

Ashesi University College Quality Assurance Manual



Effective August 2016

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Preface

Ashesi has a Quality Assurance Unit, headed by the Director of Quality Assurance and supported by the Quality Assurance Committee.

The Quality Assurance Committee is a committee of the Academic Council. It is chaired by the Quality Assurance Officer of the University, and membership includes the Provost, any Associate Provost(s) or Deans, the Academic Registrar, the Affiliation and Accreditation Liaison of the University, the Chief Operating Officer, and at least one nomination from the faculty from each academic department serving two-year terms.

The Quality Assurance Committee has the responsibility of ensuring that the university maintains acceptable teaching and learning processes. The Quality Assurance Committee appraises curriculum reviews, pre- and post-moderation reports, NAB accreditation reviews, performance reviews, examination and final grade distributions, and/or any other issues pertaining to quality that Academic Council or members of the Quality Assurance Committee choose to bring forward. It has advisory responsibility for maintaining facilities on campus in terms of growth, IT and academic spaces which includes classrooms, faculty and staff offices.

The Quality Assurance Committee meets at least twice per semester. It reports findings and recommendations regularly to the Academic Council, and to the Faculty, other departments, and the Executive Committee on an as-needed basis.

a. Student Status Sub-Committee

The student status sub-committee is constituted each semester and consists of the Academic Registrar, the Provost or Associate Provost, and a faculty representative from the Quality Assurance Committee. The student status sub-committee reviews students' progress toward acquiring a degree at the end of each semester, decides on the warning and probation status of students, and decides on the dismissal of students. The student status sub-committee is charged to follow documented policy for deciding student status; however, when circumstances seem to warrant, the committee is empowered to exercise discretion for exceptions.

The student status sub-committee reports to the Academic Council and the Quality Assurance Committee, but no approvals are necessary.

b. Re-Admission Committee

A readmission committee is constituted each semester in which previously dismissed students have applied for readmission to Ashesi before the documented deadline. The readmission sub-committee will consist of the Director of Admissions, the Provost or Associate Provost, and a faculty representative from the Quality Assurance Committee. The readmission committee reviews the readmission applications and makes the readmission decisions. The readmission committee is charged to make decisions based on the quality of the readmission application, the reasons for initial dismissal, the likelihood of success if re-admitted (including evidence of real change), and past track records of similar readmission cases. However, when circumstances seem to warrant, the committee is empowered to exercise discretion for exceptional cases.

1. Quality Assurance of Teaching and Course Delivery

i. Faculty Syllabi

Each faculty member must submit his or her syllabus for each course s/he is teaching to the appropriate head(s) of department at the beginning of each semester. The syllabus is reviewed by the head of department, commented upon, and changed if necessary, before the faculty member distributes it to the class. The head of department may seek input from other faculty if needed.

In the first week of classes, faculty must provide students with a course syllabus that outlines the material to be covered, the basic bibliography and reading assignments for the course, and that lists of the required work expected of them, including papers, quizzes, tests and final examinations. Evaluation procedures to determine final course grades (marks) must be given in the syllabus. In addition, the course syllabus must include the Ashesi Learning Goals that the course will emphasize; it is recommended that each course emphasize at least three of the seven Ashesi Learning Goals.

The following information must be on page one of each syllabus:

- Course Name
- Course Code
- Semester & Year
- Instructor Details (name, office location, contact info, office hours)
- FI Details (name, office location, contact info, office hours)
- Class Times & Location
- Course Description (a one paragraph overview of the content that matches the Ashesi course catalogue)
- Textbooks and Required Course Materials (the short list).

ii. Approval of New Courses

For a significant change in a course or a new course, the course syllabus is typically brought by the head of the relevant department to the Academic Programmes Committee. It is recommended that the head of department have at least two faculty peers at Ashesi, or at other comparable institutions review the proposed syllabus and primary textbook(s) and give feedback on the content, structure, rigor, Ashesi's Learning Goals, etc., prior to submission to the Academic Programmes Committee. This feedback should be incorporated into the proposal before it comes to the Academic Programmes Committee. The Academic Programmes Committee will review the proposed syllabus and New Course Development Form, and either recommend approval of the course or not. If approved, the course name, number, and description are sent to the mentoring university if required. and to the Academic Registry. New courses should also be posted on the University's website.

iii. Internal and External Moderation

Per our affiliation agreements with The University of Cape Coast (UCC) and The University of Mines and Technology (UMaT), faculty representatives from UCC and/or

UMaT externally moderate our final assessments each semester. This is a National Accreditation Board (NAB) requirement. Additionally, we perform internal moderation each semester.

The procedures for internal and external moderation of examinations is outlined as follows:

- Faculty submit their final exam questions and marking scheme or rubric in paper form directly to their head of department at least four weeks before the start of final examinations. Paper or project descriptions are also submitted, but since they are not confidential they may be submitted via email.
- Heads of departments review final exam questions, paper/project descriptions, and marking schemes/rubrics, or if s/he does not have sufficient expertise in the subject area, gives them to other full-time faculty member(s) to internally moderate. Feedback is given directly to the faculty member within one week. This constitutes Ashesi's internal pre-moderation process.
- After any changes suggested or requested by the head of department or other reviewing faculty, final exam questions, paper/project descriptions, and marking schemes/rubrics are submitted in paper form to the Academic Registry at least 21 days before the start of final examinations. The Academic Registry securely stores the final exam questions, paper/project descriptions, and marking schemes/rubrics until UCC and/or UMaT perform the external pre-moderation.
- UCC and/or UMaT perform the external pre-moderation. Feedback is communicated back to heads of departments who disseminate it to faculty. Faculty update their final assessments based on pre-moderation feedback if necessary.
- Ashesi faculty and faculty interns implement final exams or final paper/projects for all courses.
- Faculty submit final course grades on-line, and submit a printed broadsheet and a histogram of grade distributions to their head of department. The head of department reviews and discusses any anomalies with the faculty member, and if there are serious concerns, with the Provost. In particular, the head of department will carefully review the course grades of any course that has more than 33% A's assigned, or more than 20% D+, D, or E's assigned. The Provost will also be alerted to such courses, and will be invited to meet with the faculty and head of department of such anomalous courses. The head of department signs the broadsheets if approved, and the faculty member submits the signed broadsheet and histogram, marked scripts and marking scheme/rubric to the Academic Registry (per *Grading and Submission of Grades*, below).
- UCC and/or UMaT schedules a post-moderation exercise. During the post-moderation exercise, representatives from UCC and/or UMaT review the graded final exams, papers, projects, and marking schemes/rubrics, along with the broadsheets, histograms, and grade entries. UCC and/or UMaT write a post-moderation report, which is forwarded to heads of departments and the Provost. If anomalies are found, the relevant

head of department submits a response to UCC and/or UMaT, and changes grades if necessary.

- All grades are considered provisional until the post-moderation process is completed.

iv. Grading and Submission of Grades

Faculty MUST complete their grading within the time stipulated by the Provost and Academic Registry (7 calendar days after the final assessment is due or given for seniors, 10 calendar days after the final assessment is due or given for all other students). To complete their grading, faculty must complete the following within the stipulated time:

- Submit their marked examinations, papers, or projects to the Academic Registry;
- Provide a printed broadsheet indicating the scores obtained by each student for each major component of the course, signed by the head of department, together with a histogram of grade distributions;
- Enter the correct grade for each student for each major component of the course, and post final grades, in FOCUS (see head of department or the Academic Registry if guidance is needed).

Faculty must also ensure that they inform their head of department and Provost of any unusual findings for the necessary advice or direction. In particular, academic integrity is of utmost importance to Ashesi; students are expected to maintain academic integrity, and faculty are expected to be observant to possible cases of academic integrity.

Per Ashesi's Academic Guidelines, a grade of Incomplete may be assigned only if the student's work in a course has been of passing quality but is incomplete because of circumstances beyond the student's control (such as illness).

v. Course Evaluations and Other Student Feedback

a. Course Evaluations

Within the two weeks before the end of classes for the semester (in the last week for the summer term), instructors shall ensure that student course evaluations are conducted in each of their classes. Forms are brought to class by the instructor or a representative from the Office of the Provost, and handed over to a responsible student for distribution to the class and subsequent collection. The instructor and his/her faculty intern must leave the room while the forms are being filled by the students. At least 15 minutes of class time should be allowed for course evaluations. The designated student should be present while students fill the evaluations, and when the evaluations are completed, should seal the envelope, label it with the course name and instructor, and bring the envelope to the Office of the Provost. In 2016 the use of anonymous on-line course evaluations were piloted and may be how student course evaluations are administered. In that case, students are asked to bring laptops to class on the day course evaluations are filled, the instructor and his/her faculty intern still must leave the room while the on-line form is completed, and 15 minutes of class time are still devoted to the course evaluations. Students without a laptop may be excused to fill the on-line course evaluation in a computer lab or the library.

Course evaluations serve as both a formative evaluation for faculty and courses, and summative evaluation for the effectiveness of teaching and learning in the course. For new instructors, or per the Provost's discretion, a mid-semester student course evaluation will also be given so that there is time for conversation or intervention regarding quality of the teaching and/or learning environment, as needed. At the end of each semester, each faculty is provided with a summary of their course evaluations; the head of department and Provost will also review summaries of all student course evaluations and provide feedback to faculty as appropriate.

b. Other Student Feedback

The Ashesi Student Council (ASC) has an academic sub-committee that intentionally seeks out student feedback on teaching and learning, and other academic matters, from a variety of students. The chair of the academic sub-committee meets with the Provost monthly to provide feedback and report student suggestions and concerns. The Provost investigates any issues or concerns and speaks with affected parties to resolve problems if needed, and passes on any student academic concerns to other offices if needed (e.g. Facilities, Student and Community Affairs).

As a small campus, feedback on the quality of teaching and learning in the classrooms also comes in a variety of informal methods. Individual students or ASC representatives often seek out heads of department; the Provost, Associate Provost, or Dean; the Dean or an Associate Dean in the Office of Student and Community Affairs (OSCA), or the President, to voice concerns or ask for advice on particular issues. Issues raised are brought to the Provost and head of department if warranted, who investigate any issues or concerns as described above.

2. Quality Assurance of Programmes

i. Peer and Professional Review of Curricula

Every other year, external evaluators are brought to Ashesi to assess the relevance and quality of courses taught in each programme, including a review of syllabi, final assessments and senior students' capstone work. These external evaluators are Senior Lecturers or above (or equivalent) at Ghanaian or globally-recognized international universities. To ensure that we seek and incorporate input from industry, at least every other time external evaluators are brought to campus (so, at least every four years), they will include at least one representative from industry that hire graduates of that programme. Ideally, the external evaluators will comment on the general curriculum (mandatory courses) and African Studies electives as well. This feedback is given to the Academic Programmes Committee, and heads of department for consideration and dissemination to departmental faculty.

ii. Affiliation Oversight

Until Ashesi achieves a Presidential Charter, every programme at Ashesi has oversight from a mentoring university in Ghana. Currently the Business Administration, Management Information Systems, and Computer Science programmes are affiliated through The University of Cape Coast (UCC), and Computer Engineering, Electrical and Electronic Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering are affiliated through The University of Mines and Technology (UMaT).

Ashesi follows National Accreditation Board affiliation guidelines for our supervision by these universities, including oversight on: student admission and academic records; pre- and post-moderation exercises; invitation to matriculation; conferring degrees at graduation; oversight of full-time faculty hiring; invitations to serve on our Promotions Committee; and invitations to Academic Council meetings. As of 2015, a representative of The University of Cape Coast (UCC) is invited to Ashesi University Board meetings as well.

iii. National Accreditation Board Oversight

The National Accreditation Board of Ghana provides oversight to our institution in several ways:

- Institutional Re-accreditation, every 5 years
- Institutional Audits, as notified
- Programme Re-accreditation, every 3-5 years

3. Quality Assurance of Faculty

i. Faculty Development

a. Aim and Goals of Faculty Development

The ultimate aim of faculty development is to enable faculty members to grow and excel as accomplished educators and scholars and thereby create a vibrant community that values, promotes and rewards learning, fosters student success and lifelong learning, leads to institutional excellence, and prepares students and graduates to transform Africa.

Ashesi shall create an environment for faculty to develop by organizing and funding various activities and programmes and by collaborating with other relevant institutions. Faculty development seeks to achieve the following goals:

- Achieve excellence, leadership and sustained innovation in teaching.
- Promote excellence in research and sharing new knowledge and insights with academia and industry.
- Develop leadership capabilities that enable faculty members to influence the growth of the institution, colleagues and the wider community.
- Engender sustained growth of faculty members in their disciplines and new areas of relevance and interests.

b. New Faculty Orientation and Development

Ashesi University College shall organize orientation seminars for all new faculty at the beginning of their employment. New faculty are required to attend the new faculty seminars. The seminars will seek to socialize new faculty into the academic profession and the Ashesi community and its philosophy, values and approaches. The faculty will also be made aware of Ashesi's expectations regarding teaching and learning as well as steps for academic advancement. These new faculty seminars address:

- necessary information regarding employment at Ashesi, including the employee handbook and the faculty handbook
- expectations of the liberal arts based teaching and learning environment
- Ashesi's academic guidelines, ethical standards, and honour code

New faculty are mentored by the head of department or another member of the department. New faculty are assigned to co-teach courses their first semester when possible. New faculty who do not already have a lot of teaching experience are counseled into participating in pedagogy workshops whenever possible, funded through the departmental faculty development budget.

c. Expectations for Faculty Development

Because the sustained growth of faculty members is imperative to the success of the University, Ashesi provides training and development opportunities to assist faculty in their roles as teachers, scholars, mentors, and professionals. Faculty must participate in training and development programs as reasonably determined by the university from time to time, which may be of an academic and non-academic nature. Examples include training on

ethical standards, sexual harassment, diversity training, inclusive teaching practices, and pedagogy.

At the end of each academic year the Provost's Office sponsors a Faculty Development seminar, focused on one aspect of teaching, typically in June. For example, in 2014 Professor John Bean, author of the book *Engaging Ideas*, worked with faculty in a workshop on developing rubrics for evaluating capstone projects. In 2015, Professor Benjamin Linder of Franklin W. Olin College of Engineering led faculty in activities and discussions on design thinking, student motivation, and active teaching and learning techniques. In 2016 a group of faculty from The College of Wooster led faculty through a set of workshops on research, mentoring, and advising. Full-time faculty are expected to attend the Ashesi Faculty Development Seminar if they are in the country, and temporary/adjunct faculty are cordially invited.

In each monthly faculty meeting there are typically one or more reports on new pedagogies or tools for teaching, and faculty are encouraged to volunteer to present their experiences at faculty meetings. For example, an instructor presented his experience of using Khan Academy materials for enriching the teaching of mathematics, and two faculty presented their experiences of using a flipped classroom pedagogy in Statistics.

In addition, faculty are expected to be professionally active and to seek local, regional, and international conferences and workshops that facilitate their continual teaching and/or research development. Each department has some funding for faculty to attend local and international conferences and workshops, including those focused on teaching practices and pedagogy. For full-time faculty, departments are generally able to fund local and regional conference and workshop attendance, and for each faculty member attempt to fund attendance at one international conference or workshop in his or her field per annum. Faculty are encouraged to contact their head of department well in advance if they would like to attend an outside workshop or conference related to their professional role as a faculty member at Ashesi in order to determine if full or partial funding is available.

d. Teaching and Instructional Development

Ashesi shall, through its academic departments or the Provost's Office, sponsor faculty members to attend teaching and learning workshops that focus on developing faculty teaching skills in the areas of course design, teaching strategy/pedagogy, developing rubrics, assessment and feedback, grading, reflection, presentation and class facilitation, learning theory and style and the use of information technology.

Ashesi also has in place a faculty peer teaching observation and review system where the academic heads of departments and other faculty members visit and observe their colleagues teaching in class. Colleagues whose teaching sessions are observed are given constructive feedback to enable them improve.

Some of the teaching and learning workshops Ashesi recommends to faculty are:

- Teaching and Learning in Higher Education Workshop by West Africa Building Environment Conference (WABER) Professional Education
- Franklin W. Olin College of Engineering Summer Institute, Meeting the Needs of the 21st Century: Designing for Student Engagement

Faculty are encouraged to find other suitable teaching and learning workshops and resources and share them with other faculty as appropriate.

e. Research Skills Development

This area of faculty development seeks to enable faculty to excel as scholars and contribute to knowledge in their disciplines, and share insights as well as transfer technology to industry and the wider community. In addition to funding relevant approved research projects and studies, Ashesi shall sponsor faculty to attend seminars/workshops or organize activities to help faculty:

- Develop personal faculty academic and research goals
- Design and implement research projects and produce work for publication: designing research studies, collecting and analyzing data, drawing sound conclusion, writing and presenting results, writing for publication
- Develop scholarship practice: reading and writing
- Develop skills for supervising student's thesis and independent studies and academic advising.

Each department has some funding for faculty to attend local and international conferences and workshops, including those in the faculty member's area of research interest. For full-time faculty, departments are generally able to fund local and regional conference and workshop attendance, and for each faculty member attempt to fund attendance at one international conference or workshop in his or her field per annum. Faculty are encouraged to contact their head of department well in advance if they would like to attend an outside workshop or conference in order to determine if full or partial funding is available.

There are multiple ways to remain intellectually active on campus as well. A research seminar where Ashesi faculty present their scholarly work to faculty and staff for comments and input before they publish or disseminate to the wider community is organized approximately monthly. The Business Administration department also runs the Ashesi Economic Lecture Series every semester, in which scholars within and outside Ashesi are invited to present their research and papers to the Ashesi community. All departments regularly host outside scholars to speak at Ashesi.

The Provost and President have also encouraged faculty to form research clusters. These are teams voluntarily-constituted around common research interests, that seek to hone their research skills, exchange ideas, conduct joint studies and publish together. Faculty are also encouraged to seek another faculty member or scholar with whom they can meet regularly to discuss their research and publication development.

Senior faculty members (senior lecturer, associate professor, or higher) are eligible for one semester sabbatical leave with pay after every six years of continuous teaching at Ashesi. Faculty are encouraged to apply for sabbatical when they are eligible, and use the time to deepen their existing research initiatives or launch a new one. See Section 10.4, Sabbatical Leave, for more information.

Some of the research and publication workshops Ashesi recommends to faculty are:

- Writing for Academic Publication by West Africa Building Environment Conference (WABER) Professional Education
- DAAD PhD Proposal Writing Workshop

Faculty are encouraged to find other suitable research and publication workshops and resources and share them with other faculty as appropriate.

f. Leadership Development

Ashesi shall encourage, nurture and support faculty members to aspire to leadership roles in academia. Some leadership roles such as head of department, deans, and provost require a terminal degree in the field and knowledge of curriculum development, theories of teaching and learning, quality control, academic planning and administration, and managing and developing people.

Ashesi shall sponsor faculty members in leadership positions to attend workshops, seminars or conferences to hone their skills in the following areas:

- Leading, articulating, promoting and captivating vision
- Curriculum planning and managing curriculum change
- Coordinating multidisciplinary teams and consensus-building
- Designing and leading academic quality assurance and improvement
- Developing junior colleagues as teachers and scholars

Some of the Academic Leadership courses/workshops Ashesi recommends to faculty are:

- Senior Academics Professional Development Programme by West Africa Building Environment Conference (WABER) Professional Education
- Franklin W. Olin College of Engineering Summer Institute, Facilitating Change that Sticks: Becoming an Effective Educational Change Agent

Faculty are encouraged to find other suitable leadership development workshops and resources and share them with other faculty as appropriate.

g. Seeking a Ph.D. or other Terminal Degree

Full-time faculty with masters-level degrees that are not terminal are encouraged to seek a Ph.D. (or other terminal degree in their field). Ashesi will support faculty who are actively pursuing terminal degrees (and have submitted requested documentation indicating that they are) by giving them one paid course release each year. In addition, Ashesi has set aside a fixed pool of tuition payment funds that all faculty pursuing degrees may apply for and which will be distributed annually by the Provost. Faculty accepting these supporting resources will be requested to commit to employment at Ashesi for a year after the completion of their terminal degree.

On a case-by-case basis, Ashesi may support faculty who are actively pursuing terminal degrees in a variety of other ways (all of which may be subject to a promise of employment at Ashesi for a specified time period upon completion of the degree):

- More paid course releases per year to pursue coursework and/or research toward their degree

- Payment of tuition for the degree program above funds available from the tuition payment fund
- Unpaid leave of absence for a semester or more
- Travel or other research expense reimbursements

ii. Faculty Assessment

a. Course Evaluations

As discussed in Section 1.vi, course evaluations are administered every semester and in every course. Course evaluations are applicable to both new and continuing instructors, both full-time and adjunct. For new instructors, or per the Provost's discretion, a mid-semester student course evaluation will also be given so that there is time for conversation or intervention regarding the quality of the teaching and/or learning environment, as needed.

Course evaluations serve as both a formative evaluation for faculty and continual course improvement, and a summative evaluation for the effective teaching and learning. The head of department and Provost will review summaries of all student course evaluations and provide feedback to faculty as appropriate.

b. Self-Assessment and Feedback

Full-time faculty are required to assess themselves each year using the Faculty Performance Evaluation Form. The self-assessment is used primarily as a formative evaluation tool, in which the faculty member critically evaluates his or her own performance in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service to the University. Each faculty member is expected to set goals and work to achieve those goals each year in order to grow in their professional development. The self-evaluation is also summative in certain instances, for example for merit pay increases or when the faculty member is seeking a promotion.

The faculty self-assessment is submitted to the head of department at the beginning of each first semester of the academic year (August). The head of department then sets a meeting to discuss it with the faculty member. After discussion, the head of department determines whether s/he accepts the self-assessment or requests modification of the numerical scores or other aspects of the faculty member's self-assessment. After this discussion, the head of department adds any comments s/he would like, and both the faculty member and the head of department sign the self-assessment form, which is forwarded to the Provost. The Provost then reviews the form, consulting with the head of department as necessary. If there are any areas of concern, the Provost engages the faculty member in a discussion to help improve his or her performance in any of the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service.

4. Quality Assurance of Student Outcomes Based on Missional Objectives

i. Exit Survey

The Dean of Student and Community Affairs facilitates an exit survey for all graduating seniors. The exit survey includes questions about student perception of a diverse range of University operations, including academic, social, and extra-curricular events. Results are communicated to the Executive Committee, which includes the Provost and the President, and are used to inform policy and programmes moving forward.

ii. Tracer Studies

The Office of Career Services facilitates tracer studies of graduates annually. Summary results are communicated to the Executive Committee including the Dean of Student and Community Affairs, the Provost, and the President, and are used to inform policy and programmes moving forward.

5. Quality Assurance of Facilities

The Quality Assurance Committee has advisory responsibility for the maintenance of facilities on campus including IT and academic spaces (classrooms, library, faculty and staff offices). Any concerns are brought directly to the Facilities and Operations Department at Ashesi.

Ashesi University College

Student Course Evaluation



Course Name:

Instructor:

Faculty Intern (FI):

Semester:

Year:

A. Course Design

<i>Kindly comment on the design of the course</i>	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Topics Covered					
Assigned Readings					
Homework Assignments					
Class Exercises					
Quality and relevance of test questions					

A1. What were the course's strengths?

.....

A2. What were the course's weaknesses?

.....

A4. This course emphasizes critical thinking, analysis, and construction of knowledge more than rote learning and memorization. (Circle one)

1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Strongly
 Disagree Agree

Comments (optional):

A5. In this course, my classmates and I maintain a high degree of integrity with respect to graded work. (Circle one)

1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Strongly
 Disagree Agree

Comments (optional):

B. Instructor Performance

<i>Kindly comment on the instructor's performance as a teacher</i>	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Preparation for teaching					
Class attendance and promptness					
Ability to transmit knowledge					
Clarity of presentation					
Encouragement of student participation					
Promptness in returning graded work					
Ability to answer students' question					
Treat students with respect					

B1. How might your instructor's teaching be improved?

.....

.....

.....

B2. How available was the instructor outside of class (in office hours or by appointment)? (Circle One)

1	2	3	4	5	NA
Not at all				Always	I never attempted
Available				Available	to see the lecturer
					outside of class

Comments (optional):

.....

B3. In general, how approachable did you find this instructor? (Circle One)

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				Very
Approachable				Approachable

Comments (optional):

.....

B5. Would you recommend this course together with this instructor to other students? (Circle one)

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely not				Definitely yes

Definitely not

Definitely yes

Comments (optional):
.....

C3. Would you recommend this faculty intern to other students?

1

2

3

4

5

Definitely not

Definitely yes

Comments (optional):

.....