the assessment. If the request is granted, the Dean will immediately give permission to the student in writing, and inform the lecturer of the subject, in writing. No permission for missing an assessment opportunity shall be given retroactively to a student, except for very special cases that will require proof which is beyond reasonable doubt.

**Article 4:** Applications for special Continuous Assessment Tests will be accepted by the Dean on very exceptional circumstances whereby students failing to participate in such kind of assessments because of hospitalization or any other genuine reasons will have to submit official evidence to the head of department with a copy to the Dean of the faculty. Any evidence that



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will be proved to have been forged will result in stern disciplinary action, and the student will not be given any remedial assessment.

**Article 5:** To meet the class attendance requirements, students should have attended not fewer than 85% of the total classes of each module, including but not limited to lectures, seminars, and practical in a whole semester.

### ASSESSMENT METHODS AND NATURE OF ASSESSMENTS

**Article 6:** There will be two major categories of assessment for each module, i.e. continuous assessment(s) and a final examination. Assessment of students' academic performance shall be carried out in different ways including continuous assessment tests such as (but not limited to) take home assignments, group/syndicate assignments, quizzes; essays, written tests, laboratory tests, field assignments as well as written or oral examinations. Each lecturer will determine a combination of the type of continuous assessment methods which will be most suitable for module learning outcomes, and this will be made explicitly clear to students at the beginning of the module through the module syllabus which should be distributed to students.

Continuous assessment will consist of evaluations that will be administered while the course is in progress. Overall, continuous assessment should carry a weight of 60% of the total marks of the module.

The final examination paper is an assessment that will be done at the end of the module. The final examination and the marking scheme will be subjected to internal and external moderation (see internal and external moderation policy). The overall weight for the final examination will be 40%. There will be a defence/ viva-voce of the research report by level five students where by a research dissertation will be marked out of 70% and the oral defense out of 30 % (see Ba research dissertation guidelines). Under the modular system, the weight attached to each module will be taken into consideration when determining the weight of continuous assessment and of the final examination.

**Article 7:** The PIASS's management through Registrar, Deans of Faculties and heads of departments shall ensure that students are continuously assessed and that continuous assessment is evenly distributed throughout the academic year.

### PROCEDURES

**Article 8:** Continuous assessment and the final examination have to be taken when they are administered to the whole class. Except under very special circumstances, the Institution will not allow setting and administering special continuous assessment. Missing an assessment without genuine reasons will attract a zero note.



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Permission to be absent from a test or a final examination must be obtained from the Head of the Department with a copy to the Dean of Faculty in writing, prior to the date when the test or the final examination is scheduled to take place.

**Article 9:** A student who fails to pass a module's examinations, he or she must re-take the module. If a student has taken the module but he/she did not sit for the final examination, he/she would be required to only sit for the final examination of that module when it is next offered.

**Article 10:** Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning. Therefore, lecturers must give descriptive feedback about the students' performance in the continuous assessment, including the marking schemes, for them to know what was expected and to take remedial action. The feedback must be given to student before sitting for final examination. Provision of feedback shall be applicable to final examination. Self- and peer assessment should be encouraged.

**Article 11:** Overall continuous assessment results for each module shall be published by the Head of Department at least one week before students sit for the final examination. No student will be allowed to participate in a CAT during or after the final examination. A contrary case shall be permitted by the Head of Department and the Dean.

**Article 12:** Before the Senate approves the examination results, whatever results will be published will be provisional. An official final examination result is the one that has been approved by Senate after the examination exercise.

### PREPARATION OF EXAMINATION PAPERS AND SECURITY

**Article 13:** Each Faculty shall establish an Examination Board composed of the Dean of the Faculty, heads of departments, administrative assistant, examination officer and one lecturer. The duties of the examination board are: to prepare the tentative examination timetable and make same available to the students at least one week before the date of the examination, to correct the tentative timetable in line with the observed corrections as may be raised by the students and/or examiners before the final timetable, To release the final timetable for the examination at least one week before the date of the examination, to ensure sanity and integrity of the examination by preparing the sitting arrangement of students in a manner that will not compromise the examination, to prepare the attendance sheets for each venue to be used for the examination, to prepare the attendance sheets for the invigilators and attendants and ensure that all officers on duty endorse the attendance sheets, to prepare a schedule of invigilation for Chief Invigilators, Invigilators and Attendants, to document all cases of examination malpractices and forward same to the office of the Dean for onward transmission to the Disciplinary Committee





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on Examination and Other Academic Related Matters, to carry out all other functions as may be assigned to it by the Dean of the faculty or Deputy vice chancellor of academics respectively.

The examination Board is responsible for the security of information relating to examination papers. Staff who are preparing papers should keep a record of the progress of each paper, including date submitted for typing, date typed, date final version checked, signed and approved for print by the examiner concerned, and date delivered to the Examinations Office before internal and external moderation (see internal and external moderation of examinations). The Examination Office should arrange for the papers to be printed. No student shall be allowed access to a room in which examination papers are being prepared. Offices should be locked when unattended and PCs should be 'locked' or staff logged out.

All staff involved in the preparation of examination papers must ensure that students are not able to see or gain access, either accidentally or deliberately, to examination questions or related material. The arrangements to ensure security will depend on circumstances in individual offices but should be in accordance with the following:

Examination questions should not be transmitted via the campus computer network – i.e. they should not be stored locally on a PC hard disc. Instead, they should be typed and stored on a portable drive and should be printed only on printers which are connected directly to organ responsible of examinations.

Examination stored on a portable drive should be password protected to prevent unauthorized access. It is of course important that nobody else knows or can easily guess the password.

All examination material on a portable drive must be locked away securely when not being used. If papers are stored on portable drives, these must not be used for other purposes.

Care must be taken when disposing of earlier versions or unwanted copies of examination papers. Hard copies should be destroyed by shredding.

Examination questions and papers should be sent to the examination office at least 4 days before the exam is scheduled for printing.

Arrangements for the conveyance of examination papers or external examiners' comments should take account of the need for security.

The final typed version of an examination paper should be checked carefully by the internal moderator before being sent to the Examination office for printing. After printing, papers should be packaged ready for the examination, clearly labelled, and securely stored in the Examination office. Academic secretaries in collaboration with concerned lecturers must provide to the examination office a list of students that are eligible to sit for the exam.





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### EXAMINATION ORGANISATION

**Article 14:** All invigilation of examinations should be organised by the Academic Registrar through the examination office in collaboration with faculties and concerned heads of departments, who should:

- Publish information on the date, time and place of each examination;
- Draw an 'invigilation of examination' schedule in consultation with Faculty
- Ensure that relevant question papers are available at each examination in sufficient quantity;
- Ensure that sufficient examination script books are available and that they are securely stored both before and after any examination.
- Register all students for the examination
- Draw a sitting arrangement for the students in the examination room with each student allocated a seat number.

### ADMINISTRATION OF EXAMINATIONS

**Article 15:** Any identification or documentation that will be required to be presented on the day of an examination, should be reminded no less than 3 days before the examination period begins, so no student will be discriminated against through the whim or prejudice of a given instructor using the demand that a particular document be introduced to bar a particular targeted student from admission to the examination hall.

Any documentation announced as being required must be required of all students sitting a given examination. There should be absolutely no exceptions simply because an instructor or an invigilator claims to know a student or to be familiar with the student's particular financial situation.

**Article 16:** When entering an examination room, a student should carry nothing on him/her including any pieces of paper, laptops, calculators or/and cell phone except the student ID and examination card (clearance form) and a pen or any other materials as may be required by the lecturer of the module. Bags, cell phones, scribbling on one's body and any other unauthorized materials that may facilitate cheating will be treated as unauthorized materials in an examination room.

**Article 17:** At the time of sitting for the examination, a student must record his/her attendance on the attendance sheet provided by the invigilator. The invigilator must check each student's ID and examination cards bearing the student's name and year of study as required by the administration.



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**Article 18:** For examinations and semester tests whereby the total number of students would be below or equal to 30, at least two invigilators would be assigned to invigilate them.

The module lecturer should be present at least the first 15 minutes for any clarifications.

The Academic and examination officers should designate a Chief Invigilator in each examination room who will be the coordinating person to communicate to students during the time of examination. The Chief Invigilator should be given responsibilities and he/she should be known by students before the start of the examination.

Responsibilities of the chief invigilator:

- Verify if the room and sitting plan are well arranged before the examination
- Ensure the readiness of examination papers two days before the date of the exam,
- Assigning responsibilities and locations for invigilators
- Communication of guidelines and procedures of examination to students
- Coordinating the invigilation in her/his examination room
- Handling in collaboration with invigilators any cases that may emerge during the examination,
- Provide a narrative report of the examination to the Dean of the Faculty with copy to HoDs

**Article 19:** Oral examinations shall be conducted in the presence of at least two examiners, one being the module lecturer, and the other(s) should be appointed by the Head of department.

**Article 20:** Any staff member or student whose behaviour is deemed by the Chief Invigilator to be disruptive in examination session, in any way, will be brought before the Institution Disciplinary Committee, and if proved guilty will be recommended for dismissal to the Institution Governing Board by the Senate.

### INVIGILATOR RESPONSIBILITIES AND INVIGILATION PROCEDURE

**Article 21:** Invigilators are normally faculty members designated by the teaching Department or Faculty.

**Article 22:** The role of an invigilator is to supervise and provide support to students during examination. To this end, an invigilator's general responsibilities are as follows:

- To see that an examination commences, is conducted, and concludes in an orderly and timely manner in accordance with the University's Examination Policy and Procedures, the Student Code of Conduct, and relevant departmental policies;
- To make every effort to safeguard the integrity of the examination;



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- To maintain vigilance at all times (e.g., not attending to other tasks during the exam);
- To ensure that students sign a section list during the examination;
- To create an environment that is, to the greatest extent possible, supportive of students undertaking the examination;
- To provide students with clarification of ambiguous aspects of the examination as appropriate and to help students in any way that does not impinge on the integrity of the examination;
- To respond to personal student emergencies according to the general procedural guidelines identified below.

**Article 23:** Two invigilators should be present in each examination room. But from 50 up to 150 students are to be examined in any room, an additional invigilator should be appointed. More than 150 students will be placed in different rooms to facilitate the invigilation process.

**Article 24:** Under no circumstances whatsoever must the examination room be left unattended during any part of an examination. The Academic Registrar in collaboration with the examination board at each faculty should ensure arrangements are in place to designate invigilators in each examination room.

**Article 25:** Invigilators may not delegate their appointment. If an invigilator is unable to fulfil his or her duties because of circumstances beyond their control, they should notify the Academic Registrar, who should designate an alternative invigilator.

**Article 26:** Students should not be permitted to enter an examination after 30 minutes it has started except with the permission of an invigilator, nor to hand in their scripts and leave within one hour of the end of the examination.

**Article 27:** At the beginning of an examination the Chief Invigilator should remind students of the length of the examination, warn them that they may not talk to each other or look at each other's work during the examination and tell them when they may start. Students should be told how long remains at the end of each hour and 30 minutes and ten minutes before the end of the examination. When the Chief Invigilator announces the end of the examination, all writing must cease.

**Article 28:** Any student needing to leave the examination room during an examination for an unavoidable reason with permission and with the intention of returning should be accompanied by an invigilator.



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**Article 29:** Invigilators have a responsibility to ensure that the examination for which they are appointed runs smoothly and is conducted in accordance with the General Academic Regulations and any specific institutional rules.

**Article 30:** Talking among candidates or looking at each other's work will not be permitted in examinations and will be grounds for exclusion from the examination by the Chief Invigilator, who also has the power to initiate disciplinary proceedings for cheating.

**Article 31:** The Chief Invigilator should collect all examination stationery, including question papers and list/lists of candidates, from the Registrar's Office not later than 30 minutes before the start of the examination and to ensure that an adequate supply is maintained throughout the examination. Invigilators must arrive in the examination room at least 30 minutes before the planned start of the examination. At the end of the examination, the chief invigilator will collect exam papers, attendance list to the examination office. A student should take a small proof indicating the exam code, the registration, exam booklet number and the exam date from his or her exam booklet.

**Article 32:** Invigilators should ensure that the examination room is suitably prepared. They should see that there are sufficient places for the number of candidates expected, that each place is provided with the materials, aids and equipment indicated on the rubric of the paper, and with an answer book where required.

**Article 33:** The invigilators should ensure that the right examination question papers are distributed to candidates before the examination starts and that each question paper is complete.

**Article 34:** Candidates should be seated as directed by the invigilators and in accordance with the sitting arrangement provided by the Academic Registrar. No food or drink is permitted in the examination room other than medicines on prescription and a small bottle of water where applicable; if a candidate wishes to attract the invigilator's attention they should do so by raising a hand; Candidates must not cause a disturbance of any sort; if an alarm sounds, candidates must leave their scripts, collect their personal belongings, and evacuate the room quickly and quietly.

**Article 35:** Except where specified in the Module Description, students may not bring into the examination room any books, papers, calculators with text facility or mobile telephones. If candidates report that they have inadvertently brought an unauthorised item to their desk, the invigilator should remove the item, make a report on the Examination Incident Form and report the full circumstances to the Academic Registrar. The candidates should be permitted to continue the examination.

In the event of a candidate becoming ill (or similar emergency), the Chief Invigilator should send immediately for the Health Personnel and submit a full report in the faculty.

### CHEATING



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**Article 37:** In the case where a student is caught/suspected for cheating, the original answer book will be confiscated by the Chief Invigilator and will be kept as evidence. Where possible, students sitting next to the accused student(s) should be required to testify the event. The examination incidence report should be signed by both invigilators and the student who will be suspected of cheating. That student should also be required to write a statement certifying what happened.

The Chief Invigilator will be required to write a report to the examination officer and the Faculty and present all the evidence within 24 hours of the event. Cheating cases should be dealt with by the Senate to the degree possible, before the beginning of the next Semester.

Lesser cheating cases such as not stopping to write when requested to do so can be handled by the concerned instructor without having to be escalated to the Faculty office.

**Article 37:** Each Faculty office should determine the level of cheating cases to be handled by them and those ones to be submitted to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Academics who will subsequently make its recommendation to the Senate. Cheating in the continuous assessment should be given the same treatment as cheating in the examinations. In all circumstances academic regulations shall be applied.

**Article 38:** A member of staff who will be proved to have been an accomplice or who may have facilitated a student to cheat will be reported to an internal disciplinary committee.

**Article 39:** Any person who is not a PIASS student or staff member who will assist or facilitate a student in cheating, or who will disrupt an on-going examination, PIASS should report him/her to the Rwanda investigation Bureau (RIB) for further investigation. If he/she is a member of PIASS community (both students and staff) the case should be exhausted using PIASS internal regulations.

**Article 40:** A student who will be proved to have cheated in an examination will be dismissed from studies by Senate for a period of 2 years. The decision shall be communicated other higher learning institutions in Rwanda and to the sending church for students in theology.

**Article 41:** A student who is proved to have cheated in an examination or to have disrupted an examination should be allowed to appeal in writing to the deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research.

### DEALING WITH EMERGENCY INTERRUPTIONS TO EXAMINATIONS

**Article 42:** An examination should be deemed not to have started provided that students have not yet been given the opportunity to read the examination question papers. Where at the



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designated time of starting an examination, the building in which it was due to be held is closed as a result of an emergency building evacuation, the examination will normally start fifteen minutes after the building has been re-opened or in an alternative room.

**Article 43:** It is the responsibility of the invigilators to remain in the vicinity of the building so that they may be the first people to (re)enter the building after the all-clear is given. It is the responsibility of the students to ensure that they are present 10 minutes before the starting time of exam.

**Article 44:** Where an examination has been in process and it is disrupted because of an emergency then such an examination may be rescheduled. The Faculty in collaboration with examination office shall decide the nature of the paper.

**Article 45:** The Academic Registrar, in consultation with the examination boards is responsible for communicating the decision to students within 48 hours of the interrupted examination, by means of a notice affixed to the students' notice boards, that the examination will not take place as scheduled. The Registrar will fix a new date, time and place and display the information on the students' notice board and forward the same to the Faculty concerned. It is the responsibility of the students to ascertain the revised schedule and to be present at the designated time and place for the examination

### MARKING

#### MARKS ALLOCATION AND REVIEW

**Article 46:** A lecturer is responsible for marking the continuous assessment and the final examination. However, the marks awarded or recommended by an external examiner are added to those given by the course lecturer and then average marks are the final marks.

**Article 47:** After continuous assessment marks have been submitted by the lecturer to the Faculty office, only exceptional changes will be made by the lecturer on authorization by the Faculty.

**Article 48:** At the lecturers' level, students' complaints should be dealt with continuously after the Continuous Assessment Tests marks would be given to students. Two weeks should be given to students to complain about their Continuous Assessment Tests marks to their respective lecturers. Once marks were submitted to the Faculty, only exceptional changes would be accepted. Appeals by students against continuous assessment would be entertained even if the





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final examination of the relevant course has been administered, in case the Continuous Assessment Tests marks were not published on time.

**Article 49:** Appeals by students against final examination marks should be made to the faculty after publication of provisional results within 7 working days. After this time, appeals will not be received.

A student is considered as successful completer of a module when he/she has scored a total of not less than 50% in all assessments.

A student is progressed from one level to another on the following basis:

Successfully passed all required modules for a specific level

A module is subjected to retake in case a student failed to have a passing mark at first sitting. A special exam will be given to student with a clear justification to his or her absence during the exam.

### CALCULATION OF CREDIT- WEIGHT

**Article 50:** "Module Credits" constitute the weight of a Module in a program. In computing the overall average percentage score of a student at the end of the academic year, the relative weights of each course have to be taken into consideration.

### DISQUALIFYING FOR A FINAL EXAMINATION

**Article 51:** As stipulated in Article 5, students with less than 85% of class attendance will be barred by the Dean or HoD from sitting for the final examination regardless of the score he/she may have obtained in the Continuous Assessment Tests.

**Article 52:** A student who scores less than 50% in the continuous assessment, including quizzes and assignments in a given subject does not qualify to sit for a final examination in that subject, and will have failed the course. In such a case, the student will repeat the subject when it is next offered.

**Article 53:** All marked exam booklets are kept in the examination office for a period of only 5 years.

Approved By PIASS Council at Huye on 25-5-2022

**Chairman of PIASS Council**