



Curriculum Management and eLearning Department

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LETTER CIRCULAR

Information: X

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Action Required: X

Ref: CMeLD 46/2010

To: All Heads of School (State and Non-State) and Sections

From: Mr Leonard Grech, Assistant Director – Assessment for Learning

Subject: Raising Standards – Formative Use of Half-Yearly Examination Scripts

I refer Heads of School to Letter Circular DCM 34/2007. In that Circular it was emphasised that ‘Half-Yearly examinations are meant to provide teachers, parents and students with information concerning academic achievement’. Providing parents and students with just a mark is far from satisfactory considering, among other things, the loss of teaching time, the great amount of paper used, and the energy and effort involved in the setting of examination papers, in the organisation of the examinations and in the marking of scripts.

Once the aim is to guarantee quality education and raise standards, it is crucial that maximum formative use is made of students’ scripts. Scripts provide teachers with valuable feedback and therefore with a great opportunity to improve the teaching and learning process.

Teachers should study the scripts and reflect on their teaching methods. Students’ answers might help us realise that our pedagogies are effective with a number of students but ineffective with others. Hence the need to adopt different teaching styles to satisfy the needs of all our students.

We need to give feedback to students indicating what has been done well during the examination and what needs to be improved. **Students might be very much interested to see for themselves where they have gained or lost valuable marks.** In the Letter Circular sent two years ago it was pointed out that ‘students benefit enormously when they become aware of the strengths and weaknesses they demonstrate in examinations’. Moreover students have to be told what needs to be done to improve their work. This will help them make progress, however small.

What has been said above is in line with the Department’s policy to implement Assessment for Learning and therefore to transform a summative exercise into a formative one. This will help enhance learning and raise standards.

Thank you for your attention.

Raymond J. Camilleri
Director CMeLD