

Title of the Study : **The GCE Ordinary Level and GCE Advanced Level Examinations**
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Objectives / Terms of Reference

This situational analysis pertains to the General Certificate of Education, Ordinary Level, or the GCE(OL) and the General Certificate of Education, Advanced Level, or the GCE(AL) examinations, which have dominating influence on all school education in Sri Lanka. The Terms of Reference (TORR) of the Study are to:

- i. Examine the present structure of the two examinations and their efficiency in determining (a) pupil attainment, (b) selection for further education and (c) for employment,
- ii. Analyze the trends in the performance of students by (a) subject, (b) type of school and (c) districts and divisions, and
- iii. Propose (a) changes to improve the scope and effectiveness of O/L and A/L Examinations and (b) any alternative evaluation schemes to replace O/L and A/L Examinations.

Methodology adopted

The methodology adopted was to carry out the study in respect of these two examinations, as required by the TORR, through;

- (a) Obtaining the most recent appropriately analyzed data on pupil performance (unless stated otherwise the source is the Department of Examinations/National Evaluation and Testing Service (DOE/NETS),
- (b) Citing appropriate studies such as the 1991/1992, HRDC/ Marga/ GEP 1, "Study on Education and Employment", and the 1997, ADB/SEDP Study, "Impact on Evaluation Policies on Classroom Instruction" of the Canedcom consultancy, SLAAED Seminar Report on University Admissions Criteria,1992, SLAAED, Seminar Report on University Admissions Criteria, 1992, and
- (c) Making observations, comments and proposals on the basis of information obtained through methodologies at (a) and (b) above and on the basis of long experience and close involvement in the field, the active involvement in all of the studies cited and the insights gained thereby.

Based on the understanding of the TORR and in view of the short time provided for the study, no attempt was made to obtain views of stakeholders through interviews or participatory interactions.

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Proposals and recommendations concerning improving the scope and effectiveness of the O/L examination

The scope and effectiveness of the O/L examination will be definitely enhanced when the SBA scheme introduced to grade 10 in 2001 is improved as indicated below and gets recognition as a legitimate component of the examination.

1.1 **The SBA component** (some of these proposals are already accepted and being implemented from 2003)

(a) **Unreserved acceptance of the SBA component as a legitimate and a valid component of the O/L examination**

It is necessary to be resolute in the recognition of the SBA component as a legitimate and valid component of the G.C.E. (OL) examination.

(b) **Improving the effectiveness, reliability and comparability**

Some of the serious doubts about the validity of the SBA, in addition to those naturally due to the recentness of the scheme, were owed to the inelegant and unwieldy design of the SBA at the early pre G.C.E. (OL) stages.

1.2 **The Summative written component**

The summative written component should be considered as complementary and integral part of the G.C.E.(OL) examination scheme together with the SBA component.

2. **The SBA component** (some of these proposals are already accepted and being implemented from 2003 in respect of the cohort entering grade 12)

(a) **Unreserved acceptance of the SBA component as a legitimate and a valid component of the A/L examination.**

It is necessary to be even more resolute in the recognition of the SBA component as a legitimate and valid component of the A/L examination.

(b) **Improving the effectiveness, reliability and comparability**

Because the scheme improved for the G.C.E.(OL) examination will be directly used for SBA for G.C.E (AL), most of the constraints owed to the previous schemes will not be there.

2.1 **The Summative written component**

The summative written component should be considered as complementary and integral part of the GCE (AL) examination scheme together with the SBA component.

3. **Proposals and recommendations concerning alternative evaluation schemes to replace O/L and A/L examinations**

Alternative schemes for replacement of the GCE (OL) and GCE (AL) examinations will not be necessary if the SBA scheme and the other proposals and recommendations given above are adopted.