

## Individualisation of group papers etc.

It follows from the Examination Orders (s. 4(3) of BEK no. 1062 of 30/06/2016 and s. 13(3) of BEK no. 1046 of 30/06/2016) that in connection with a paper written by a group of students, separate grades can only be awarded or other assessment made if the contributions of the individual students are clearly marked. Requirements for individualisation must be laid down in the Programme Regulations.

The following is stated in s. 19(4) of CBS' Programme Regulations:

*If a written product is produced by more than one student, and if there is no oral defence of the product, the students must show what their individual contributions are, and in such a way that it is ensured that individual assessment is possible.*

The Dean's Office of Education can provide the following *guidelines* to the Study Boards concerning individualisation of group assignments where there is no oral exam.

In principle, two issues should be considered:

### **a) How much of the assignment should be subject to individualisation?**

The provisions of the ministerial orders do not provide any indications hereof, but it must be assumed that they are based on the hypothesis that the entire text can be distributed between the respective authors; assigning one author to each passage/section/chapter. This, however, does not make sense in practice, so if this type of examination must be realistic and possible, it must be accepted that some passages are written jointly and must be credited to all the authors. Examples of such are the problem statement and the conclusion, and in certain cases also the methodology chapter (if the methodology chapter does not exceed an extent to which it makes sense to distribute the passages between the authors).

It is essential that the sections that are written jointly are not of an extent that undermines the basis of making an individual assessment or that the individualisation gives the impression that it is a deliberate attempt to circumvent the intentions of the ministerial orders. *The individualisation must therefore have an extent and a form that makes it possible for the examiners to comply with the following rule from the Examination Orders: In connection with both an individual exam and a group exam, an individual assessment must be made of the students' performance, and separate grades must be awarded.*

### **b) How should an assignment be individualised?**

How an assignment should be individualised is not stipulated further in the ministerial orders. The identification of the contribution of the individual must be the primary (and most important) basis for examiners to perform an individual assessment of a student. Also, the identification cannot appear as an attempt to undermine the requirement for individualisation (the 'every fourth word' or 'every fourth line' models).

In other words, the sections distributed to the individual student must be large enough and coherent enough for the examiners to have an overview of the contribution of the individual author and obtain a meaningful impression of the quality. As already mentioned, the interpretation of this must depend on the nature and scope of the assignment in question. *Nothing thus prevents that the exam regulations of a given exam stipulates more detailed and operational requirements for individualisation.*

One specific consideration is whether a section (apart from the above-mentioned jointly written sections) is allowed to be credited to more than one author (but not all authors). Again, the crucial factor will be whether such an individualisation will serve as a meaningful basis for individual assessments.

Apart from the problem statement, the conclusion and possibly the methodology chapter, the course responsible/the study programme should be cautious about allowing more than one author to the other sections/chapters (especially if the product in general has been divided into relatively small text passages that have been credited to different authors), as it will quickly become a slippery slope that puts the above-mentioned two considerations under pressure. On the other hand, it is probably not a good idea to have an actual rule about not allowing that certain sections are credited to two authors if it is well-founded and seems meaningful. – It seems more reasonable that a passage, which actually is created in close collaboration between two of the group's members, is credited to both of them instead of dividing the section into small text bits and distributing them, one after the other, between the two authors. *The examiners' ability to handle this and guarantee that their assessments are individual is still essential.*

A way to obtain an overview of the contribution of the individual student - and thereby also being able to assess whether the degree of individualisation is acceptable - could be to demand that such assignments are accompanied by a table showing which parts of the written product are credited to the individual authors.

In this way, the examiner will have an overview of how the written product is distributed between the students (and which sections/chapters are credited to the whole group or more than one author), and an overview of the individual contributions to the written product.

### ***Sanctions***

In cases where the examiner(s) does/do not find that the individualisation made enables individual assessments, the programme secretariat must be informed. The students will receive a decision informing them that the written product will not be assessed as it is, since it fails to meet the requirements for individualisation in the Examination Order, see s. 20(6) of the Programme Regulations. *When an assignment is rejected, the student will have used one exam attempt (registered as a no show).*

Unless special circumstances apply, the assignment can be resubmitted for assessment at the next exam, provided that it has been individualised to an extent that allows for individual assessment.

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