



**ASSESSMENT OF FACULTY AND STUDENTS'
FAMILIARITY WITH GRADE APPEAL PROCEDURES AND
THE PROCEDURES FOR ADDRESSING MISSING EXAMINATION
RESULTS/MARKS AT UMMA UNIVERSITY, KENYA**

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Abstract:

This study assessed the level of familiarity with grade appeal procedures and procedures for addressing missing examination results/marks among faculty members and undergraduate students at Umma University, Kenya. **Methodology:** A convergent parallel research design was employed at Umma University Main Campus in Kajiado County. The study targeted 2,254 undergraduate students, 46 full-time lecturers, and 4 Deans of Faculty. Stratified sampling yielded 340 undergraduate students, while a census was taken for lecturers. Data were collected using semi-structured questionnaires (students and lecturers) and interview guides (Deans of Faculty). Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations), while qualitative data underwent content analysis. **Findings:** Response rates of 76.8% (students, n=261) and 78.3% (lecturers, n=36) were achieved. While 87.7% of students were aware of the formal examination policy document, only 50.7% had thoroughly read it. Students demonstrated moderate familiarity with grade appeal procedures (composite mean=3.455) but strong familiarity with missing marks procedures (composite mean=3.948). Lecturers showed moderate familiarity with both grade appeal procedures (composite mean=3.299) and missing marks procedures (composite mean=3.337). Key challenges identified included delayed reporting of missing marks (32.3%), false claims by students (16.7%), lengthy bureaucratic processes (11.1%), and overreliance on informal communication channels. **Conclusion:** Examination policies at Umma University are not uniformly understood among students and faculty. While students demonstrated strong knowledge of missing marks procedures, both groups exhibited only moderate familiarity with grade appeal procedures, indicating significant gaps in policy communication and awareness. **Recommendations:** The study recommends mandatory policy orientation for all students and faculty, simplified policy dissemination through digital platforms, regular training workshops on grade appeal

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processes, streamlined missing marks resolution protocols with clear timelines, and annual policy awareness audits.

Keywords: grade appeal, missing examination marks, procedural familiarity, university policy

1. Introduction

At the core of an efficient education system are examinations, which are a pivotal indicator of the effectiveness of teaching and learning processes, acting as a key variable in their evaluation (Singh, 2022; French, Dickerson & Mulder, 2024). They act as influential sources of motivation for students by communicating the concepts and materials which are explicitly crucial (Aftab & Tariq, 2018). Faculty members may then apply the results in identifying students' misconceptions, evaluating learning objectives and activities, and also making decisions regarding instructional practices (Rudolph *et al.*, 2019). For universities, examinations are a means through which quality graduates can be churned out in readiness for the job market (Gallagher, 2022). Besides, examinations form the core of curriculum design and innovation and are crucial for maintaining educational standards (Abdulkadir, 2024; Teshome, 2025). Examinations play a fundamental role in quality assurance in universities by providing crucial insights into input, process, content and output elements of teaching and learning (Pitiyanuwat, Phanphruk & Pitiyanuwat, 2018). The systematic and consistent interaction of these elements establishes the measures of institutions' reputation, image and credibility.

In assessing students' learning and performance, universities administer different types of examinations, and while the execution of examination processes may slightly differ from one institution to another, some common practices exist (Ombasa, 2017; Mahlobo & Lebelo, 2020; Egede & Omiegbe, 2023). There is a general consensus that regardless of the types of examinations administered, they have to be regulated or undertaken in line with specific statutes, rules and procedures and hence, must be governed by established policies (Miron *et al.*, 2021). Examination policies are administrative documents formally issued to guide the conduct of examinations in institutions with the aim of achieving or maintaining determined standards (Okoreaffia, 2024). They are produced to ensure that the planning and management of examinations are undertaken efficiently and in the best interest of students/candidates. Examination policies help universities operate efficient examination systems with clear guidelines, rules and regulations for all relevant staff members and students, besides providing standard patterns that can be reviewed periodically to evaluate their effectiveness (Adhikary, 2024).

According to Ray *et al.* (2018), university examination policies are ratified through consensus among key stakeholders following substantive discussions with academic boards, the examinations department of the registry, deans of schools, heads of

departments, student unions, and government representatives. For that reason, such policies necessitate consulting relevant circulars, regulations and documents, including the students' handbook. Adeloje (2017) argues that without established examination policies, the conduct and overall management of examinations at any level of an educational system would be disorganized, ungovernable and unappealing; and subsequently, the results or grades from such examinations would not be reliable, credible or meet international standards. Therefore, examination policies must be known to all and adhered to during examinations.

Examination processes in universities entail a variety of risks for the institutions and generally comprise three broad phases, namely the pre-examination, examination and post-examination phases (Quapp & Holschemacher, 2016). The key actors in the examination phases include lecturers/examiners, invigilators, students, supervisors and administrators (Kurasha, 2013). Accordingly, examination policies are designed in such a way that they delineate the procedures, instructions or responsibilities of each phase and also identify the relevant actors, for prompting and ease of monitoring (Okoreaffia, 2024). While enacting examination policies is considered a noble course, several scholars have stressed that such policies can only be effective if they are familiar to or well understood by all stakeholders (Birks *et al.*, 2020; Parnter, 2020).

Navigating through student grade grievances is considered a challenging and time-consuming exercise for both students and faculty members. Such grievances, according to Pacis, Sytsma and Keough (2016), can be a source of stress for faculty, especially when they have duly adhered to the assessment methods specified in the syllabus, computed the final course grades accurately and also applied standards equally to all students in the course. For those reasons, among others, universities normally lay down guidelines and steps for managing such grievances in their examination policies (Jackson, Hoffman & Schaller, 2021). To effectively address students' grade grievances, faculty members must be aware of and well-equipped with adequate knowledge regarding the procedures involved in the university's formal grade appeals process (Gynnild, 2011).

Familiarity with grade appeals procedures enables faculty members to appropriately and efficiently respond to appeals, with a possibility of preventing any form of misunderstanding and also protecting academic integrity (Thomas *et al.*, 2018). Students' awareness of grade appeals procedures can help reduce grade appeals that arise due to misconceptions, ensure their academic rights are protected and also address cases where errors or inconsistencies have resulted in incorrect grading (Ott, 2022). Students are satisfied with grade appeals outcomes when the rationale behind the rulings are well-clarified and understood (Abrahamsen, Moen & Selvik, 2024).

The issue of missing marks is a recurrent problem at the university level that affects both students and faculty. Missing marks can lead to inaccurate grading, unfair assessment of student performance, and a lack of accountability for both students and faculty (Amadi & Ondabu, 2023). To address the issue of missing marks, universities

implement policies that are aimed at creating highly efficient systems for handling student data, tracking grades, and ensuring that grades are recorded and uploaded promptly (Packer *et al.*, 2021). Such policies also establish readily available, accessible, and responsive support services that guide students through the resolution process (Kravitz, Stone-Romero & Ryer, 1997).

A well-defined protocol for swiftly resolving missing marks issues will play a significant role in restoring student trust in university systems (Pacis, Sytsma & Keough, 2016). Faculty members are expected to be familiar with procedures for handling missing examination results so as to ensure academic integrity, maintain student records, and facilitate the timely resolution of issues (Gynnild, 2011). This familiarity is crucial for maintaining the university's credibility and providing students with accurate and timely information about their academic progress. Missing results can undermine the fairness and reliability of the examination process, potentially impacting student grades and graduation prospects (Emaikwu, 2012). Hence, students also need to be familiar with procedures for handling missing examination results to protect their academic records, prevent delays in graduation, and ensure accurate record-keeping (Owen, Stefaniak & Corrigan, 2010).

Generally, the importance of enacting examination policies and stakeholders' familiarity with such policies cannot be overemphasized. Nevertheless, persistent examination challenges in universities, such as rampant missing examination results and students' contestation of awarded grades, cast doubts on whether examination policies are well communicated and understood, particularly by students and faculty members, as well as their implementation and compliance. This study sought to assess faculty and students' familiarity with examination policies at Umma University, Kenya, focusing specifically on grade appeal procedures and the procedures for addressing missing examination results/marks. While research on faculty and student familiarity with examination policies in universities was not a novice inquiry, studies that focused on the said examination policies and also targeted students and faculty members at Umma University were nearly non-existent, amplifying the need for this research.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Just like many other institutions of higher learning across the globe, public and private universities in Kenya have enacted examination policies which provide the general principles and guidelines that govern the administration of their examinations (Aikins, 2019; Kathula, Adhiambo & Mwalw'a, 2019; Mulongo, 2020; Keter, 2021). The policies provide the rules, regulations and instructions that different actors must adhere to in the different phases of the examination process. Despite the existence of examination policies in these institutions, the quality, integrity, reliability and validity of examination processes in many institutions have on several occasions being questioned as a result of various complaints from various stakeholders.

Chronic cases of missing student marks and examination scripts, increased number of petitions related to faulty grades and lengthy bureaucratic procedures for addressing students' examination grievances are among the rampant examination concerns reported in these institutions (Muchai, Mulwa & Amukowa, 2022; Amadi & Ondabu, 2023; Ochieng, 2023). While such concerns may be the problem of faculty members, the students are most of the time left to bear the consequences of the reported cases. What is more worrisome is the fact that such examination-related concerns persisted in universities that were implementing ISO 9001 quality management systems having already been certified. Such concerns raised critical questions regarding whether the examination policies in Kenyan universities were only declarative, or whether they were consistently and effectively communicated, implemented and applied.

It had been widely reported that the effectiveness of enacted examination policies in learning institutions hinged on the degree of understanding and familiarity among stakeholders (Birks *et al.*, 2020; Parnter, 2020). Various studies, such as Deeley *et al.* (2019) and Danbaba and Bako (2020) had demonstrated that when students and faculty members were not aware or did not fully understand various examination policies, the likelihood of increased disputes and operational inefficiencies which compromised the integrity of examinations were inevitable. Yet, in the case of Umma University, a gap existed with regards to available data on the extent to which faculty members and students were aware of and adhered to examination policies, including those related to grade appeal procedures as well as the procedures for addressing missing marks. Accordingly, this study sought to address this knowledge gap by assessing faculty and student familiarity with grade appeal procedures and the procedures for addressing missing marks at Umma University.

1.2 Research Objective

The study sought to determine the level of familiarity with examination policies guiding examination timetabling, cheating and invigilation among faculty members and students at Umma University.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Grade Appeal Procedures

A grade appeal is a formal complaint regarding a final course grade which arises when a student believes that the grade has been awarded capriciously or unfairly (Jackson, Hoffman & Schaller, 2021). A formal grade appeal allows students to express their concerns if they believe their grade does not accurately represent their performance owing to a mistake, discrimination, or bias (Packer *et al.*, 2021). The grade appeal procedures or process differs from one institution to the other and the purpose is providing students with a systematic, swift and fair process for raising their concerns regarding final grades (Kravitz, Stone-Romero & Ryer, 1997). The favoured way for

students to address a grade grievance is to hold a discussion with the instructor in the hope of resolving the matter without needing to file a formal grade appeal (Pulich, 1983; Gynnild, 2020; Ginzburg *et al.*, 2024). Nonetheless, if the informal discussion between these parties does not result to a resolution, the student may then proceed with a formal grade appeal grievance. The grievance is then reviewed by the relevant approved faculty or committee and a decision rendered based on the policies of the university (Ott, 2022). Most universities consider this a final decision and no further appeals can be made. The process for filing a grade appeals grievance is grounded in the rights of students to due process. On Page 24 of the Umma University Examination Policy Revised Edition 2019, the procedure for making examination appeals are outlined and the various offices involved include Vice-Chancellor's office, the Academic Registrar, the Examination's Office and the Senate Examination Appeals Committee. The Student Handbook in Page 31 also details the procedures the student must follow to appeal a grade. For instance, it is specified that an application for grade appeal should be done in the first two (2) weeks after the declaration of the examinations results and that a student wishing to appeal a grade must first discuss the issue with the unit instructor. If the student wishes to have a grade reviewed further after undertaking the mentioned action, further guidelines are provided.

Research on students' familiarity with grade appeals procedures in universities generally remained very scanty. One of the available related studies was undertaken by Gynnild (2020), who, based on a case study of diverse grade appeals procedures at the University of Oslo, reported a significant increase in the incidences of grade appeals over the 10-year period considered. The study established that students and examiners were in confusion when it came to the application of standards in appeals processes. According to the study, counterproductive practices without student involvement had for years operated under the cover of fairness and objectivity. As part of its recommendations, the study argued that there was a need for students to be engaged in drafting grade appeals processes and the approved guidelines communicated to them during their learning activities, so as to enhance their awareness of the procedures. In another study, Germaine *et al.* (2011) explored the lessons that could be learned through a review of grade appeal data. Data collected from the National University at La Jolla, California, revealed that grade appeals were stressful for both instructors and students. Moreover, most grade appeals were resolved at the school or college level within a university, even though court cases involving grade appeals had been reported. The study noted that grade appeals in this institution were initiated when students wrote a letter to the dean and provided evidence of why they believed their grade should be reviewed. The dean then directed the grade appeal committee to review students' letters and evidence, to request for supplementary evidence as required, and also to request a response and evidence from the instructor. Depending on the evidence provided by both parties, a decision was rendered by the committee. Germaine *et al.*'s (2011) study underscored that the existence of a concise university grade appeal policy that clearly stated the grounds for a grade

appeal and the process students had to follow to appeal a course grade was vital. The study cited various grounds for grade appeals, such as calculation errors, lack of clear and prompt criteria for grading, assignment of a grade based on bias or discrimination, or inconsistent or unfair application of grading standards. The study observed that most reasons for grade appeals cited by faculty members revolved around students' sense of entitlement. Hence, the need for instructors to clearly communicate to students about directions for assignments and grading expectations to students was emphasized. The study argued that inconsistencies were most likely to occur when instructors deviated from approved syllabi. The study also noted that instructors and students needed to make attempts to resolve grade issues through direct communication with one another.

2.2 Procedures for Dealing with Missing Examination Results

Missing marks have been a longstanding problem at universities worldwide. It affects the integrity of the grading system and can lead to discrepancies in student performance evaluation (Ochieng, 2023). Missing marks can occur due to various reasons, such as human error, system malfunction, miscommunication, or even intentional actions by students or faculty (Maithya *et al.*, 2023). This problem can have significant consequences for students, including jeopardizing their academic progress, causing stress and anxiety, and hindering their future career prospects (Kiprono & Gichuhi, 2021). Moreover, faculty members can also face the consequences of missing marks, such as inaccurate assessment of student performance and a lack of transparency in the grading process (Murigi, 2024). In most universities, the procedures for addressing cases of missing marks necessitate that students carefully check their examination results once released and updated on their student portals and, upon discovery of a missing mark, report the issue to the relevant department within two weeks of the result release date (Amadi & Ondabu, 2023). Students' complaints pertaining to missing marks must be recorded in the student examination complaint register available at the respective department (Cooper-Hind & Taylor, 2012). Upon receiving a complaint, the respective department is mandated to carry out various investigations by requesting comments or clarifications from the relevant course instructor(s), confirming the student's presence during the examination using the official examination attendance sheet and tracing and verifying the examination script using the booklet serial number (Mulongo, 2020). After the conclusion of the relevant investigations, the student's record is updated to reflect the corrected grade if the missing mark is resolved successfully, while in cases where the issue remains unresolved, the student is informed of the outcome and advised on any further actions that may be required (Emaikwu, 2012).

A qualitative study carried out by Amadi and Ondabu (2023) aimed at comprehending the causes and consequences of missing marks in Kenyan universities established that the common causes of missing marks included administrative errors, technical issues, and academic misconduct. To address this challenge, the study argued that the communication between lecturers and examiners needed to be improved as a

way of ensuring that grading was accurately undertaken and to prevent cases of missing marks. The provision of training and support to examiners and administrative staff for the purposes of ensuring that these university personnel understood the grading systems and procedures for accurately recording grades was also recommended. The study also underscored the need for establishing clear policies and procedures for addressing missing marks, including prompt communication with affected students and the provision of clear information on the steps that needed to be followed in addressing the issue. Increased awareness among students and faculty members about the importance of accurate grading and the consequences of academic misconduct was also underlined in this study.

In another study, Kiprono and Gichuhi (2021) investigated the relationship between missing marks and examination records management procedures in universities within Meru and Nyeri counties using a descriptive survey research design. The study observed that in these institutions, there were documented examination records management procedures that were designed to prevent issues like missing marks. However, gaps in understanding, compliance and enforcement of these procedures were reported. According to the study, if lecturers had been keen on following the said examination procedures as stipulated in the provided manuals, cases of missing marks in these universities would be greatly reduced. The study also attributed missing marks to a lack of basic records management competencies and general awareness of the necessary procedures involved. Lack of centralized offices that enforced compliance to these procedures and poor storage and safeguarding of marked answer scripts before delivery to the final custodians were also reported. The study recommended that all lecturers and examination coordinators must be trained regularly on basic records management to enhance understanding and adherence to examination procedures involved in addressing cases of missing marks and scripts.

3. Research Methodology

The study employed a convergent parallel research design. The study locale was the four faculties/schools at Umma University Main Campus, which is located in Kajiado County. The study targeted a total of 2,254 undergraduate students, 46 full-time lecturers and 4 Deans of Faculty as part of the faculty members. A stratified sampling technique was used to sample the undergraduate students based on faculty/school, while a census of the full-time lecturers was taken. The Deans of Faculty were purposively sampled. Using the Yamane (1967) formula, a sample of 340 undergraduate students was selected and spread as follows: 123 from the School of Education and Social Sciences, 102 from the School of Nursing and Midwifery, 32 from the School of Sharia and Islamic Studies and 83 from the School of Business and Technology. All the 46 full-time lecturers and 4 Deans of Faculty were considered. Data from the undergraduate students and full-time lecturers was collected using semi-structured questionnaires, while an interview guide was used

to gather data from the Deans of Faculty. Qualitative data were analysed through content analysis and presented in a narrative form, while for the quantitative data, descriptive analysis was undertaken. The descriptive statistics computed comprised simple frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation. The findings were presented using tables and charts.

4. Findings and Discussions

4.1 Response Rate

A successful response rate of 76.8% and 78.3% was realized for the undergraduate students and the full-time lecturers, respectively. Three of the four scheduled interviews with the Deans of Faculty were also successful.

4.2 Overall Level of Familiarity with Examination Policies among Faculty Members and Students

The study sought to determine the level of familiarity with grade appeal procedures as well as the procedures for addressing missing examination marks/results among faculty members and students at Umma University. The surveyed undergraduate students and full-time lecturers were thus subjected to a series of questions related to their knowledge or understanding of these examination policies as outlined in the Umma University Examination Policy Revised Edition 2019 and the university's Student Handbook 2nd Edition dated March 2025.

4.2.1 Students' Awareness and Access to the University's Formal Examination Policy Document

To begin with, the students' awareness of the existence of a formal document from the university detailing examination rules and regulations was explored. The majority of the undergraduate students surveyed, 229 (87.7%) were aware of the existence of such policy document. This was a demonstration of the commitment made by Umma University in providing students and faculty with a formal administrative document that guided the conduct of the institution's examinations towards the achievement or maintenance of pre-determined standards as recommended by scholars such as Adhikary (2024) and Okoreaffia (2024). The students who indicated that a formal university examination policy document existed were asked whether they had accessed or read its contents. Their responses are captured in Figure 1.

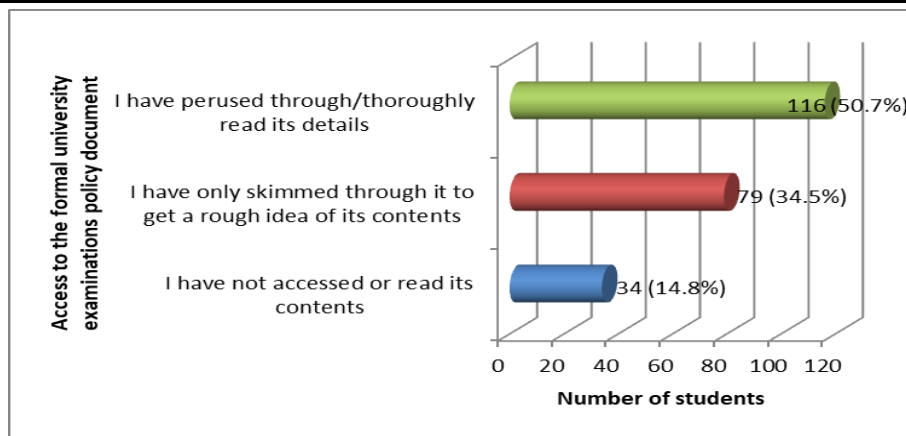


Figure 1: Distribution of Students by their Access to the Formal Examination Policy Document

The study determined that of the 229 students who had knowledge of the existence of the formal university examination policy document, 34 (14.8%) had not accessed or read its contents, 79 (34.5%) had only skimmed through it to get a rough idea of its contents, while 116 (50.7%) indicated that they had perused through or thoroughly read its details. From these findings, it was inferred that knowledge of the existence of a formal university examination policy among students did not automatically translate to its access or the students' commitment to familiarizing themselves with its contents. According to the findings, only about half of the students aware of the existence of the university's formal examination policy document had taken time to thoroughly read its details, thus highlighting a significant gap between the policy's existence and its access by students. Several researchers, among them Birks *et al.* (2020) and Parnter (2020) have cautioned that whereas the formulation and enactment of examination policies is a worthy course, their effectiveness can only be achieved when all the critical stakeholders are well-conversant or understand these policies. Other scholars, such as Gullifer and Tyson (2014) and Deeley *et al.* (2019), reiterated that when examination policies were not clearly and consistently understood, they could culminate in disputes, accusations of academic misconduct, as well as operational inefficiencies like procedural confusion, which ultimately undermined the integrity of examinations.

4.2.2 Students' Overall Knowledge/Understanding of the University's Examination Policy

The students also rated their overall level of knowledge and understanding of the rules, regulations and procedures governing examinations in their university. The results are displayed in Figure 2.

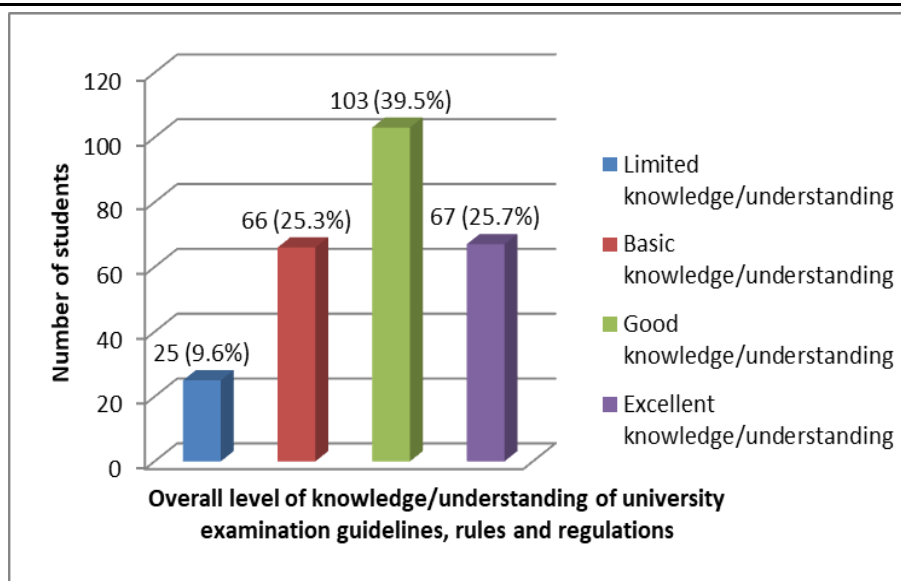


Figure 2: Distribution of Students by their Overall Knowledge/Understanding of the University's Examinations Policy

According to the study findings in Figure 2, the students' overall knowledge and understanding of the university's examination guidelines, rules and regulations largely varied from basic to excellent. The students with limited knowledge/understanding were 19 (7.3%), while those who possessed basic knowledge/understanding of the university's examination policy were 88 (25.3%). Those with good and excellent knowledge/understanding of the policy were 103 (39.5%) and 67 (25.7%), respectively. These findings indicated a lack of uniformity in the knowledge and understanding of the formal university examinations policy among undergraduate students at Umma University, which might lead to the inconsistent application of the rules and regulations governing academic assessments at the institution. This scenario, based on the arguments of scholars such as Gullifer and Tyson (2014) and Deeley *et al.* (2019), could potentially open avenues for inequity, academic misconduct and reduced academic integrity. Moreover, the findings suggest that some students might be disadvantaged due to ignorance of regulations, while others might exploit the vague understanding of rules to engage in unauthorised behaviour or unnecessary grade appeals. This argument is consistent with the finding by Adeloye (2017) that persistent ignorance about examination rules and regulations paved the way for students' engagement in examination malpractices.

4.2.3 Lecturers' Overall Awareness, Knowledge and Understanding of the University Examination Policy

Figure 3 reveals how the full-time lecturers as faculty members rated their overall awareness, knowledge and understanding of the different components of the university's examination policy.

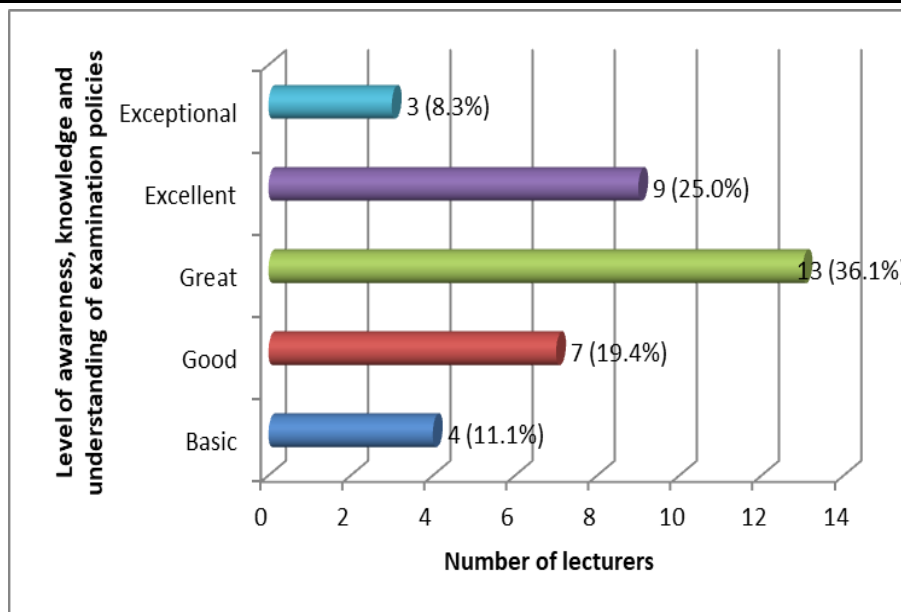


Figure 3: Distribution of Lecturers by their Overall Awareness, Knowledge and Understanding of the University's Examinations Policy

The findings provided in Figure 3 demonstrated that 4 (11.1%) of the lecturers had basic awareness/knowledge/understanding of the university's examination policy, 7 (19.4%) indicated that they had good awareness/knowledge/understanding of the policy, while 13 (36.1%) of these lecturers had great awareness/knowledge/understanding of the policy. The lecturers reporting excellent and exceptional overall awareness, knowledge and understanding of the different components of the university's examination policy were 9 (25.0%) and 3 (8.3%) respectively. It was thus evident that the examination policy at Umma University was not uniformly understood by the full-time lecturers as well. This could possibly open loopholes for unstandardized, inconsistent and ineffective implementation of the examination policy across the institution. In line with this argument, Suto and Ireland (2021), for instance, underscored that faculty members lacking tangible knowledge on examination policies might inconsistently apply standards, resulting in unfair assessments and inaccurate grading, while Iqbal *et al.* (2021) argued that such circumstances might result in the unconscious creation of opportunities for examination cheating.

From the Deans of Faculty responses, overall, faculty members tended to have moderate familiarity with examination policies, while students' knowledge of the said policies was generally low to moderate. The major gaps identified by the Deans were limited awareness of the components of the entire examination policy document, gaps in understanding roles and responsibilities, inadequate knowledge on examination irregularities and misconduct procedures, as well as overreliance on informal communication channels such as WhatsApp groups and word of mouth, which led to inconsistencies.

4.3 Familiarity with Grade Appeal Procedures among Faculty Members and Students

The level of familiarity with grade appeal procedures among faculty members and students at Umma University was assessed. Figure 4 shows the responses of the students and lecturers when asked whether the university had provided clear guidelines for resolving grade grievances submitted by students.

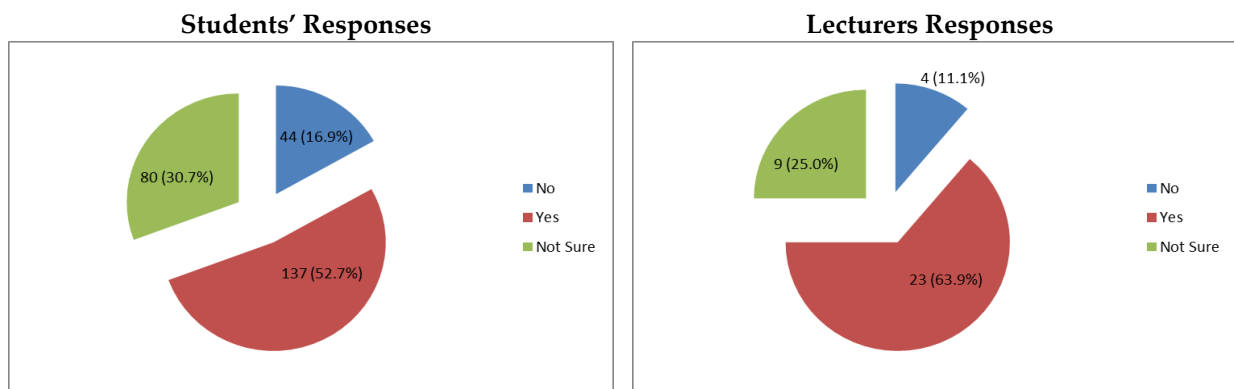


Figure 4: Perceived Clarity of Guidelines for Resolving Students' Grade Grievances

The study results presented in Figure 4 revealed that slightly more than half of the students, 137 (52.7%), asserted that the university had provided clear guidelines for resolving grade grievances submitted by students, 44 (16.9%) argued that this was not the case, while 80 (30.7%) of the students were not sure of the clarity of these guidelines. On the other hand, the majority of the lecturers, 23 (63.9%), acknowledged that the guidelines resolving students' grade grievances at Umma University were clear. From these results, it was inferred that a significant proportion of undergraduate students at Umma University were likely uninformed or sceptical about how to appeal grades awarded if they exuded confidence that various errors had occurred either during the marking of their answer scripts or even in the course of calculating or recording their marks. This could potentially lead to increased stress or frustration and reduced trust in academic departments when grade grievances occur, besides culminating in potential abandonment of legitimate student complaints.

The fact that 63.9% of the lecturers considered the procedures for addressing grade grievances clear was a general indication that there was a moderate to high consensus among faculty members at Umma University regarding such procedures, suggesting that they were functional but not universally understood or fully accepted. The finding demonstrated that for most faculty members, the process or steps involved in handling students' grade grievances, such as informal resolution, formal filing and academic review, were well-documented and transparent. Nonetheless, with a substantial number of the lecturers indicating that the procedures were not clear, it can be argued that a significant gap in the policy understanding or communication existed, and this could lead to inconsistent applications of the policy and slow resolution of cases. Overall, the results point to a significant room for improving the institution's grade appeal

procedures to ensure total clarity, as well as boosting students' and faculty members' familiarity with the procedures. Drawing from existing studies such as Gynnild (2011), Pacis, Sytsma and Keough (2016) and Jackson, Hoffman and Schaller (2021), clear grade appeal procedures and guidelines are necessary for ensuring that minor grievances are quickly resolved and that students' complaints do not escalate into formal, messy or time-consuming cases. Germaine *et al.* (2011) also noted that the existence of a concise university grade appeal policy that clearly stated the grounds for a grade appeal and the process students must follow to appeal a course grade was vital. The results outlined in Table 1 reveal the students' reaction to the 9 items presented to them in relation to the grade appeal procedures at this institution.

Table 1: Students' Familiarity with Grade Appeal Procedures

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
A student dissatisfied with their examination results can only appeal their grades in the first two weeks after the declaration or release of the examinations results.	9.20%	14.20%	23.40%	36.00%	17.20%	3.379	1.192
Students aggrieved by the awarded grades can only file official grade appeals after informally discussing the concerns with the unit instructors or the chairperson of their respective departments.	9.60%	12.60%	18.80%	43.70%	15.30%	3.425	1.176
The formal grade appeal process in this university requires that the student obtains a petition for grade review from the respective departmental chairperson explaining the specific and valid grounds for the appeal to both the unit instructor and the chairman	8.80%	10.30%	33.00%	32.20%	15.70%	3.356	1.133
A verdict provided by a departmental board is required in cases where the unit instructor and the departmental chairperson do not resolve a student's grade grievance.	11.10%	10.70%	26.80%	36.80%	14.60%	3.330	1.183
A student unsatisfied with departmental decision on a grade appeal case has the right to appeal the verdict to the Vice Chancellor.	9.60%	8.40%	21.10%	36.40%	24.50%	3.579	1.218
Students appealing for a remark of an examination must pay a non-refundable fee per paper, which may vary from time to time, regardless of whether they pass or fail the examination upon remarking.	11.50%	8.80%	18.80%	43.30%	17.60%	3.467	1.214
I clearly understand the possible outcomes of a student's formal grade appeal and the significance of the final authority/say of the Senate Committee on Examination Appeals.	8.00%	7.30%	18.00%	51.70%	14.90%	3.582	1.084
The process of grade appeal in this university should take at most a period of one month.	10.00%	15.70%	26.40%	28.40%	19.50%	3.318	1.235

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Final decisions on grade appeals are communicated to aggrieved students through the office of the Academic Registrar.	5.40%	7.70%	24.50%	41.00%	21.50%	3.655	1.065
Composite Mean and Standard Deviation						3.455	0.818
Valid N = 261							

Source: Research Data (2026).

Based on the findings presented in Table 1, the students on average neither agreed nor disagreed that a student dissatisfied with their examination results could only appeal their grades in the first 2 weeks after the declaration or release of the examinations results and that students aggrieved by the awarded grades could only file official grade appeals after informally discussing the concerns with the unit instructors or the chairperson of their respective departments as demonstrated by the means of responses of 3.379 and 3.425 respectively. Moreover, the students on average were neither in agreement or disagreement that the formal grade appeal process at Umma University required that the student obtain a petition for grade review from the respective departmental chairperson explaining the specific and valid grounds for the appeal to both the unit instructor and the chairman, as proved by the mean responses of 3.356. Similarly, the students on average neither agreed nor disagreed that a verdict provided by a departmental board was required in cases where the unit instructor and the departmental chairperson did not resolve a student's grade grievance, as attested by the mean of responses of 3.330. The students, however, on average agreed that a student unsatisfied with the departmental decision on a grade appeal case had the right to appeal the verdict to the Vice Chancellor. This finding was informed by the computed mean of responses of 3.579. The study further established that, on average, the students neither agreed nor disagreed that students appealing for a remark of an examination had to pay a non-refundable remarking fee per paper, which might vary from time to time, regardless of whether they passed or failed the examination upon remarking as shown by the mean of responses of 3.467. On the contrary, they on average agreed that they clearly understand the possible outcomes of a student's formal grade appeal and the significance of the final authority/say of the Senate Committee on Examination Appeals, as supported by the mean of responses of 3.582. On average, the students neither agreed nor disagreed that the process of grade appeal at the university should take at most, a period of one month, given the mean of responses of 3.318. They nevertheless, on average, agreed that final decisions on grade appeals were communicated to aggrieved students through the office of the Academic Registrar, as demonstrated by the mean of responses of 3.655. The overall mean of responses (3.455) for this construct suggested that, on average, the students neither agreed nor disagreed with most of the items on the grade appeal procedures construct. Table 2 outlines the lecturers' responses regarding various items that reflected the grade appeal procedures at Umma University based on a five-point Likert scale.

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Table 2: Lecturers' Familiarity with Grade Appeal Procedures

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
A student dissatisfied with their examination results can only appeal their grades in the first two weeks after the declaration or release of the examinations results.	22.20%	11.10%	19.40%	33.30%	13.90%	3.056	1.393
Students aggrieved by the awarded grades can only file official grade appeals after informally discussing the concerns with the unit instructors or the chairperson of their respective departments.	25.00%	2.80%	13.90%	36.10%	22.20%	3.278	1.504
The formal grade appeal process in this university requires that the student obtains a petition for grade review from the respective departmental chairman explaining the specific and valid grounds for the appeal to both the unit instructor and the chairperson	16.70%	13.90%	8.30%	27.80%	33.30%	3.472	1.502
A verdict provided by a departmental board is required in cases where the unit instructor and the departmental chairperson do not resolve a student's grade grievance.	36.10%	0.00%	27.80%	13.90%	22.20%	2.861	1.588
A student unsatisfied with departmental decision on a grade appeal case has the right to appeal the verdict to the Vice Chancellor.	25.00%	5.60%	2.80%	47.20%	19.40%	3.306	1.508
Students appealing for a remark of an examination must pay a non-refundable remarking fee per paper which may vary from time to time as determined by the university senate regardless of whether they pass or fail the examination upon remarking.	22.20%	2.80%	8.30%	50.00%	16.70%	3.361	1.417
I clearly understand the possible outcomes of a student's formal grade appeal and the significance of the final authority/say of the Senate Committee on Examination Appeals.	16.70%	11.10%	2.80%	61.10%	8.30%	3.333	1.287
It is a requirement in this university that the process of a grade appeal should take at most, a period of one-month.	16.70%	8.30%	13.90%	41.70%	19.40%	3.389	1.358
Final decisions on grade appeals are communicated to aggrieved students through the office of the Academic Registrar.	8.30%	5.60%	13.90%	58.30%	13.90%	3.639	1.073
Composite Mean and Standard Deviation						3.299	1.220
Valid N = 36							

Source: Research Data (2026)

From the results in Table 2, it was deduced that the lecturers, on average, neither agreed nor disagreed that a student dissatisfied with their examination results could only appeal

their grades in the first 2 weeks after the declaration or release of the examination results (Mean=3.056). The results also showed that on average, the lecturers were neither in agreement or disagreement that students aggrieved by the awarded grades could only file official grade appeals after informally discussing the concerns with the unit instructors or the chairperson of their respective departments, given (Mean=3.278). A similar observation was also made when the lecturers were asked whether the formal grade appeal process at Umma University required that the student obtained a petition for grade review from the respective departmental chairman explaining the specific and valid grounds for the appeal to both the unit instructor and the chairperson (Mean=3.472) and that a verdict provided by a departmental board was required in cases where the unit instructor and the departmental chairperson did not resolve a student's grade grievance (Mean=2.861).

On average, the lecturers also neither agreed nor disagreed that a student unsatisfied with departmental decision on a grade appeal case had the right to appeal the verdict to the Vice Chancellor (Mean=3.306) and that students appealing for a remark of an examination had to pay a non-refundable remarking fee per paper which might vary from time to time as determined by the university senate regardless of whether they passed or failed the examination upon remarking as proved by (Mean=3.361). In the same way, the lecturers on average neither agreed nor disagreed that they clearly understood the possible outcomes of a student's formal grade appeal and the significance of the final authority/say of the Senate Committee on Examination Appeals (Mean=3.333) and that it was a requirement at Umma University that the process of a grade appeal should take at most, a period of one-month (Mean=3.389). However, they on average agreed that the final decisions on grade appeals were communicated to aggrieved students through the office of the Academic Registrar, as supported by (Mean=3.639). The composite mean of responses of 3.299 for the construct was an illustration that the lecturers, on average, also neither agreed nor disagreed with most of the statements on grade appeal procedures.

Looking at the students' and lecturers' reactions to the various statements presented to them on grade appeal procedures at Umma University, it was deduced that a significant shared lack of in-depth understanding or engagement with this component of the university's examination policy existed. This could be partly attributed to the students not often having any grievances or the lecturers not having to deal with such grievances on a frequent basis. Both parties were not sufficiently confident in their knowledge nor were they totally ignorant of the university's stipulated procedures for addressing grade appeals. The undergraduate students and lecturers generally lacked a deep understanding and knowledge about the steps, timelines, costs, and grounds for filing or handling grade appeals, as well as the relevant offices involved and their rights and responsibilities in the process. The implications for the students would perhaps be uncertainty of their rights, process or criteria for lodging a formal grade appeal, while for the lecturers, they might not be fully aware of the official procedures for responding to students' complaints. Various studies have highlighted the importance of students' and

faculty members' familiarity with grade appeal procedures. Gynnild (2020) argued that the lack of awareness of grade appeals processes and guidelines among students and examiners could result in confusion in the application of the necessary standards, culminating in a significant increase in the incidence of grade appeals. Thomas *et al.* (2018) observed that faculty members familiar with grade appeals procedures were able to aptly and professionally response to appeals with a possibility of preventing any form of misunderstanding and also protecting academic integrity. Ott (2022) had also noted that students' awareness of grade appeals procedures could assist in reducing grade appeals attributed to misconceptions, besides ensuring that their academic rights were protected and cases where errors or inconsistencies had led to incorrect grading were addressed. Furthermore, Abrahamsen, Moen and Selvik (2024) established that students were satisfied with grade appeals outcomes when the rationale behind the rulings was well-clarified and understood.

Figure 5 reveals the other aspects of the university's grade appeal procedures, which the lecturers believed faculty members should be conversant with.

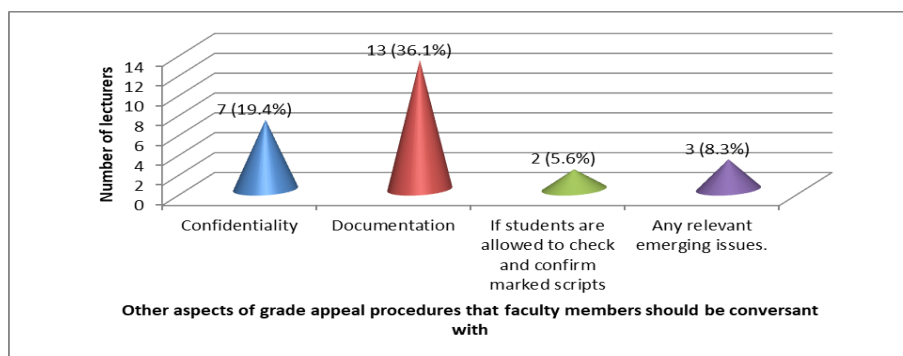


Figure 5: Other Aspects of Grade Appeal Procedures Faculty Members Should Know

It was observed that 7 (19.4%) of the lecturers underscored that faculty members should be conversant with issues of confidentiality when addressing grade appeal procedures. Documentation was mentioned by 13 (36.1%) of the lecturers, while 2 (5.6%) of them believed that it was crucial that faculty members understood whether students were allowed to check and confirm marked scripts during grade appeals. Awareness of any emerging issues in the grade appeal procedures of the university was underlined by 3 (8.3%) of the lecturers. These findings suggested that there was a need for the grade appeal procedures at Umma University to be revised or improved to capture in detail or clarify aspects such as confidentiality, documentation, review of marked scripts and any pertinent emerging issues in the grade appeals process at the institution.

4.4 Familiarity with Procedures for Addressing Missing Examination Marks/Results

The study also determined the level of familiarity with procedures for addressing missing examination marks/results among faculty members and students at Umma University. The responses of the students and lecturers regarding whether they were aware of the

procedures they needed to follow in the event of a missing mark/result case occurred are as shown in Figure 6.

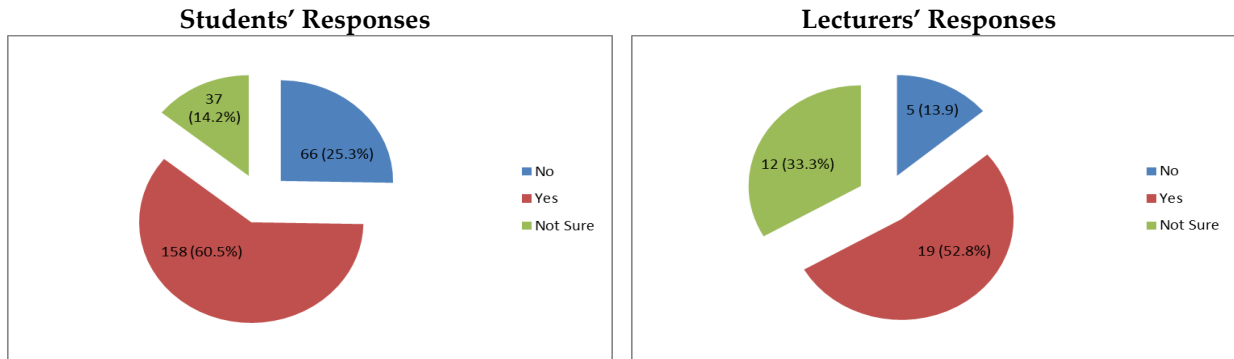


Figure 6: Perceived Overall Awareness of the Procedures for Addressing Missing Examination Marks/Results

As shown in Figure 6, the majority of the students, 158 (60.5%), argued that they were aware of the procedures for addressing missing examination marks/results at this institution. Slightly more than half of the lecturers, 19 (52.8%), are the ones who reported being aware of the said procedures. According to the results, 5 (13.9%) of the noted, that they were not aware of the procedures, while 12 (33.3%) of them were not sure of their familiarity with these procedures. These findings suggested that while a larger percentage of the undergraduate students and lecturers at Umma University reported being generally aware of the procedures for addressing missing examination marks/results at the institution, a substantial proportion were still uninformed or were not confident of the process to follow in case they encountered a missing mark/result scenario. Table 3 shows how the students reacted to various items in the construct on procedures for addressing missing examination marks/results at Umma University.

Table 3: Students' Familiarity with Procedures for Addressing Missing Examination Marks/Results

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
It is the duty of the student to immediately check their results once released on the student portal and report any missing or not included results promptly.	1.50%	3.40%	4.60%	46.00%	44.40%	4.284	0.830
All cases of missing marks must be reported by the students to the respective department within two weeks upon the release of exam results.	3.40%	8.00%	23.40%	36.00%	29.10%	3.793	1.058
Complaints regarding missing marks and related details must be recorded in the	3.10%	4.20%	14.20%	41.80%	36.80%	4.050	0.977

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student examination complaint register available at the respective department.							
Students with complaints about missing mark have a responsibility to gather all the supporting documentation and evidence that proves completion of the coursework or examination for use in resolving their cases.	8.40%	11.90%	15.30%	30.70%	33.70%	3.693	1.279
If the respective department staff do not respond or resolve the issue of missing examination results promptly, students have a right to escalate the issue to the departmental head or the registrar.	3.10%	2.30%	10.70%	38.70%	45.20%	4.207	0.942
In the event a missing mark is confirmed, the university may offer remedies like restoring the mark, repeating the coursework and special examinations.	5.40%	4.20%	14.60%	41.80%	34.10%	3.950	1.068
Students with complaints of missing marks have the right to appeal the outcome of the departmental investigation if they are not satisfied with the resolution.	7.30%	10.70%	19.50%	33.70%	28.70%	3.659	1.207
Composite Mean and Standard Deviation						3.948	0.834
Valid N = 261							

Source: Research Data (2026).

The study based on the results presented in Table 3 noted that on average, the students agreed that it was the student's duty of the student to immediately check their results once released on the student portal and report any missing or not included results promptly (Mean=4.284). They equally, on average, agreed that all cases of missing marks must be reported by the students to the respective department within 2 weeks upon the release of the examination results (Mean=3.793) and that complaints about missing marks and related details had to be recorded in the student complaint register available at the respective departments (Mean=4.050). On average, the students were also in agreement that students with complaints about missing marks had a responsibility to gather all the supporting documentation and evidence that proved completion of coursework or examinations for use in resolving their cases, as revealed by (Mean=3.693). Equally, the students were on average in agreement that if the respective department staff did not respond or resolve the issue of missing examination results promptly, students had the right to escalate the issue to the departmental head or the registrar (Mean=4.207) and that in the event a missing mark was confirmed, the university might offer remedies like restoring the mark, repeating the coursework and special examinations (Mean=3.950). The students further agreed that students with complaints of missing marks had the right to appeal the outcome of the departmental investigation if they were not satisfied with the resolution as supported by (Mean=3.659). The computed overall mean of the construct (3.948) implied that, on average, the students were in agreement with most of the statements presented in relation to the procedures for addressing missing examination marks/results at Umma University.

The students' responses highlighted above demonstrate that undergraduate students at Umma University had strong knowledge of the procedures for addressing missing marks/results. This could in part be attributed to the fact that students were cognizant that missing examination marks could result in the failure to complete their courses on time or delayed/missed graduation, a scenario that studies such as Omanga (2017) and Ondari (2019) had found to be a major source of stress that could leave some students traumatized, frustrated or some losing hope in their studies. Muli (2017) had observed that while this may be the problem of the lecturers or administrative staff, the students were many at times left to bear the consequences of the situation. According to Emaikwu (2012), missing results can undermine the fairness and reliability of the examination process, potentially impacting student grades and graduation prospects. Therefore, as underscored by Owen, Stefaniak and Corrigan (2010), it was crucial that students were familiar with the procedures for handling missing examination results as a way of protecting their academic records, preventing delays in graduation, and ensuring accurate record-keeping by faculty members.

The results outlined in Table 4 further reveal the responses of the lecturers pertaining to the various items that formed the construct on procedures for addressing missing marks/results at Umma University.

Table 4: Lecturers' Familiarity with Procedures
for Addressing Missing Examination Marks/Results

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
It is the responsibility of the student to immediately check their results once released on the student portal and report any missing results promptly.	25.00%	8.30%	5.60%	44.40%	16.70%	3.194	1.489
All cases of missing marks must be reported by the students to the respective department within two weeks upon the release of exam results.	30.60%	2.80%	8.30%	36.10%	22.20%	3.167	1.595
Complaints regarding missing marks and related details must be recorded in the student examination complaint register available at the respective department.	19.40%	11.10%	2.80%	27.80%	38.90%	3.556	1.576
Students with complaints about missing mark have a responsibility to gather all the supporting documentation and evidence that proves completion of the coursework or examination for use in resolving their cases.	33.30%	5.60%	11.10%	13.90%	36.10%	3.139	1.743
Unit instructors must promptly investigate a student's case of missing mark and cooperate with the examination office	0.00%	22.20%	5.60%	41.70%	30.60%	3.806	1.117

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while providing clear communication to students.							
If the respective department staff do not respond or resolve the issue of missing examination results promptly, students have the right to escalate the issue to the departmental head or the registrar.	27.80%	5.60%	13.90%	19.40%	33.30%	3.250	1.645
In the event a missing mark is confirmed, the university may offer remedies like restoring the mark, repeating the coursework and special examinations.	19.40%	8.30%	13.90%	41.70%	16.70%	3.278	1.386
Students with complaints of missing marks have the right to appeal the outcome of the departmental investigation if they are not satisfied with the resolution.	22.20%	8.30%	11.10%	33.30%	25.00%	3.306	1.508
Composite Mean and Standard Deviation						3.337	1.351
Valid N=36							

Source: Research Data (2026).

The study established that the lecturers, on average, neither agreed nor disagreed that it was the responsibility of the student to immediately check their results once released on the student portal and report any missing results promptly, as indicated by the mean of responses of 3.194. Similarly, the lecturers on average neither agreed nor disagreed that all cases of missing marks had to be reported by the students to the respective department within 2 weeks upon the release of examination results, given the mean of responses of 3.167. The lecturers, however, on average agreed that complaints regarding missing marks and related details had to be recorded in the student examination complaint register available at the respective department, as proved by the mean of responses of 3.556. On average, the lecturers neither agreed nor disagreed that students with complaints about missing marks had a responsibility to gather all the supporting documentation and evidence that proved completion of the coursework or examination for use in resolving their cases, as illustrated by the mean of responses of 3.139. They nonetheless, on average, agreed that unit instructors had to promptly investigate a student's case of missing marks and cooperate with the examination office while providing clear communication to students, since the mean of responses was 3.806. It was further observed that on average, the lecturers neither agreed nor disagreed that if the respective departmental staff did not respond or resolve the issue of missing examination results promptly, students had a right to escalate the issue to the departmental head or the registrar and that in the event a missing mark was confirmed, the university might offer remedies like restoring the mark, repeating the coursework and special examinations as supported by the mean of responses of 3.250 and 3.278 respectively. The lecturers, on average, were also neither in agreement nor in disagreement that students with complaints of missing marks had the right to appeal the outcome of the departmental investigation if they were not satisfied with the resolution as suggested by the mean of responses of 3.306. The composite mean of responses of 3.337 for this construct was a confirmation that, on average, the lecturers neither agreed nor disagreed

with most of the statements on procedures for addressing missing marks that were presented to them.

Considering the lecturers' responses in Table 4, it was evident that, unlike the undergraduate students, the lecturers were neither ignorant nor well-versed with the stipulated procedures for addressing missing examination marks/results at Umma University. This can be linked to their active engagement with these procedures or not encountering any case of missing marks under their instruction, which would warrant them to familiarize with the process involved in resolving the cases. Scholars such as Gynnild (2011), Packer *et al.* (2021) and Amadi and Ondabu (2023) emphasize the importance of faculty members' familiarity with procedures for handling missing examination results in ensuring accurate grading and academic integrity, proper maintenance of student academic records, and timely resolution of reported cases, among other benefits. Figure 7 summarizes the challenges that the lecturers faced with reference to the procedures for addressing missing examination marks/results at the institution.

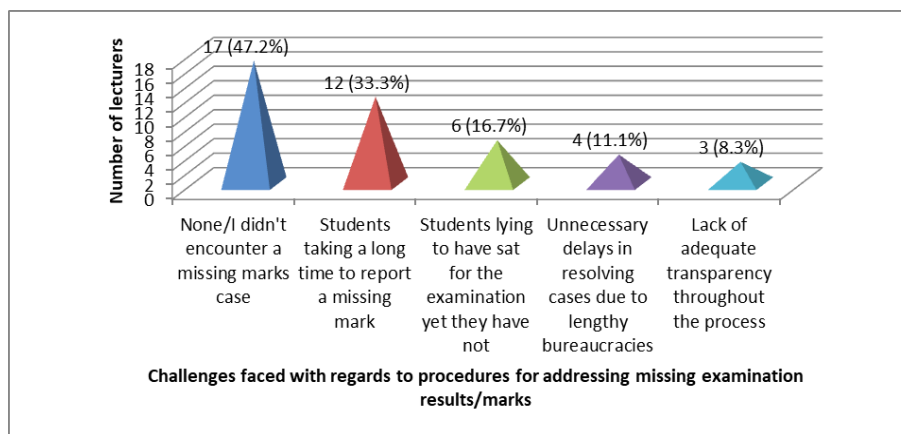


Figure 7: Challenges faced by Lecturers Regarding Procedures for Addressing Missing Examination Marks/Results

The study results displayed in Figure 7 showed that 17(47.2%) of the lecturers indicated that they did not face any challenges or, rather, they had not encountered any case of missing marks under the instruction. About 12 (32.3%) of the lectures decried of students taking a long time to report a missing mark case, 6 (16.7%) observed that some students lied to have sat for an examination when they actually did not do it while unnecessary delays in resolving cases due to lengthy bureaucracies and lack of sufficient transparency throughout the process of resolving as missing marks case were challenges cited by 4 (11.1%) and 3 (8.3%) of the lecturers respectively. These findings are an indication that even though most of the lecturers did not encounter missing marks cases, there were gaps in familiarity with and the need for making the procedures for addressing missing examination marks/results at Umma University more efficient. The findings are consistent with the observation by Maithya *et al.* (2023) that cases of missing marks could occur as a result of diverse reasons, among them intentional actions by students. The results support the argument by Amadi and Ondabu (2023) that in most

universities, the students have a responsibility of carefully checking their examination results once released and updated on their student portals and immediately (within two weeks of the result release date) reporting a missing mark case to the relevant department for action. Pacis, Sytsma and Keough (2016) as well as Packer *et al.* (2021) underscore that highly efficient systems are necessary for swiftly addressing students' missing marks complaints, ensuring that students' trust in university systems is restored.

5. Conclusions

The study concluded that undergraduate students and faculty members at Umma University lacked a holistic understanding and knowledge of examination policies, highlighting the need for enhanced awareness creation. Both the students and faculty members were familiar with the university's grade appeal procedures to a moderate extent. However, undergraduate students at this institution demonstrated strong knowledge or awareness of the procedures for addressing missing marks, while the faculty members were knowledgeable about these procedures to a moderate extent. Accordingly, the study concluded that examination policies at Umma University were not uniformly known or understood among both the undergraduate students and faculty members, as a substantial proportion of these parties were still not fully versed with the selected policies.

6. Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made:

6.1 Recommendations for University Administration

- **Mandatory Policy Orientation:** The university should institute mandatory orientation sessions on examination policies for all incoming students and newly hired faculty members before the commencement of each academic year.
- **Simplified Policy Dissemination:** The Examination Policy document and Student Handbook should be simplified into user-friendly formats, including infographics, flowcharts, and video tutorials. These materials should be made accessible via the university's student portal and learning management system.
- **Regular Training Workshops:** The Academic Registrar's office should organize biannual training workshops for faculty members focusing on the implementation of grade appeal procedures, proper documentation practices, and timely resolution of missing marks cases.

6.2 Recommendations for Enhancing Grade Appeal Procedures

- **Clear Timelines and Fee Structures:** The university should prominently display grade appeal timelines (two-week window) and remarking fee structures across all departmental notice boards and the university website to reduce student uncertainty.
- **Standardized Appeal Forms:** A standardized, downloadable grade appeal petition form should be developed and made available at all departmental offices and online, clearly outlining the required documentation and valid grounds for appeal.
- **Appeal Outcome Communication Protocol:** The university should establish a formal protocol ensuring that final grade appeal decisions are communicated to students within 30 days, with written justification provided through the Academic Registrar's office.

6.3 Recommendations for Addressing Missing Marks

- **Streamlined Reporting Mechanism:** The university should implement an online missing mark reporting system that automatically timestamps complaints, assigns reference numbers, and notifies relevant departmental staff immediately upon submission.
- **Strict Adherence to Reporting Deadlines:** The two-week reporting window for missing marks should be rigorously enforced, with automated reminders sent to students upon result release. However, the university should establish exceptional procedures for documented extenuating circumstances.
- **Investigation Turnaround Standards:** The university should establish and publish maximum turnaround times for missing marks investigations (e.g., 14 working days), with escalation pathways to the Registrar if deadlines are not met.

6.4 Recommendations for Further Research

- Future studies should investigate the effectiveness of implemented policy awareness interventions on reducing grade appeal incidences and missing marks cases. Additionally, comparative studies across Kenyan universities are recommended to establish best practices in examination policy communication and implementation

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Conflict of Interests Statement

The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this article. This research was conducted as an independent academic assessment of grade appeal procedures and missing marks protocols at Umma University, Kenya. No author has any financial, personal, or professional relationship with the university's administration that could inappropriately influence or bias the findings, interpretations, or conclusions presented in this manuscript. All data were collected and analysed objectively, without any external pressure or competing obligations.

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