

### **UNIVERSITY INVIGILATORS - GRADE 3**

Note/Glossary:

- *Invigilator* – refers to 'University Invigilators'
- *UAP* – refers to 'Unacceptable Academic Practice'
- *QMP* – Question mark Perception examinations

### **JOB DESCRIPTION – UNIVERSITY INVIGILATORS**

University Invigilators are responsible for the supervision and running of university examinations in the four main examination venues and on-line examinations in main computer rooms. A wide range of duties are involved associated with the general conduct of the examinations and with specific aspects of the examination processes.

Invigilators should have a proven education, normally to degree level. Previous experience of running university or other higher education examinations would be regarded as an advantage, but is not essential, as full training is given. Pastoral aspects are crucial, so Invigilators require an assured but sympathetic manner in dealing with students under stress.

New appointees must attend two induction sessions with the Superintendent of Examinations, one relating to main venue invigilation and the other covering particular aspects of on-line invigilation. Existing University Invigilators will be routinely advised of any significant changes in examination procedures and relevant University Regulations

All University Invigilators are responsible ultimately to the University Superintendent of Examinations, but – on a half-daily basis – to the Assistant Superintendent of Examinations in charge of their allocated main examination venue for each morning or afternoon examination session. In on-line examinations, the Invigilators are themselves entirely responsible for the running of the venue. Half-day sessions allocated to individual Invigilators will be determined by the Superintendents and offered to each Invigilator in advance, acceptance of the assignments being required.

In main venues, attendance is required at least 20 minutes in advance of each half-day session, and will end as indicated by the Assistant Superintendent of Examinations, but in most cases circa 45 minutes after the end of the longest examination in the venue in question. In computer rooms, earlier attendance and a longer time frame will be involved. Work timing sheets must be checked and signed each half-day by either the Superintendent or the relevant Assistant Superintendent of Examinations.

### **GENERAL DUTIES & REQUIREMENTS**

Before, during and after each examination, anything that the Assistant Superintendent requires, but including:

- Exercising general supervision, under the guidance of the Assistant Superintendent.
- Being vigilant at all times. Observing examinees. Invigilating actively but unobtrusively.
- Circulating regularly in venue, but quietly.
- Responding to information queries or requests from examinees.
- Reacting to information or administrative requests from the Assistant Superintendent.
- Dealing with pastoral incidents or student support requirements as they arise.
- Filling in all required, allocated, examination-administrative paperwork meticulously and accurately, before, during or after the examinations.

- Maintaining all rules and prohibitions relating to books, papers, materials or equipment including those specified in examination paper rubrics. This includes personal dictionaries and all forms of small electronic device, unpermitted calculators, mobile telephones, smart watches and Bluetooth accessories.
- Being aware of all possibilities relating to Unacceptable Academic Practice. Taking action as appropriate and as instructed. Protecting evidence, completing relevant reports and providing other documentation.
- Monitoring examinee visits to toilets, liaising with Examination Attendants as required.
- Monitoring permitted food and drink, removing items as necessary.
- May be allocated to IER Room, normally invigilating alone and with later finish times. Also more significant attention to student needs required.
- Always being aware of what is happening with and near to other invigilation colleagues, so as to be able to render assistance quickly.
- Par excellence, examination administration in the venues requires good teamwork. All members of the allocated invigilation team must contribute to a smoothly-operating, minimum-problem process. Working together, under the instructions of the Assistant Superintendent of Examinations, to achieve all necessary elements in the total process and targets.
- Participating in all half-daily team briefings, as required, where particular duties for each morning or afternoon session are allocated.
- Being flexible. Providing cover for sick or absent colleagues and being prepared to move venue as requested.
- In the event of either expected or unscheduled absence of an Assistant Superintendent in charge of a venue, University Invigilators nominated by the Superintendent may be asked to assume the responsibility of deputising for that Assistant Superintendent and organising the venue in question for a half-day or a full-day or a number of hours. Appropriate additional remuneration will be paid.

#### **ROLES IMMEDIATELY BEFORE EXAMINATIONS**

- On arrival, prior to the session, laying out examination papers. Checking also that appropriate resources have been provided.
- Dealing with individual student anxieties in the waiting area outside examinations, as required, if necessary involving senior examination staff. Offering advice as appropriate.
- Monitoring students entering examination hall to ensure that they understand, appreciate and are observing the examination rules, including those in relation to allowed 'materials' and to 'Unacceptable Academic Practice'. Taking students aside and explaining procedures as necessary. This is a crucial and demanding part of the half-day, as students – preoccupied with themselves and their anxieties - will inevitably need to be intercepted and reminded of rules and prohibitions.
- Carefully observing students entering examinations and removing from them unpermitted clothing, bags, ancillary equipment and other illegal material.
- Repeating to candidates entering the examination hall rules on mobile telephones and other small electronic devices, removing illegal devices as appropriate.
- In examination hall, directing examination candidates to required seats and papers. Sorting out quickly but sympathetically problems related to mis-seating, incorrect papers and sometimes unexpected or illegal actions by students in immediate pre-examination period.
- Duties may include making start and end announcements, bilingually.

#### **ROLES DURING EXAMINATIONS**

- Being observant and recognising impending problems of significance to students under stress; recognising and take ownership of problems or impending problems, providing a

solution where possible. Appreciating when to involve senior examination staff.

- Collecting attendance slips and checking attendance slips against class lists. Completing relevant examination documentation.
- Producing detailed written reports on all matters associated with alleged Unacceptable Academic Practice, according to the requirements of the Superintendent of Examinations.
- Completing 'Incident Reports' on any relevant untoward matters, as prescribed.
- Working co-operatively with examination team colleagues in all parts of the examination process and communicating progress and outcomes as necessary.
- Understanding the key priorities in the examination process. Responding to unforeseen events or changes in priorities positively.
- Where necessary, guiding new team members by demonstrating the process and introducing them to the details of the work that they will be undertaking.
- Seeking to resolve problems quickly by working cooperatively with the Assistant Superintendent of Examinations and other team members, drawing on each other's skills and experience.
- Responding promptly and accurately to both examination candidates and to examination team colleagues who request information or a service. This will usually involve routine tasks within the examination process, but also sundry one-off inquiries from examination candidates.
- Taking responsibility. On occasions may need to explore the needs of the examinees to provide the appropriate service, or vary how procedures are applied in response to the specific needs of the examination candidates.
- Taking decisions with others in the examination team about one-off modifications of the examination process. Recognising when such situations arise associated with sick, stressed or troublesome examination candidates. Possibly involving quickly taking students out of the examination hall, maintaining their right to continue their examination, but placing them in a suitable individual location.
- In addition to duties within the examination hall, University Invigilators may from-time-to-time need to take station immediately outside the main examination hall, to:
  - deal with late-comers
  - keep in good order the circulation area outside the exam hall
  - provide a quiet and noise free environment
  - check early leavers

### **ROLES AFTER THE EXAMINATIONS**

- Opening doors at the end and observing students leaving. Assisting fellow team members in ensuring that items (including scripts) are not taken illegally out of the examination hall.
- Collecting in from the examination hall such completed scripts as are indicated by the Assistant Superintendent of Examinations. Examination venues can be very complex in terms of numbers of module papers sat at any one time, so meticulous work and attention to detail is required in collecting in examination scripts and checking these against the numbers expected.
- Preparing script collection boxes and forms, for collection by Post Room staff.
- Helping to clear up examination hall and facilitating preparation for next session.

### **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS OF ON-LINE EXAMINATIONS**

- Meeting with other allocated Invigilators to agree roles and tasks to be completed, 30 minutes in advance of the examination.
- Preparing computer room (as may have been in general use until the previous day or

half-day).

- Putting up external and internal notices (which are only in place while the room is being used for examination purposes).
- Liaising with IS staff to prepare computers and software for student arrival.
- Monitoring of student entry into the computer room (as in main venues), to ensure that rules and regulations are complied with, but with slightly different prohibitions.
- Going through a more involved setting-up and start procedure than in main venues, in QMP examinations, liaising with IS staff if necessary, and ensuring that all students start simultaneously.
- Apart from all the general invigilation aspects, also monitoring aspects of the use of the QMP software, including secure and successful completion procedure.
- Being aware when IS support is required (IS staff do not attend throughout the examinations).
- With double-session examinations (common) checking if second session students are located as instructed to departments. Then superintending first session students leaving, preventing any opportunities to meet second session students. Being aware of and monitoring opportunities for Unacceptable Academic Practice in the changeover.
- Successfully shutting down QMP examinations, liaising with IS staff.
- Clearing computer venue, ensuring security.

#### **OTHER DUTIES**

Under the direction of the Superintendent of Examinations assisting to:

- Comply with relevant legislative and regulatory requirements, including but not limited to,
  - (i) Fire Safety
  - (ii) Health and Safety
  - (iii) Data Protection
- Exceptionally, in the event of a need to consider emergency evacuation of the examination hall (most likely when a fire alarm sounds), being aware of the delayed-response protocol to be observed and co-operating with colleagues in the examination team in ensuring that this happens. Assistant Superintendents will have ensured that all Invigilators are reminded of the protocol previously dealt with during induction. Understanding the importance of initially retaining all students in the examination hall, of keeping them calm for the specified time, and of ensuring an ordered and unhurried evacuation, as instructed.

#### **PERSONAL SPECIFICATION**

University Invigilators should be:

- As previously indicated, people with direct personal experience of university examinations (that is, graduates) and preferably of the stresses and pressures of a university examination environment.
- Hopefully, experienced in running university or other examinations. This is regarded as an advantage, but is not essential.
- Fully committed to working in a front line service role, and being part of a team.
- People who exude confidence and assurance, but who understand when to seek guidance from more senior or experienced examination staff.
- Of a sympathetic and helpful disposition.
- People with evident enthusiasm and the ability to get on with other people of all ages and

experience, both colleagues and examination candidates.

- Able to deal with unexpected situations in an appropriate and unflustered fashion.
- People who are flexible, both in terms of which part of the overall job role that they will undertake, and occasionally where they might be asked to work. This includes flexibility in relation to lunchtime periods and to unanticipated departures from expected working hours.
- An ability to communicate in both Welsh and English is desirable for this post, continuing the University's commitment to deliverance of a bilingual service to our customers.

## **TRAINING**

- New appointees must attend two induction sessions run by the Superintendent of Examinations.
- Existing University Invigilators will routinely be advised of any significant changes in examination procedures and relevant University Regulations.

## KEY ELEMENTS

### 1. COMMUNICATIONS

Effective **verbal communication** is a central element in the discharge of this particular role.

1. Two types of verbal communication are necessary at the point at which students are entering the examination hall :
  - a) Drawing attention of examinees to standard procedures and examination rules. Communication must be clear and emphatic, because people entering examinations are definitely not concentrating on examination procedures, are frequently pre-occupied and often are neither co-operative nor prepared to listen.
  - b) More complex aspects, such as the various aspects of Unacceptable Academic Practice, need both to be carefully watched for, and pointed out individually to potential transgressors (which are surprisingly common). This requires sensitivity and always individual treatment, probably taking a student aside, but very much bearing in mind that – while the rules must be enforced and a clear explanation given of the relevant problem - we would not wish to upset the student’s equilibrium at such a crucial juncture.
2. Again, during the examination session, Invigilators will find themselves in a position where they must succinctly, clearly and quietly explain things to examinees:
  - To do with procedures and ways of operating.
  - In relation to the respect that individual students should have for other examinees, if they are behaving thoughtlessly.
  - In relation to difficulties that individual students may experience or perceive.
  - In relation to University regulations and possibly to breaches of those regulations.

Verbal communication comes to fore in all these cases.

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Though Invigilators may very well be having to **present written information** to examinees, it will usually be in the form of documents written by the Superintendent, rather than composed by the Invigilator. Their role is fundamentally not about creating paperwork, but about dealing face-to-face with students.

The main situation in which Invigilators must **communicate in written form** is in reporting Unacceptable Academic Practice. A clear and unambiguous report on UAP must always be provided by those Invigilators involved in cases of alleged UAP - that is, the Invigilators who uncovered any such transgressions or were drawn into dealing with such situations. Invigilators are asked to make notes at the time and then compose a report which covers all aspects of the situation, which process requires thoroughness and attention to detail. It must be borne in mind that such reports, while going initially to the Superintendent, will pass on to AQRO and to the academic department involved, and will form a principal line of evidence where cases of UAP are pursued in either a departmental inquiry or through the University’s UAP panel. As part of this process, the Superintendent will normally talk with the Invigilators involved to elucidate details within such written reports. Such reports are of huge importance to the students involved, as their academic future – and possibly further - might very well be affected by the outcome of a UAP case.

Though occurring less frequently, the Superintendent will also seek a written report from Invigilators in three other situations: A) In the very rare cases of complaint by students. B) In equally rare instances of Health and Safety accidents or incidents occurring in the venue. C) Where corroboration of cases of illness and indisposition have occurred

### 2. TEAMWORK AND MOTIVATION

Examination invigilation is certainly one of the situations within the University where teamwork is at its most vital. Invigilators in main venues and university computer rooms are quite clearly members of a team, and the successful - and preferably trouble-free - completion of the aims and objectives for that examination session (AM or PM) depend wholly on both individuals playing their allotted part and on the whole team functioning as a unit. The primacy of teamwork is both emphasised and discussed during induction sessions for new invigilators.

- The objectives for a half-day session will be well understood by many invigilators, both as a result of their training but also their accumulated experience. This will obviously not apply to new appointees. In addition, there will normally be a specific set of instructions from the Assistant Superintendent, according to the numbers of papers, the number of students, the varying durations of papers within the main hall and possibly specific characteristics associated with particular papers, including things from the paper rubrics of which the invigilators will need to be cognisant.
- Invigilators will be well aware of their place in the examination administration and that their efforts are part of meeting the overall objectives laid down by the University and by the Superintendent.
- Members of the team may well assign particular jobs between themselves without the input of their Assistant Superintendent, realising that time is frequently of the essence, most of all in one of the larger examination venues. This calls on both experience and a recognition that most of the work is team-related.
- Along with the Assistant Superintendent laying out his or her specific instructions at the start of the session, the most experienced invigilators will often take the lead, undertake organisation voluntarily or advise and motivate other less experienced staff.
- Less experienced invigilators will benefit from both the knowledge of the 'old hands' and from the motivation that they will offer, recognising time constraints and rapidly taking on board the team ethos.
- All members of the team will understand the need to be flexible and be prepared to be involved in all aspects of the invigilation role, sometimes taking on multiple responsibilities or switching quickly from one aspect to another.
- Teamwork is clearly paramount in getting a set of examinations under way, as close as possible to the scheduled start time. There are - on the one hand - many aspects of the total operation to be accomplished simultaneously, but - also - this is the time when a small problem with an individual student can have a negative effect on time-keeping, and must be solved expeditiously without detriment to the rest of the students. This is one of the times to see teamwork at its most effective.
- Notwithstanding the previous point, at no time in the examination session is teamwork more vital than at the end of the half-day session. Once again, there are security operations to be completed in terms of the students exiting the hall, things that must be checked. It must also be understood that the one situation, above all, to be avoided in an examination venue, is a 'lost' script - happily, this happens almost never, but it is down to teamwork and following procedures that such a claim can be made. Invigilators know this and will collect in and account for all expected scripts meticulously; counting large numbers of scripts, particularly with multiple answer books for one paper, will produce miscounts, a fact which ensures that invigilators take great care and work together at this point in the operation.
- In the area of Unacceptable Academic Practice, it is always the case that several people need to work together to detect, observe and expose students who are cheating, and then to deal with the situation in the manner laid down by the Superintendent. Particular care has to be taken to ensure that disruption to other students is minimised.

Actual teams of Invigilators exist at a number of levels : Across the whole daily operation, most of the Invigilator group will be participating; in each of the four main venues, a particular set of examinations with varying formats and durations will be held, run by a group of up to 7 or 8 Invigilators allocated on purely a half-day basis; Invigilators in IER Rooms must be able to cope with being detached and needing to show more individual initiative; Invigilators in on-line

exams can, in extreme cases, be having to simultaneously run the same examination paper to the same set of standards and parameters, in four computer rooms and then run them all a second time with a second 'sitting', all of which is very demanding.

### **3. LIAISON AND NETWORKING**

In the context of invigilation, liaison with both the Assistant Superintendent and with other members of the invigilation team, is a natural and continuous process, throughout the working day. This role is never one carried out in isolation – in one's own time and at one's own rate - and the way that invigilators work together will determine how effective the outcomes prove to be. Invigilators will work in teams allocated to the four main venues or to a computer room, on a half-daily basis, so they will liaise with the members of a different small group of individuals on that same temporal basis. But at the same time, they will function as part of the larger group and will soon come to know the personalities and characteristics of the working colleagues with whom they will be liaising.

There is no external liaison or networking considered to be a requirement of the role.

### **4. SERVICE DELIVERY**

The service provided by University Invigilators is only broadly understood by people who have not invigilated in such an environment. Outline details of the post are in the summary job description provided as an introduction to this role profile. This is not, however, service delivery in a situation of minimal initial scrutiny and low pressure – as may perhaps happen in an office environment, centrally or within an academic department – and where deficiencies can be identified and rectified without too much anxiety. Invigilation – in either main venues or in computer rooms - involves service delivery of a very customer-facing nature, often under pressure and in a very 'charged' environment. Anything untoward is likely to be magnified by the situation, and will almost certainly need to be rectified immediately, with measures probably needing to be taken to compensate in some way, either to a particular individual or to any other students who might be affected.

Invigilators do not normally set the standards or define the nature of the services offered, but they are certainly the staff with the responsibility for undertaking the processes involved and maintaining the standards of service expected.

The level of readiness and attention to detail required is high. During induction, Invigilators have it made clear to them that they must be alert and attentive throughout the working day and actively invigilate at all times. There is a clear definition of things that might in some way distract them, and which they must never do during the working day. Also that standards of behaviour must never be compromised.

### **5. DECISION MAKING PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES**

Decision-taking for invigilators is within a number of frameworks:

- An established procedure within which they must play a part, as a member of a team. Many such procedures will be directed by the Assistant Superintendent in charge of the relevant examination venue, and there is limited scope for individual decision-taking and initiative. This most obviously occurs prior to and subsequent to each half-day session, when either preparations for the examination are being made or there is a large amount of post-examination administration to be completed.
- Situations also exist where the Invigilator is purely allocated a role to perform:
  - Outside the examination hall, in the 'waiting area', offering advice and assistance where necessary.
  - In terms of monitoring the entry of candidates into the examination hall, being

mindful of the observance of a significant numbers of rules and prohibitions. There is scope for individual ways of dealing with situations that arise, as always when interacting with people, in this case students - as noted previously - sometimes over-focused on just themselves and their anxieties and in a very charged environment.

- Actually during the examination, at a time where this might erroneously be viewed by uninvolved people as a 'reduced-pressure time', during general circulation and direct invigilation, but actually where observance of both modes of behaviour and University regulations will be uppermost in the Invigilators' minds. People dealing with people, when both minor transgressions and serious incidents arise, always gives scope for individual decision-taking, in just how a situation might most appropriately be handled.
- Particularly in the third category immediately above, Invigilators may need - on the one hand - to quietly and unobtrusively remind students that they should be either doing something or not doing something, or - on the other hand - violation of a serious University regulation (most notably the Unacceptable Academic Practice Regulation) may require an established way of managing such a situation to be invoked, but nevertheless be handled with reference to the severity of the infraction and also being mindful of the impact on other students in the immediate locality.

Decisions may have impacts totally confined to the conduct of the particular examination, and effectively forgotten immediately afterwards. But decisions may have greater ramifications and an impact beyond the examination hall. Two examples would be:

1. The way that an Unacceptable Academic Practice violation is dealt with will have implications for both the handling and possibly the pursuit of the case subsequently. This might potentially contribute to how academic departments and institutes can deal with and prosecute cases of UAP subsequently, both in departmental contexts and also within a University Committee of Inquiry (in the most serious cases). Cases of UAP have to be handled both correctly and considerately, as the possibly exists that later outcomes will affect the student's degree result, their continued study in the University and conceivably their whole life.
2. It is essential that Invigilators go about their work correctly and in a sensitive fashion. There is a balance to be struck between examination candidates being aware that they are being observed and monitored, but also on the examination staff as a team operating unobtrusively. Though such situations are not common, the Superintendent very occasionally has to deal with complaints either about Invigilators who have not got the balance quite right and might have compromised an examinee's ability to get on effectively with an examination, or where the process and observance of the 'rules' might have ultimately assumed a greater importance than the fact that this examination matters very much to those being examined.

## **6. PLANNING AND ORGANISING RESOURCES**

In large measure, the planning and organisation of resources is carried out by senior examination staff: The Superintendent is responsible for the macro-organisation of resources, both in the lengthy period leading up to the examinations and - on a daily basis - ensuring that appropriate resources of all types are provided for each of the main venues and the on-line computer rooms. The Assistant Superintendents are in continuous control of their own venues, ensuring always that appropriate and sufficient resources are available for the required operations on that day, and disposing those resources around the venue and - in particular - placing them in the hands of the Invigilators as each part of the process unfolds.

However, Invigilators do have to plan suitable resources in a number of situations:

1. In the completion of tasks allocated by the Assistant Superintendent within the total process, ensure that they have the relevant paperwork and appropriate physical resources.
2. Where their role takes them outside the main examination hall - most notably into the

IER Room – and where they will be operating without direct supervision, ensuring that an appropriate supply of the necessary resources is always present, undertaking such organisation as is required.

3. In University computer rooms, where there is no Assistant Superintendent and no continuous presence of the Superintendent herself, monitoring and being aware always of resource requirements of all types and possibly having to communicate needs direct to the Superintendent in a timely fashion. Operational planning may also be necessary, in terms of team members agreeing roles within the small group situations that are encountered

## **7. INITIATIVE AND PROBLEM SOLVING**

While senior examination staff might hope to be able to anticipate all the situations that will arise in all types of examination venue, characteristics which Invigilators themselves must display in abundance are personal initiative and an ability to solve problems as they arise – a natural ability to ‘think on one’s feet’ and to react appropriately. In practice, a sizeable part of the long working day is Invigilators waiting for things to happen and then quickly dealing with whatever has occurred.

Problem solving will be carried out within a number of frameworks:

- a) In the main examination hall, dealing with both routine requests or enquiries from students, or sometimes more difficult or intransigent situations, but where there is – on the one hand – a procedure laid down and probably they will have received some documentation about this, but – on the other hand - where the Invigilator will need to react in the way that they feel is most fitting to the circumstances and where they will also need to judge whether this is something on which they might seek support from another Invigilator or conceivably look to involve the Assistant Superintendent.
- b) In an IER Room, there is normally only one Invigilator. However, in two of the four main venues, and sometimes with on-line examinations in computer rooms, the IER Room will be located somewhere else, either on another floor or conceivably in another building. Thus the lines of communication are stretched and – though there may again be laid-down procedures or the Assistant Superintendent will have indicated verbally how the Invigilators should proceed in various situations – there is nevertheless a greater degree of both independence and initiative that the Invigilator would be expected to manifest. Dealing with his or her own problems, except in cases of uncertainty or of more significant incidents.
- c) In a University computer room, where there will be neither the Superintendent nor an Assistant Superintendent present for the majority of the session, the group of Invigilators must collectively order their own activities, and their individual responsibilities, to a large degree. It should be noted that on-line examinations very often involve two contiguous sessions in a particular computer room, with a number of serious issues in terms of keeping students leaving Session 1 away from students arriving for Session 2, which can cause difficulties resulting, not just from an occasional wish to ‘cheat’, but from students inherent desire not to be organised!

It is very far from the case that Invigilators merely operate according to tightly-laid-down instructions. They on occasions need to manifest a high degree of initiative.

## **8. ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH**

Difficult to see how this characteristic could relate to the role of Invigilator. The Superintendent alone accumulates statistics, reports them and draws conclusions for the University. There is nothing else in the very dedicated examination process which could remotely require analysis and research.

## 9. SENSORY AND PHYSICAL DEMANDS

There are indeed quite serious demands made upon examination staff, but it would be difficult to characterise them as 'physical demands', even though long hours spent in an examination venue are very personally testing - more so than anyone who has never experienced such an environment from the invigilation perspective could imagine. All the more so as the standards now laid down are much more taxing for staff than was ever the case in years gone by. Concentration and vigilance takes its toll, to be sure, and few front-line examination staff have much difficulty sleeping at night - unless, of course, they are running through in their minds the events of the day just past, as is sometimes the case!

Formerly, invigilation was a part of academic staff contracts. It is to the University's advantage that this role is now performed by dedicated and properly trained staff. *As a university academic of 46 years experience, and one of those such staff who always took examination invigilation responsibilities seriously, I can testify that many academic staff - quite apart from never having been trained in any way - were severely lacking in both enthusiasm and in common sense in relation to such a role. Up until 2007, we -the examination staff - knew that we effectively had to 'lose' certain individuals when they arrived to carry out their assignments, as they simply had no conception of the rigor required, and would sometimes make mistakes with serious consequences.* The demands of the role are much greater now than was the case previously - in relation to University regulations, in relation to students with special needs, and in relation to students being much more the 'customer' than they were ever perceived to be in times past. The University needs these paid, trained, and much more dedicated staff very badly.

As indicated, 'Sensory and physical demands' doesn't quite cover the Invigilator role, but neither does the 'Work Environment' where other aspects of the stresses and strains of major University examination venues can be examined. What is crucial is that the demands of the role are recognised wherever they are included in this role profile outline.

## 10. WORK ENVIRONMENT

Again, this 'characteristic' doesn't quite fit to pressures with which, and the environment within which, the Invigilator has to operate, but there is nowhere else to say what needs to be said, so it once again vital that what is written under (9) and (10) is taken on board and included in the role analysis for which this role outline is written.

The examination environment is something quite unlike any other within the University. And yet it is an integral and unavoidable component in what the University does above all else - educates and trains students and awards degrees. In truth it is a part of the teaching process, not just an administrative adjunct. The skills required are not directly teaching skills, but they are most certainly not akin to the 'Administrative and Secretarial' skills into which mould the University is probably attempting to pour this particular job role. The job is about people, not things, and people in a very singular environment - the examination hall.

Teaching, including lecturing, is - amongst many other things - about conveying information and imparting skills and techniques in situations of fairly low stress. Students in lectures and practicals may be critical and demanding of their teachers, but they are receptive and wishing to learn. Students in examinations are wholly different creatures, enduring a situation in which they find no pleasure, with a series of human reactions which relate directly to this :

- Examinees are under sometimes severe pressure, and thus almost all get stressed, everything from general unease up to full-on panic. Invigilators have to deal with these symptoms.
- Examinees are pre-occupied and often self-absorbed, perhaps unsurprisingly, and not in the best frame of mind to listen to what is being said to them, important as this is likely to be.
- They are forgetful, sometimes exhibiting behaviour that they would objectively know to be incorrect or inappropriate, and reacting testily or adversely when this is drawn to

their attention.

- Unfortunately, there are some occasions when the 'drawing of their attention' is not in the context of a timely reminder, but when things have gone too far and a University regulation has already been breached. Invigilators find no pleasure in such an avoidable situation and go out of their way to ensure that vital information is communicated repeatedly to students.
- Some students do not 'make mistakes' but perpetrate deliberate cheating or breaking of the University regulation. Invigilators are trained in how to deal with such situations, but they involve difficulty and emotions on both sides.

Bearing in mind all the above observations, it would be appropriate to describe the work environment in an examination hall as extremely 'charged', not at all a comfortable set of conditions. But this is the normal working situation for up to 8-9 hours per day for an Invigilator. This must be recognised.

## **11. PASTORAL CARE AND WELFARE**

The point has firstly to be made that examination staff in general, including Invigilators, are not there primarily to 'police' the examinations, but to facilitate the students being examined attaining the best possible outcomes in relation to their knowledge and their abilities. They all, without exception, recognise the pressures described under (9) and (10) and regard themselves as having the opportunity to help students do their best. Thus, in terms of pastoral care and welfare, they always behave positively and helpfully (even when uncovering Unacceptable Academic Practice). It should be remembered that we specifically ask for applicants for this role to be graduates, so that they can appreciate and sympathise with the pressures of the situation. Pastoral care would be regarded as a core element in the job role:

- Students may display evidence of pressure and stress either in general situations, such as in the waiting area or upon entry to the examination room, or in more specific individual manifestations. Not only must they be treated considerately, but may need personal advice or reassurance on particular matters, even when entering the examination hall and undertaking the basic administrative tasks.
- It may also be that, for individuals, pressure builds as the examination proceeds, for variety of reasons, such that they more obviously show signs of stress. Invigilators will have been advised in how to deal with such situations, as part of their pastoral remit, and might exceptionally accompany a student outside of the actual examination hall while they compose themselves, or – possibly involving the Assistant Superintendent – invoke some more specific solution, including moving students to the IER Room or to the sick bay, or seating them alone in another location (if available). Cases of panic often require such approaches. In cases of general malaise and an unwillingness to continue the examination, Invigilators will advise students to immediately apprise their departments of what has occurred.

Invigilators need to quickly recognise when a situation demands something more than being solicitous and helpful to students. In such situations, taking a student to the venue sick bay may be sufficient, but – more extremely – it may be necessary to a) seek out a first-aid qualified staff member, b) phone for an ambulance, or c) arrange for a student to be taken quickly to hospital, probably by car. On occasions, it will prove desirable to confer with the Student Health Centre. These kinds of response are more likely to be associated with illness or injury, rather than panic or emotional upset.

## **12. TEAM DEVELOPMENT**

The centrality of teamwork by Invigilators is covered in (2). Team development is very different and likely to be the domain of the Superintendent, who will judge whether additional instruction or training in some new or modified element of the Invigilator role is necessary. This may be imparted in written form – which would be routinely the case – or possibly through a

course organised by the Superintendent. A good example of the latter was the training in the 2014/5 session of the whole Invigilator cohort to enable them to undertake invigilation in on-line examinations.

However, it would also be expected that – in addition to both documents on procedures and to instructions given verbally by Assistant Superintendents – the more experienced Invigilators would advise or guide new appointees on standard information and procedures.

### **13. TEACHING AND LEARNING SUPPORT**

Invigilators do not normally teach, *per se*, but are indisputably involved with a core part of the teaching process, that of examining our students. And not in a detached way, but very practically and face-to-face. Though all students will have been examined previously at school or sixth-form college, university examinations and the pressures associated with them, can be assessed as being at a whole new level. By guiding and assisting students in a host of small ways, Invigilators are indeed contributing to the students' learning processes and hopefully helping them to produce enhanced results.

### **14. KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE**

- In adverts for University Invigilators, we ask for graduates (or, specifically, it is noted as 'essential' that applicants have 'familiarity with HE examination procedures', which can only in fact be gained by being a graduate). In practice all our Invigilators are graduates, many of them postgraduates, not infrequently former staff of the University. Though one is thus not asking for specific academic subject 'knowledge and experience', what is being sought is experience of the university examining process, even if from an examinee's perspective. This should be recognised in analysing this role.
- It is also noted in the job advertisement as 'desirable' that applicants should have experience of HE invigilation. In practice few new applicants have such experience, so it is very much the case - as pointed out in (12) - that the knowledge and experience of existing Invigilators has to be passed on to new team members. This may be designated 'team development' in that context, but we are nevertheless implying that the transfer of existing expertise (knowledge and experience) is an integral part of the role. As indeed it is. That experience may have been gained over many years of carrying out the invigilation role, which incidentally is not in any way currently reflected in the emoluments that the more experienced staff receive.