

GUIDELINES TO OFFICE SYSTEM IN THE UNIVERSITY

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- A.L. Joufer Sadique -

P R E F A C E

There is no guidelines available in the Universities to perform the office administration effectively and efficiently. Methodology adopted in the past in a University differs from the other and depends on the administrator who administer.

This report provide ways and means to streamline the above past practice.

This report describes the basic understanding of principals of office system and the relevance to efficient and effective University administration.

The aims of this report are to provide basic skills and techniques in the office system for achieving better performance and to make aware of various practice of office system in the University to enable University administrators and clerical staffs to develop a brodened perspective of their role in the University administration.

GUIDELINES TO OFFICE SYSTEM IN THE UNIVERSITIES

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GUIDLELINES TO OFFICE SYSTEM IN THE UNIVERSITY

PART I

INTRODUCTION

1) OFFICE SYSTEM

Work in an office consists of receiving of letters and sending replies to them and taking action on matters referred to in the letters. This involves the letters being sent to various officers, comments and observations being made on them, before they are placed before a staff officer who had direct what action should be taken or what reply should be sent. Similarly just as action is taken on receipt of correspondence from outside, it is necessary for the office to write to outsiders regarding matters dealt by the office. The former is called inward correspondence and the latter outward correspondence. Action does not stop with receipt of a letter and reply to it. Further correspondence take place, It is therefore necessary to have all correspondence regarding one subject together; for this purpose letters have to be identified. It is also necessary to them preserved for future reference. It is therefore necessary to have a system-it is called of office system.

An essential requirement of any office organisation is the maintenance of a sound office system satisfactory management, whether in an office or factory or University or any other kind of activiry, calls for the intensive and systematic application of scientific method to every day routine. Haphazard ways of doing work, whether in an office or University are certain to be wasteful, and the first condition for securing a reasonably high standard of efficiency is the establishment of methods soundly and realistically worked out and made known to all concerned.

2) WHAT DOES AN OFFICE SYSTEM PROVIDE ?

- a) A grouping system which will bring together papers relating to same subject and make it easy to locate any particular letter. This called the filing system.
- b) A movement system whereby it is made sure that papers move from one person to another, to see and deal with the papers and does not remain is some one's table or drawer or in the corner of a room unattended.
- c) An action system which ensures prompt action by the appropriate officers after due consultation and consideration.

This therefore requires;

- i) a system for separating papers on which action is necessary from those that need no action and could be 'closed'
- ii) a system providing for quick
 - a) reference to instructions (Circulars, standing orders) to regulations (University Act, ordinances, Statutes Rules, Regulations, By laws) to financial estimations (Estimates, U.G.C. circular letters)
 - b) policies.
 - c) plans
- iii) a follow-up system which brings up relevant papers for action when necessary
- iv) a formal closing of each stage (or case) by sending a final reply or allowing a request or granting permission that needs no further action.

3)

OFFICE SYSTEM IN THE UNIVERSITY

As you all know University is an institution where undergraduates are offered courses of study, and granted facilities for reading and for reference of books, and also for community activities among students and staff. While the teachers are there to impart education and students to receive them; it is the lot of the clerical and other non-academic staff to help both students and teachers in their duties. We have therefore, for convenience of administration divided the office system in a University into:

- a) General Administration
- b) Financial Administration
- c) Student and Staff Welfare
- d) Examinations & Academic
- e) Stores and Supply
- f) Physical Education
- g) Department Office & Academic Disciplines (Dept. of Study)

GUIDELINE TO OFFICE SYSTEM IN THE UNIVERSITY

PART II

UNIVERSITY SYSTEM IN SRI LANKA

The University system in Sri Lanka comprises nine Universities, five post graduate institutes and four institutes, each attached to one of the Universities, and the apex Organisation of the University Grants Commission. Its full-time undergraduate student population is over 20,000 and the postgraduate students population is over 1,500 in all the disciplines of the undergraduate student population, nearly 40 percent are in the disciplines of Arts and Humanities and approximately 20 percent are in the disciplines of management studies and Commerce. At the postgraduate level, however, the picture is largely different: Arts and Humanities having 16 percent; Education 20 percent; Management Studies 10 percent; and the rest in various branches of Science and Engineering. The total student population in the University System is only 0.5 percent of the student population of 3.7 million in the school system in Sri Lanka.

Expenditure on education is another criterion for understanding the University system in Sri Lanka. During the last five years the annual expenditure on education has been around 2.5 percent of the country's GNP. The expenditure during the same period has been around 0.5 percent of the GNP and that on University Education, 0.4 percent of the GNP.

1) THE MAIN PURPOSE OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION

- i) To maintain uniformity in the standards of instruction
- ii) To maintain financial control
- iii) To have common schemes of recruitment
- iv) To regularise wages and salaries and also provident fund/pension schemes
- v) To determine what courses should be given in the higher educational institutions.

- vi) What extension courses should be provided and in what Higher Educational Institutions.
- vii) Recognition of foreign degrees and diplomas
- viii) Regulate the number of students admitted to each University or other Higher Educational Institutions
- ix) To make appointments to posts where the personnel could be transferred from one Higher Educational Institution to another
- x) To regulate schemes of recruitment to various posts in various Higher Educational Institutions
- xi) To regulate the procedures for making appointments
- xii) To coordinate facilities etc. between Higher Educational Institutions

2) THE AUTHORITIES OF A UNIVERSITY

- i) The Council
- ii) The Senate
- iii) The Campus Board or Boards, if any
- iv) The Faculty Board or Boards and
- v) Such other bodies as may be prescribed by the ordinance to be such Authorities

2) (I) THE COUNCIL

- a) The Council of the University shall be the executive body and governing authority of the University
- b) The council of a University shall consist of the following persons
 - i) Vice-Chancellor - (Chairman)
 - ii) Deputy Vice-Chancellor, if any
 - iii) Rector, if any
 - iv) The Dean of the Faculty of Graduate studies, if any
 - v) The Dean of each Faculty
 - vi) Two members elected by the senate from among its members; and

vii) Such number of members as it equal to the total number of members under paragraph (i), (ii), (iii), (iv), (v) and (vi) above, increased by one. All such members shall be appointed by the University Grants Commission from among person who have rendered distinguished service in educational, professional, commercial, industrial scientific or administrative spheres

c)The council has the power to run the day to day administration of the University, within the Budgetary provisions approved by the University Grants Commission

2) (II) THE SENATE

a) A University shall have a senate which shall be the academic authority of the University

b) The senate of a University shall consist of the following persons:

i) The Vice-chancellor (chairman)

ii) The Deputy Vice-chancellor, if any

iii) The Rector of each campus, if any

iv) The Director of each Institute or centre for Higher Learning, if any, affiliated to the University

v) The Dean of the Faculty of Graduates Studies, if any

vi) The Dean of each faculty

vii) The Head of each Department of study

viii) Every permanent Professor of the University

ix) The Librarian, and

x) Two teachers, other than those referred to in the preceding paragraphs of this subsection, elected by the permanent teachers of each Faculty from among their members

c) The senate shall have control and general direction of instruction, education, research and examinations in the University.

2) (III) THE FACULTY BOARDS

- (a) Each Faculty of a University shall have a Faculty Board which shall consist of the following persons:
- (i) The Dean of that Faculty (Chairman).
 - (ii) All permanent Professors, Associate Professors, Senior Lecturers and Lecturers of the Departments of study comprising the Faculty.
 - (iii) Two member elected by the permanent Assistant Lecturers of the Faculty from among their number;
 - (iv) Two members of the permanent Staff imparting instructions in the Faculty excluding those referred to in paragraphs (ii) and (iii) elected from their number;
 - (v) Two students elected by the students of the Faculty from among their number; and
 - (vi) Three persons not being members of the Staff of the University elected by the Faculty Board from among persons of eminence in the areas of study relevant to the Faculty.

3) The Officers of a University

The Officers of a University shall be the following:

- (i) The Vice Chancellor
- (ii) The Deputy Vice Chancellor, if any
- (iii) The Rector of each Campus, if any
- (iv) The Dean of each Faculty
- (v) The Registrar
- (vi) The Librarian
- (vii) The Bursar; and
- (viii) The holder of any other post declared by ordinance to be a post, the holder of which is an Officer for the purpose of this connect.

3) (i) The Vice Chancellor

- (a) The Vice Chancellor shall be a full-time officer of the Universty and shall be the Principal, Executive Officer and Principal Academic Officer thereof. He shall be an Ex-Officio member and Chairman of both the Council and the Senate.
- (b) The Vice Chancellor shall be the Accounting Officer of the University.

- c) The Vice-Chancellor shall be responsible
 - i) for the execution of policies and measures approved by the council in relation to the University and, subject to such policies, the direction, supervision and control of the University, including its administration; and
 - ii) for the maintenance of discipline within a University

3) (II) THE REGISTRAR

- a) The Registrar shall be a full-time officer of the University
- b) The Registrar shall be responsible for the custody of the records and the property of the University
- c) The Registrar shall be the ex-officio secretary of the council and the senate
- d) The Registrar shall be the Assistant Accounting Officers of the University
- e) The Registrar shall, subject to the direction and control of the Vice-Chancellor, be responsible for the general administration of the University and the disciplinary control of its non-academic staff

3) (III) THE BURSAR

- a) The Bursar shall be a full time officer of the University
- b) The Bursar shall, subject to the direction and control of the Registrar, be responsible for the administration of the finances of the University and maintain its accounts in such form and manner as may be prescribed by ordinance. He shall have the custody of the funds of the University.

3) (IV) THE LIBRARIAN

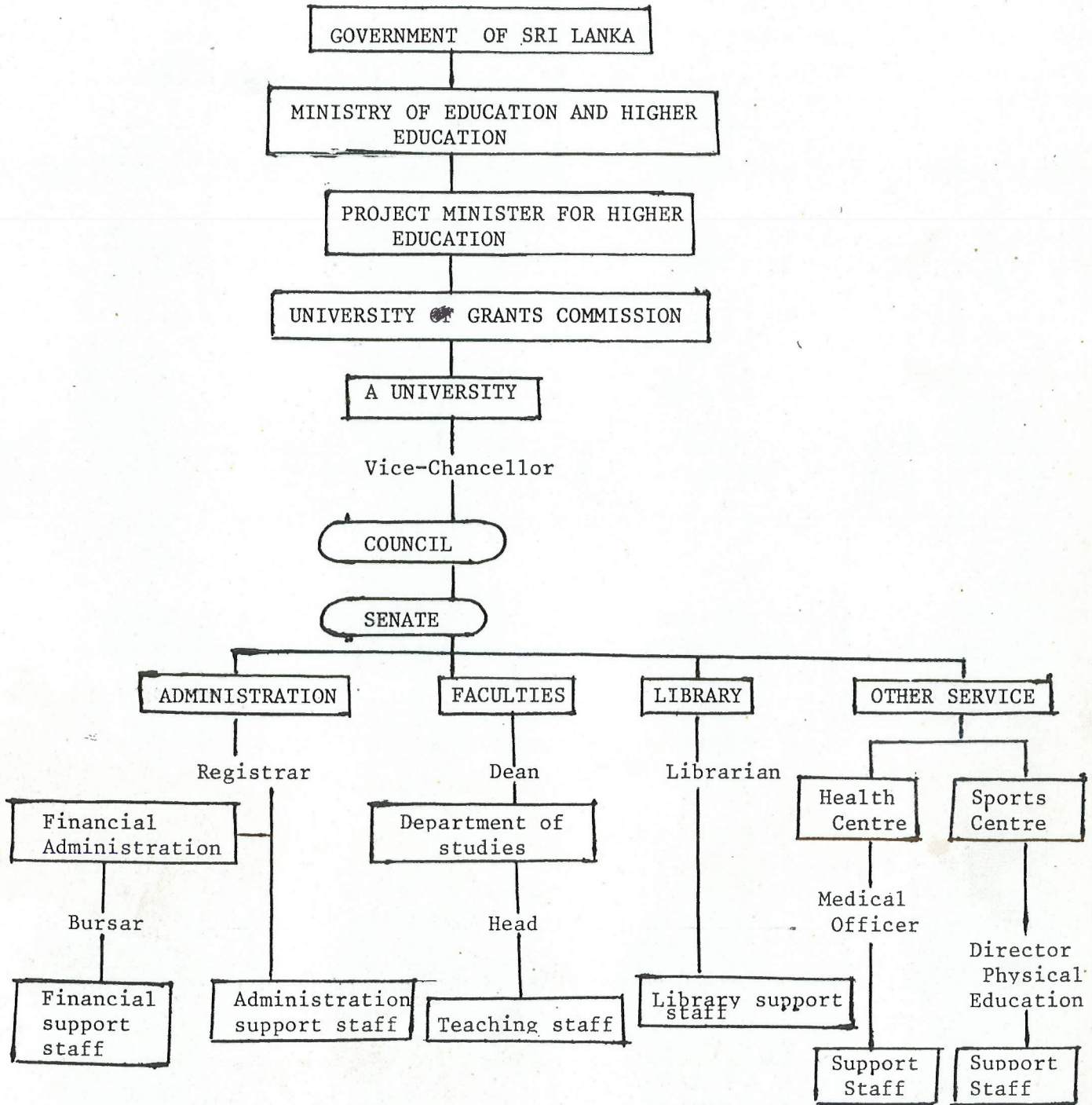
- a) The Librarian shall be a full-time officer of that University
- b) The Librarian shall, subject to the direction and control of the Vice-Chancellor, be responsible for the administration of the Library or Libraries of the University.

3) (V) THE DEAN OF THE FACULTY

These shall be a Dean of each Faculty who shall be a full-time officer of the University and the academic and administrative Head of that Faculty.

4)

ORGANISATIONAL CHART OF A UNIVERSITY



GUIDELINES TO OFFICE SYSTEM IN THE UNIVERSITY

PART III

FILES AND FILING SYSTEMS

1) BASIS OF FILING PAPERS

The purpose of filing is to keep together in a systematic and orderly manner the papers relating to a given subject, which are likely to be required for future reference in order to answer enquiries and to have at hand information which is required to carry on the work of the department.

- 2) A file is a collection of papers, dealing with a particular subject, arranged in chronological order. For convenience of reference, papers that relate to permanent and continuous aspects of a subject should be separated from those dealing with individual applications which arise out of the subject, and are only of transient interest. The former are called "subject files", because there we should find every thing of importance about the subject, while the latter are called "Case Files" or "Cases".

3) SUBJECT FILES

Subject files will contain all instructions, circulars (or extracts of circulars), rulings, policy directions, precedent &c., having general application to the subject. It should be regarded as a running or growing file from which the history or development of any particular subject, and the policy and precedents relating to it should be readily ascertainable. Papers of a transitory interest, or those relating to individual cases should not be filed in it. If in the consideration of any individual case, a general ruling is given which will have application in other similar cases thereafter, a copy of the ruling or copies of the relevant correspondence should be filed in the subject file. Each subject will be given an identification number.

4) CASE FILES

A case is a collection of papers relating to a single question, e.g. an application for some service by a member of the public. It is the smallest unit of the records.

- 5) Often one or more other cases may spring out from a particular case to form separate cases. In that event, copies or extracts from the records in the original case may have to be taken out for the new cases. In every such case, cross reference should be made at the appropriate places (1) in the original file, indicating a reference to the case in which further action is being pursued, and (2) in the new case, giving the "reference" number of the original case from which the subsequent case developed.

6) SUB-FILES AND CENTRAL FILES

It may often be necessary to open sub-files on complicated cases. This is done when it is inconvenient to carry all the papers of the "unit" in one structure. There may be particular themes or points of interest, for each of which the maintenance of a separate sub-file will help to follow the whole case better. One example would be a case relating to the making of an appointment. In addition to the main file which deals with the general question and the consideration of the claims of all candidates, it would be useful to have a separate sub-file for each candidate where his application and annexes and the representations for and against him are filed exclusively.

Similarly, at a certain stage, it may be necessary to consider centrally several cases which had been separately pursued earlier. An example would be the final preparation of one estimate for a number of projects, which, of necessity, had to be separately considered in the initial stages.

7) MATTERS TO BE DEALT WITH DIRECTLY IN FILES WITHOUT
CREATION OF CASES

While a group of cases will relate to the same subject each case is usually about a particular happening or transaction. The cases are therefore disconnected and so long as the relevant previous papers are linked or noted, there is no inconvenience in dealing with each case apart from the file. There are, however, subjects which are considered on a continuous basis and where "history" or previous consideration is always important.

8) PROCEDURE FILES

These are files containing detailed statements of the procedure or work steps for each item of work assigned to a subject clerk.

9) REFERENCE FILES

These are files in which a subject clerk will keep for ready reference such documents as rulings, precedents, specific instructions, circulars, ready reckoners, etc., relating to his day to day work.

10) CASE STAGES

Cases can be divided into three categories according to the stage in which it exists.

- 1) Acting cases, on which attention is immediately due
- 2) Pending cases, on which no immediate action is required, but action on which is not completed
- 3) Closed cases on which all action has been completed

11) UNIFIED SYSTEM

This is also called the book-file system where the papers are arranged in chronological order from left to right, minutes and letters being inter-mixed, with the oldest papers at the top and the newest at the bottom so that the file reads like a book.

12) METHOD OF FILING

The papers under the book-file system may be affixed to two holes punched in the middle of the filing margin in the front half of the case cover by means of a tag, the end of which should be tied without passing through the holes in the back half of the case cover, so that the knot will be inside the case cover and in actual contact with the last paper filed. This method allows of the filing of further papers in a case with the minimum of trouble. It also enables the case to be opened flat without damage to the case cover when minuting. No paper should extend beyond the edges of the covers. When the size of one paper is too large to be contained within the covers, it should be folded at the edges. When a file becomes bulky the papers should be put between thick two-hole or four-hole file covers.

13) FILING MARGIN

Adequate filing margins (about 1 ½ inches wide) should be left on all papers. The filing margin on the face of paper is on the left whereas on the reverse it is on the right. This fact should be remembered and it is best to fold a sheet of paper along its filing margin before starting to write on it. No minutes should be made on the filing margin, as, if this is done, the minutes will be lost sight of when the paper is filed, or the file would have to be undone before the minutes could be read.

14) ORDER OF FILING, NUMBERING AND REFERENCING OF PAGES

Every document should be filed in chronological order in the appropriate case and numbered serially on the top right-hand corner. (For this purpose the appropriate date will be the date of receipt in the case of inward documents, the date of issue in the case of outward documents, and the date of the minute in the case of continuation sheets used for minutes in the unified system of filing)

- 15) Annexes to any documents should be numbered with the same serial number as the document together with suffixes "a", "b", "c" etc. The number of annexes should be noted on the main document. If the annexes are too bulky to be filed, they should be kept in a separate folder and a note made to that effect in the main document. If any annexes are subsequently returned, a note to that effect should be made on the main document to which they were attached, indicating reference to the covering letter returning the documents.
- 16) Normally there is no need to retain office copies of routine reminders and interim replies; a note to that effect on the relevant document would suffice. But where a copy is required to be retained, it will be numbered as any other outward document.
- 17) Immediately a document is placed in the file the numbers of the pages (if any) to which it contains reference should be noted in the margin against such references. When such document is a reply to an earlier outward letter or in continuation of an earlier inward letter, a note should be made on such earlier letter that the reply or further letter is at the particular page. These cross references will facilitate study of the file and avoid waste of time in tracing relevant documents.
- 18) Every paragraph of a minute or letter must always be numbered. Once pages and paragraphs are numbered, reference to papers in subsequent minutes is made easy, e.g., para 4 of (9).
- 19) Where any original document is sent out to another official for obtaining a report or for reference and return, a reference slip should be filed in the position of the document removed. It should indicate to whom the document was sent and when or refer to the folio No. of the covering letter. The document, when it is returned, should be filed in the original position and the slip removed. The report or letter with which it was returned should be filed according to chronological order and numbered.

20) TITLE CARDS

As each case is commenced, a "Title Card" should be written up for it on a slip of thick white paper about the size 2" X 4". The card should have a centre punch hole to tag it on the case cover. The top half of the card should have the following particulars written on it:

- 1) Reference number of the case,
- 2) Particulars of the case which differentiate it from other cases of the same type, (these particulars should be so written that they lend themselves to arrangement in an alphabetical order). These cards may be used to record movement of cases.

21. FILE COVERS

The minimum requirements of file covers are that they should -

- 1) be sufficiently strong to stand vertically in drawers, & c.,
- 2) provide space for writing the file number, name of subject and cross references and
- 3) be large enough to take in a reasonable number of papers of "Half Sheet" size, without being too unwieldy when stored or handled.

Further elaborations may provide distinctive colours for different branches, printed panels for noting the dates on which the file was opened and finally closed, and details of transit between branches; expanding covers to take in a large number of papers; printed names of the University special distinctive marks for Parliamentary papers, & c. File covers may be obtained ready-punched or punched in the office to suite the requirements of the work. Case papers are usually kept in "temporary" paper jackets. These are less strong than the normal file covers and the printing is less elaborate.

GUIDELINES TO OFFICE SYSTEM IN THE UNIVERSITY

PART - IV

CORRESPONDENCE

1. Case Registration

The system of case registration to facilitate recording and tracing of papers is base on the following principles:

- (a) Every branch in the office has an identification code letter.
- (b) Every subject clerk in a branch has a code letter to identify him.
- (c) All the subjects dealt with in the branch are assigned distinctive numerals.
- (d) Each document whether received or originated in the office, that opens a new case is given a serial number. A separate series may be maintained for each year.
- (e) Each subject clerk maintains a case register, which will contain a complete list of cases handled by him.

2. The first code letter identifies the branch, the second the subject clerk, the first numeral indicates the subject file, the second the case, and the third the year of opening and registration of the case.

3. An alternative method is to assign code letters according to subjects of functions. This may be found more convenient in some department, and it also provides more flexibility in the re-allocation of work, when necessary. Where this is the case, every subject or group of allied subjects is assigned a code, which will start with the code letter of

the branch, followed by another letter (or group of letters) representing such subject or group of allied subjects. Such code (particularly when it refers to a group of subjects) may be further expanded by the addition of appropriate letters to denote various sub-divisions of the group.

4. The date of registration must be entered below the last entry in the case register for the preceding day across the centre of the page or on top of a new page. This entry must be made conspicuously either in red ink or blue pencil.
5. The form of the case register (revised) is as follows:

Date of Registration

Serial No.	From Whom received	His No. and Date	Subject	Disposal	Remarks
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.

6. Every paper, opening a new case has to be registered in the Case Register. Every letter coming into or going out of the office will not be registered, but every "Case" will be registered. In other words no incoming or outgoing letter will be registered, if it relates to an existing case, which has already been registered.
7. No letter should be issued from the office which does not bear a case number.

The practice of giving an outward letter merely a code letter without giving it a case number is unsatisfactory. So is the practice of keeping one miscellaneous case dealing with a number of different matters or correspondence even if they relate to the same subject. However, it might sometimes be desirable to allot one case number to several letters

of the same type, particularly where the papers would be destroyed in a short time.

8. When a subject clerk deals with two or more subjects, it will be convenient to use separate series for cases arising under each subject. For this purpose separate folios in the case register may be set apart or separate case registers maintained for each subject and to each a distinguishing alphabetical or numerical code should be assigned. This differentiation will facilitate re-distribution of work among the staff at any time.

However, this arrangement may not be desirable when a subject clerk has many subjects allotted to him, and the multiplication of case registers or separate numerical series for different subjects could lead to confusion and make the work unwieldy.

9. Registration of a letter dealing with more than one subject :

Letters are occasionally received that deal with more than one subject. Such a letter should be first sent to the clerk who has to deal with the main or most important subject of the letter, and should be marked with his code letter and case number. He will send the letter to the next subject clerk concerned who will make an extract of the part affecting him, note on the extract the case number given to the letter and send on the letter to the next clerk concerned and take necessary action on the extract. The last clerk to deal with it will return the letter to the officer to whom it was first coded. An alternative and better method will be for the first subject clerk to have the various extracts prepared and pass them to the other subject clerk concerned, after making a note on them of the number of the case in which the original letter has been placed.

GUIDELINE This presupposes a wide knowledge of the system of distribution of work in the Office. This is an essential requirement. Every clerk should have a clear knowledge of the subjects or matters dealt with by the others in the Office.

TAPPAI AND HANDLING OF LETTERS

10. Outward Registration : The offices daily by post or by hand are called the Tappai.

New cases opening with outward letters should be registered in the same case register as used for inward letters. Inward and outward cases may be entered in any order, the case number given being the next serial in column 1 of the register. This case number should be used as the outward number of the paper. Columns 4 and 5 should also be entered for new case papers outwarded.

3. Covers addressed to an officer by name will be sent to his unopened file. If the officer concerned is absent on tour or leave, such covers should be sent to the officer who is looking after his work.

4. Covers marked "Confidential", "Secret" or "Top Secret" which are not addressed to an officer by name will be sent to the officer authorised to receive and open such communications. These will be dealt with by him in accordance with security instructions. They should not be passed from officer to officer with the tappai, but should be sent in a security box to the Staff Officer concerned. He will in turn hand it personally to the Head of the Branch or Subject Clerk. In some cases it may be necessary for the Staff Officer to handle the letters personally without the letter being sent to the branch.

5. Stamping, Marking and Sorting of Receipts

Each receipt will be stamped with the date stamp in which

GUIDELINES TO OFFICE SYSTEM IN THE UNIVERSITIES

PART - V

TAPPAL AND HANDLING OF LETTERS

1. All papers that come into the office daily by post or by hand are called the Tappal.

2. Action by Tappal Officer :

The tappal will be opened under the direct supervision of the officer responsible for this duty. He must know the distribution of work in the whole office and this scheme of distribution must be in writing.

3. Covers addressed to an officer by name will be sent to him unopened forthwith. If the officer concerned is absent on tour or leave, such covers should be sent to the officer who is looking after his work.

4. Covers marked "Confidential" "Secret" or "Top Secret" which are not addressed to an officer by name will be sent to the officer authorised to receive and open such communications. These will be dealt with by him in accordance with security instructions. They should not be passed from officer to officer with the tappal, but should be sent in a security box to the Staff Officer concerned. He will in turn hand it personally to the Head of the Branch or Subject Clerk. In some cases it may be necessary for the Staff Officer to handle the letters personally, without the letter being sent to the branch.

5. Stamping, Marking and Sorting of Receipts :

Each receipt will be stamped with the date stamp in such a way that a clear impression of the date of receipt is made on the paper on a suitable place at the top. Receipts

will be sorted branch wise or section wise and be marked with the respective code letter of other identifying mark. They will then be put in docketts and sent to the staff officers concerned.

6. Action by Staff Officers :

The Staff Officer will -

- (i) go through the tappal sent to him,
- (ii) remove papers which he himself can dispose of without assistance from the office, and those which in his opinion are important enough to be seen by higher officers at the tappal stage or on which he desires their instructions.
- (iii) return the rest to the Head of the Branch who will then mark them out to the subject clerks concerned.

7. The Staff Officer or any other Higher Officer to whom the Tappal papers are submitted, should give directions, whenever necessary, as to the line of action that should be taken. When he proposes to deal with a paper himself, he will ask for the file to be put up to him with the relevant papers without any minuting. Wherever possible he should make orders straightaway on the action to be taken before passing papers to the Heads of Branches. Papers on which no special instructions are given will be initialled by him in token of his having seen them.

8. Action by Head of Branch :

The Head of Branch before distribution the receipts to the subject clerks will see whether any of them are of a complex or difficult nature or have any features which require his

personal attention. He will deal with such receipts himself or give special instructions to the subject clerks as necessary.

9. The Head of the Branch will note down in his personal note book or diary important receipts requiring prompt action, or on which action has to be completed by a specified date in order to keep track of the matters to ensure their timely disposal.

10. Letters received by registered post, many of which may contain valuable documents, should receive special attention. They should be entered in a separate register indicating the date of receipt, registered number of the packet and the postal station, the name of sender, the subject and the Officer to whom the papers are passed for attention. The latter will initial the entry, when taking delivery of the papers and will be responsible for their safe custody.

When registered letters addressed by name are received, they should be sent unopened to the Officer concerned with the register in question with entries made thereon as to date of receipt, registered number and postal station. The Officer taking delivery of the papers will make the other entries and return the register to the Head of the Branch.

11. The Head of the Branch will also ensure that valuable documents received in the tappal are taken special care of.

12. Priority in movement of tappal :

The perusal of tappal must be given the highest by all Officers. Personal Assistants, Stenographers and Office Aides should treat the tappal moving up and down as

"Immediate". Every Office Supervisor should always look out for any hold-up in its movement and take corrective action in time.

13. Action by Subject Clerk :

Soon after the tappal papers are made over to him, the subject clerk will read them one by one, and sort them out according to priority, keeping distinctly in mind the following classification :

- (a) Immediate
- (b) Priority
- (c) Ordinary papers easy to deal with
- (d) Papers requiring research, which do not come under (a) or (b)

14. If any other branches or sections are concerned with any part of aspect of a receipt, the clerk will send relevant extracts through the Head of the Branch to the sections or branches concerned for remarks or necessary action.

15. Submission of Papers :

If a receipts is one on which there is no previous file, and which therefore opens a new case, it will be registered.

16. It will be put in a case cover and suitably secured by means of a tag. The registered number will be clearly entered on the right hand top corner of the case cover and the subject entered on the upper half or in the space provided.

17. If the receipt relates to a case already opened, it will be put into the case in question.

18. In submitting action papers the subject clerk should take the following steps :

- (i) Case the action papers correctly

- (ii) Number it serially
- (iii) Mark cross reference
- (iv) Cancel call-up date in diary, in case the acting paper is a reply that was expected.
- (v) Remove card from the card index stand in the case of a reply to an endorsement.
- (vi) Attach all relevant papers suitably referenced
- (vii) Either put up for signature a reply "subject to approval" or make a suitable minute
- (viii) Note submission on movement card

19. Minuting :

When the line of action on a receipt is obvious or is based on a clear precedent or practice or has been indicated by the Staff Officer concerned in the directions given by him on a receipt, a reply, subject to approval, where necessary, may straightway be submitted for signature - giving cross reference to the file or register or precedents and/or instructions file. In these cases no minuting is necessary. In other cases, the subject clerk will put up papers to the staff officer with a suitable note or minute.

20. A minute is a written statement recorded on a paper under consideration to facilitate its disposal. It may consist of a precise of previous papers, or statement or an analysis of the question or questions requiring decision and suggestions as to the course of action to be taken. It is unnecessary to paraphrase letters, but a brief summary of the main points of a long letter is useful.

21. The following points of guidance should be noted when making a minute:

- (a) It should begin by referring to the letter on which decision is needed and reference should be made to

any relevant pages in that case and to any connected files or cases submitted. If the letter mentions any earlier correspondence, reference should always be given to this correspondence. A precise of previous papers will be helpful in a tortuous and complicated matter.

- (b) Thereafter the attention of the Staff Officer should be drawn to any considerations relevant to the making of decision on the issues involved. This will include
 - (i) Concise, lucid, precise and objective presentation of all the facts after an analytical study of the relevant data and after being satisfied that the facts, so far as they are open to check, are correct. Facts must be separated from opinions.
 - (ii) pointing out any mistakes, mis-statement of facts, discrepancies or contradictions.
 - (iii) drawing attention, where necessary, to the customary or statutory procedure.
 - (iv) pointing out the relevant rules or regulations, precedents or policy decisions. When references are made to ordinances, Administrative Regulations or Financial Regulations, copies should be submitted if not in possession of such sources.
 - (v) stating the question or questions for consideration and bringing out clearly the points requiring decision.
 - (vi) in appropriate cases suggesting courses of action or alternative courses of action.

(vii) putting down arguments or considerations, if any, that go contrary to the suggestion or recommendation made, as these may be considered by the Staff Officer as weighty and decisive.

(c) When you are quoting what someone else says, it is desirable to give the full text; by paraphrasing you may alter the sense and offend the person you are quoting. Similarly, quote verbatim if you refer to the provisions of Ordinances. You may otherwise give a wrong statement of the Law.

(d) Minutes should be written neatly and legibly in ink. They should not be written on the binding margin or obliquely across the page or in other haphazard manner all over a paper. They should be written, one below the other in chronological order, the first minutes on a letter being made at the bottom of the letter, (where the book file system is adopted) and never at the top or head of a letter.

22. A fresh sheet of paper should be attached to the letter when it seems likely that the next paper will run on beyond the existing sheet. The file number should be entered on the top of this sheet. Where the document has an annexe, the minute should be written on the document and never on the annexe. If there is no room on the document itself to complete the minute, it should be continued on a fresh sheet of paper, which should be numbered and filed after the last annexe. No minuting should be done on papers which have been endorsed for report.

23. The minutes should be initialled and dated. The date should invariably include the year.

24. When submitting a case to the Staff Officer, the clerk should see that all connected papers, that have a bearing on the case, are put up with the case, suitably referenced. When references are made to papers in the same file, the number of the document to which reference is made should be marked neatly in pencil at the point where such reference is made. Where references are made to papers in some other file, a note both of the numbers of the document and the reference number of that file should be made.

25. Such papers should be flagged with alphabetical slips to facilitate their identification. The slip will be pinned neatly on the inside of the page. Where more than one flag is necessary, they should not be pinned so that the lower flags are covered by the top ones but should be pinned across the width of the file so that each individual flag is visible and can be located immediately.

26. It should be remembered that the flags are a temporary convenience for the quick identification of papers and should be removed, as soon as they have served their purpose. Flags left on files indefinitely become decrepit. To facilitate identification of references after the removal of the flags, it is necessary that the numbers and pages of the files referenced by the flags should be quoted on the body of the note, so that the reference are able to stand on their own.

27. Action papers going down :

Every action paper should, in going down from the Officer making the order, normally pass through the hands of every Staff Officer through whom it passed on its way up. This will enable every Officer to keep in touch with what is happening in regard to every paper with which he is concerned. The papers will go down to the subject clerk

through the Head of the Branch, who will thus be kept informed of what is happening in his branch and also be enabled to detect any errors which may have escaped the notice of the Staff Officer or Subject Clerk.

28. Signature papers going both up and down should follow the most expeditious and direct route - Subject Clerk to Staff Officer and vice versa. However, important papers for signature may be put up through the Head of the Branch.

29. Papers with more than one order:

When more than one order is made on a paper and these cannot be carried out simultaneously an "action" serve as a reminder that further action is required. The "Action" for flag should be removed only after all the orders have been carried out, but it should definitely be removed then.

30. Movement of cases :

Movement cards should be maintained to keep a record of cases put up to Staff Officers or sent to other branches. The cards should be of about the size of 3" X 5" and should bear the number of the case and the subject on top.

31. Whenever a pending case leaves the custody of a subject clerk, an entry should be made in pencil indicating to whom it is being sent, and the card inserted in the card index stand. The arrangement of cards should be in numerical order.

32. When the case comes back to the subject clerk, the entry on the card should be crossed off and the card removed from the card index stand.

33. Periodically, at least once a fortnight, the movement cards should be examined and cases long overdue should be brought to the notice of the Officer concerned.

34. Submission of Confidential Papers:

Secret and confidential papers should not be passed in open cases through KKS. They should be handed personally to the Officer concerned.

35. Three Days Rule:

Clerks should endeavour to clear off action papers daily if possible. In no case must an action paper be held up without submission to a Staff Officer or other appropriate action being taken, unless the difficulty of taking prompt action has been explained to the Staff Officer and permission obtained for attention within a longer period (Action papers are those requiring attention in the Office).

36. In no case must an action paper be kept without attention being paid to it for more than three days. The action taken within this period must be of such a nature as will ensure completion of action within the shortest time possible. Every effort must be made to reply letters within a week.

37. Every letter from an unofficial correspondent, to which it will not be possible to send a reply within a week, must be acknowledged. Franked post cards may be used for this purpose, and a note made in the case about the fact of the acknowledgement and the date.

38. Linking of Files :

Linking of files on which action is in progress will, as far as possible, be avoided. As a general rule this will be resorted to only when the files are inter-connected and orders have to be passed on them simultaneously. If any papers in a current file are required for reference only

in connection with the disposal of another current case, relevant extracts should be taken from the former and placed in the letter.

39. Priority Making on Files:

- (i) The three prescribed priority markings to be used on files and papers are "IMMEDIATE", "TODAY" and "URGENT".
- (ii) The label "IMMEDIATE" should be used only in case of extra ordinary urgency requiring instant attention and not merely to attract the attention of an Officer to a paper which it is desired should not be overlooked.
- (iii) The label "TODAY" should be used only for papers which have to be disposed of the same day.
- (iv) The label "URGENT" should be used on papers which should be given precedence over others of ordinary nature to which no priority labels have been attached.
- (v) The priority markings should be used discriminatingly. Officers through whom files pass, should keep an eye on the propriety of the priority marking affixed to them and revise or remove them if necessary.
- (vi) Out-going files or letters marked "Immediate" should be issued at once, but in on case should they be sent to the residence of an Officer except under specific directions of a Staff Officer.

40. Despath⁵ :

On the receipt by the Clerk of the signed reply or endorsement, he will detach it from the case, see that the case number is affixed to it, date it, see that any

enclosures and annexes are in order, book it in the diary and despatch it.

- (a) Care should be taken to see that the correct address is legibly written on the envelope.
- (b) When the letter is to be sent by hand, it should be so marked on the top left hand corner of the envelope together with the number of the letter for entry in the delivery book. If immediate or urgent delivery is required, this too should be marked on the cover.
- (c) When the letter is required to be sent by registered or express post, an entry to that effect should be made on the top left hand corner of the cover.
- (d) Secret and confidential letters should be in double covers. The inner cover should be sealed in the presence of the subject clerk, who will mark it "Secret" or "Confidential" as the case may be and put it in the second cover which will be addressed and marked according to (b) or (c) above if necessary.

41. Call-Up Diary :

If an outward paper requires an answer, the Clerk should, before submitting it for signature, mark the call-up date on the Office copy and book the case in his diary in accordance with the call-up system.

42. Treatment of Pending Cases:

If the last action does not close the case, it should then be put with other pending cases with the Subject Clerk. Every pending case should bear a call-up date which should also be noted in the diary. These pending cases should generally be kept vertically and in order of their numbers.

If a Subject Clerk has a large number of pending cases, he may be given a table with Roneo drawers or cabinet. If still case covers are not in use, the cases may be kept in one or more small bundles, say 1-25, 26-50, 51-75 & c., the bundles being distinctly marked with these series of numbers. Each bundle should be tied between pieces of stout cardboard.

43. When it is necessary to deal with certain connected cases together, it may be found convenient to keep such cases together. In such an event these cases may be kept tied together in the position to be occupied by the principal case, provided cards are placed in the positions that the other cases should have occupied, indicating the case to which they are attached.

44. The Subject Clerk will find it convenient to attach a title card to each pending case so that he can easily locate a case in the cabinet. This card will also be useful in recording the movements of the case when it is in action within the Office.

45. Permanent Transfers of Cases :

If a case is transferred from one Clerk to another for disposal, the first Clerk should send the case to be recorded by the Head of the Branch or the Head Clerk. The other Clerk should register the case and inform the first Clerk of the new number, so that he may note it opposite the entry of the old number in column 6 of his register.

46. Temporary Transfers of Cases:

If a subject Clerk issues a case for action by another Officer, he should generally enter on a card the number, the Officer to whom it is sent and the date, and insert

it in his card index. A note of the issue may also be made in the case register in column 6.

47. Diaries :

Immediately before submitting for signature an outward letter requiring a reply, the Clerk should note a call-up date in the Office copy and book the case in his diary for the date fixed. A reasonable time should be allowed for the reply and this would vary with the circumstances of each case. Normally for replies which are not urgent the period might be 2 weeks. A larger interval would be justified only in the case of replies which require collection of data from various sources or records or consultation with others. The Staff Officer before signing the letter must check whether the call-up date has been entered in the Office copy.

48. If a reply is received before the due date, the Clerk will know this from his entry in the Office copy of the letter in question and will cross it off his diary as soon as the reply has been received.

49. Every morning each Subject Clerk will turn up his diary for the day and call attention to overdue cases booked for reply on that date, using printed and franked "Inviting Attention" memo slips for the purpose. He will at the same time book a further "call-up" date in his diary and note it on the Office copy as before. Forms already franked can be issued to each Subject Clerk for first reminders but second and subsequent reminders should, as a rule, be signed by a Staff Officer. When attention is called to a letter, a note to this effect may be made on the Office copy of that letter and no Office copy of the reminder need be kept.

50. The interval of 2 weeks should not be regarded as an invariable rule. In every case the Officer should make an assessment of what would be a reasonable time for the reply, considering the nature and extent of the information sought. Generally, where the reply expected is a straightforward one, which would not involve collection of data and reference to others, a fortnight's interval is adequate.

In the case of replies which will involve collection of data or reference to other, a longer period (say 3 or 4 weeks) may be allowed. But, if a reply is urgently required, the above intervals will have to be shortened and reminders sent more frequently. The Staff Officer may generally or specially indicate the intervals at which reminder should be sent relating to the subjects he handles.

51. Papers required to be brought up for further action a subsequent date or papers marked KIV (Keep in view) should also be noted in the diary. In the latter case the Subject Clerk will ascertain from the Staff Officer the date on which the case is to be submitted again for orders.

52. If any case noted for attention in the diary receives that attention before the due date, the Subject Clerk should when attending to the case score off the entry in question in the diary.

53. Indexing :

The efficiency of a Clerk as a paper keeper depends on the speed with which he can trace papers when the name of the subject or the number of the subject or the number of the file is given. Indexing is a method to facilitate easy location of papers. Numerical and alphabetical sequences provide two easy ways of tracing papers.

Files may be arranged in one sequence (numerical) and index cards maintained in another sequence (alphabetical).

54. Subject Clerks have often to tract cases of which the subjects are known but not the case numbers. They will, therefore, find it advantageous to make a note of some unused pages of their diary or elsewhere, of the subjects of the more important cases together with their numbers. If any Clerk finds that he has a considerable number of subjects to be noted in this manner, he should start a subject card index, i.e., he should write the subjects and the case numbers on cards, and keep the cards in the alphabetical order of their subjects. The importance of correct subject headings, particularly for the purpose of indexing, cannot be over-emphasised.

55. Indexing may also be used to facilitate the location of regulations, circular instructions, precedents and other rulings. It may be necessary to index the same ruling or order under several different "key-words". This kind of index is particularly necessary when the information on a subject is scattered over several different files and books.

GUIDELINES TO OFFICE SYSTEM IN THE UNIVERSITY

PART VI

DUTIES OF HEADS OF BRANCHES & SUBJECT CLERKS

I. HEADS OF BRANCHES

Within a University, work is allocated between several branches and there is a Head for each branch, who will be responsible for the supervision and control of the staff in the branch. While the special knowledge and experience of a Head of Branch will be available as and when required, he will not ordinarily minute on papers. His responsibilities are essentially supervision and management. These includes :

- a) Maintenance of discipline among the staff in the branch.
- b) Seeing that duties are clearly and precisely defined, that they suitably and equitably allocated and that there is an even follow of work in the branch ensuring that there are no gaps, overlaps and duplication of work.
- c) Special attention to new recruits, training them and guiding them along in their work.
- d) Training clerk in subject work, where necessary.
- e) Going round and spending his time with subject clerks assessing their load of work, looking for arrears and finding ways of clearing them, programming the work of the branch so as to provide assistance during peak periods, and for making use of spare time during slack periods.
- f) Looking for weak point in the work of clerks, pointing out ways of correcting them and improving the standard of work.
- g) Carrying out systematic inspection of the work of clerks (once a month).
- h) Seeing that a new recruit is moved from one kind of work to another every few months and thus ensuring that every officer can work in any capacity within the branch.

- i) Making arrangements for the efficient discharge of the duties of an absent clerk.
- j) Reviewing work method and procedures for effecting improvements, eliminating unnecessary steps, cutting out delays, avoiding wastage of time, energy and materials.
- k) Co-ordinating the activities of clerks.
- l) Handling him skillfully and maintaining good working relationships so that the best possible output of work may be obtained.

1. DUTIES OF SUBJECT CLERKS

Responsibilities - Clerical officers are involved in the "paper work" of operational branches of a University. Each clerk is responsible for a subject, part of a subject or for a group of subjects. Subject clerks should have a good knowledge of the regulations, circulars, ordinances, instructions, precedents, etc., that bear on their subjects. Besides knowing the general considerations affecting their subject, they should also have a sound grasp of the facts of the instant case.

2. Subject clerks should be encouraged to use their judgement and initiative to as great an extent as possible. The efficiency of an office depends ultimately on the efficiency of its subject clerks, and this in turn can be achieved only by a scrupulous observance of the office system - particularly by the correct handling of the case registration, and the proper maintenance of the case register and the call-up diary, which are the pivots round which the work of the subject clerk revolves.
3. Each subjects clerk should have -
 - a. a complete list of his duties,
 - b) a file of procedure records,
 - c) a list of returns due from him together with dates and
 - d) instructions and precedents file containing circulars, policy directions, rulings, precedents, etc., affecting his work. It will generally be found advantageous to have a reference index to this file.
4. In all that a subject clerk does, promptness, systematic approach, accuracy and clarity in thought and expression are essential. One test of his efficiency is the ease with which he can be replaced when he is on leave or on transfer. If his files and index cards have been arranged in an orderly way, if his instructions files are up to date and clear, if he has kept up-to-date procedure records for each item of work done by him, and if he has properly maintained his case register and call-up diary, his successors should have little difficulty in continuing from where he left off.

5. Correspondence work - A subject clerk should not only endeavour to know his subject thoroughly but also develop his skill in minuting as this will greatly advance his efficiency and usefulness. If he is unable to make a useful minute in any particular case he need only submit the case with connected papers appropriately marked. A mere paraphrase of the last letter or two wastes both his time and that of the staff officer. The tendency to produce the "obvious" minute which merely recounts what is already conveniently apparent in the papers should be discouraged. It is advisable for staff officers to endeavour to reach an understanding on the kind of case on which the subject clerk is expected to minute, and that in respect of which his task is merely to provide the connected papers. This will avoid fruitless consideration by subject clerks of problems to which they can make little, if any, contribution.
6. The standard of contribution of subject clerks will doubtless vary with individuals. A subject clerk who thinks about the problem at issue, frames his minute accordingly and even goes to the length of writing or typing a letter ready for the staff officer's signature is making a worth while contribution to public business.
7. A subject clerk should be trained to draft replies and reports based on the orders given by staff officers.
8. In drafting letters or reports, the clerk should see that the facts are stated completely, correctly, concisely and clearly, in logical sequence, with each paragraph a complete unit of thought. There should be no ambiguity in the language used, no room for misunderstanding or misinterpretation. Words with precise meanings should be chosen, the simplest that will explain the thought. The key to clear writing is clear thinking.
9. It should be borne in mind that a draft which may be clear enough to the writer may not convey the meaning clearly to the recipient.
10. For example, it would be quite in order in quoting internal references such as the Financial Regulations, the serial numbers of printed forms or short titles, when writing a minute which will only be seen by the Departmental officers. It is however, quite a different matter when writing to a member of the public; in this case, a string of numbers and initials will

confusing rather than informative, and points must be explained without introducing references of this kind.

11. A suitable heading must be chosen. The heading helps both the writer and the addressee to focus the purpose of the letter. It must therefore, be chosen carefully to express in a few words exactly what the letter is about.
12. The paragraph should be numbered. This makes subsequent reference easy. If a paragraph becomes too long, it should be divided into sub-paragraphs.
13. After drafting a letter, the clerk should edit what he has written. He should read through it as if he is the addressee, and ask himself the following questions -
 - a) Is there reference to previous correspondence, if any?
 - b) Are the facts clearly and correctly stated?
 - c) Are the figures, statistics furnished, if any, accurate?
 - d) Do the conclusions advanced, suggestions offered, or recommendations made seem sensible and logical: Are they clearly supported by the facts given in the letter?
 - e) Is it possible to grasp quickly what action is necessary?
 - f) Is the layout helpful?
 - g) Is the language used simple and easily understandable?
 - h) Will the tone of the letter bring the desired response? Is it polite and courteous and does it seem helpful?
14. When submitting a letter for signature, the subject clerk should comply with the following requirements:-
 - i. Compare fair copy with the draft, if any, and satisfy himself that it is correctly typed.
 - ii. Check references, dates and figures with the original documents in which they appear and ensure accuracy. (Comparison with original documents is necessary to avoid errors in drafts being repeated in the fair copy).
 - iii. Mark cross reference and enter page number on office copy.
 - iv. Initial office copy below the designation as proof that all steps to ensure accuracy have been taken.

- v. Where important schedules dealing with figures are involved, such schedules should be prepared by one officer and checked by another. Both officers should initial such documents.
15. Accounting work - A subject clerk may also be concerned with accounting work. He may be engaged in work connected with the collection of revenue or in work connected with the incurring of expenditure, the making of payments or the subsequent operations of preparing the accounts. If he is engaged in revenue work, the main point to remember is that revenue is due on or before a fixed date and it is his duty to prepare a list of all defaulters shortly after the due date, and submit it to the Staff Officer. While checking payment vouchers he should pay special attention to arithmetical accuracy; whether the rates have been sanctioned; whether special certificates required by Financial Regulations are attached; and whether the classification is correct. In the preparation of accounts, accuracy is all important. The correct figures should be entered in the correct column on the correct side. Wrong entries should be corrected, not by erasing, but by scoring off the incorrect entries and writing the correct figures in red ink.
16. Custody of files - When a subject clerk takes over from another, the case register, the active files in the latter's custody and the index cards should be taken over carefully. The former will have use the same case register and when he opens a new case, an entry will have to be made in the case register, continuing the same series of numbers as his predecessor. The index cards should be counted and checked with the active files; cards referring to dead files should be kept in a separate tray, and new cards should be written for any files which have none. The index cards should not be neglected, as they furnish a ready way of locating a particular file. A file of cases handed over should be prepared and signed by the two officers handing over and taking over, each keeping a copy of it with him.
17. The clerk taking over should count the number of active files handed over to him by his predecessor. In addition, to giving him an idea of the load of work this would help him from the point of view of security as well, since he would know the exact number of files for which he is responsible.

There are two aspects to this -

- a) Physical safe custody, i.e., prevention of loss or manipulation of papers and files, and
- b) Ensuring that the information content of the files does not reach unauthorized persons.

Minutes, orders by Staff Officers, and inter-departmental correspondence are all absolutely privileged and no one can compel the disclosure of these documents even in a Court of Law. A subject clerk will appreciate that it would be embarrassing to him if minutes and recommendations made by him were disclosed to interested parties. It would be equally embarrassing to the other officers in the University if their minutes, reports, orders were disclosed to interested parties. A subject clerk is therefore obliged to ensure that files are not seen by persons other than those who should know their contents for varying out their duties. Even within the University most of his colleagues should not have access to his files. The best way of maintaining this security against loss and leakage of information is to keep on the table only the one or two files which are being dealt with at the moment. As the clerk finishes with each file he should send it up to his superior or put it back in the cabinet.

18. Particular attention should be paid to the custody of registered letters, as they often contain documents of value. The registration number, the post office or origin, and date of despatch, should be noted on all documents received under registered cover. Occasionally, valuable documents are tendered personally by interested parties; special care should be paid to these as well. At the end of the day, the subject clerk should see that all his papers are lodged in cabinets or lockers, that these are securely locked with a key and that he takes the key with him.

GUIDELINES TO OFFICE SYSTEM IN THE UNIVERSITY

PART VII

SUPERVISION & CONTROL

1. Office Inspection - An office system, however soundly devised, will fail in some if not all its objects unless it is adequately supervised. The main requirements of adequate supervision is that supervising officers should spend as much of their time as they can spare in the various branches, seeing for themselves that the numerous details of office work are being promptly and efficiently attended to. This object is best attained by systematic office inspection. It is not possible to maintain office work at a high standard of efficiency unless this is done. Any office system, if it is to work efficiently must provide for regular inspections of the work of clerks, and neglect of this bound to result in a progressive deterioration in the quality and quantity of clerical work.
2. A clerk's work should normally be inspected once a month. This is primarily the duty of the Head of the Branch. In carrying out these inspections, he should not only check on the mechanics of office routine but also assess the output of work quantitatively and give such guidance and instructions as may be necessary. It will be appreciated that quantitative assessment of an officer's work is necessary for purpose of assessing the cadre required for an office.
3. A qualitative assessment of an officer's work throughout the year will be useful as a base for preparing the annual confidential report. A more even distribution of work among staff and satisfaction that the confidential report is based on a running record of the officer's performance throughout the year will lead to greater contentment among clerical staff and, consequently, increase output per man day.
4. The question naturally arises whether clerical work is capable of quantitative measurement. There are certain types of clerical work copying, filling forms, writing books of accounts, etc. which can be measured without much difficulty fairly accurately. There are certain other types like drafting letters on orders already given by Staff officers, which can be measured perhaps less accurately but once again without much difficulty. There are still other types, especially preparation of minutes and reports, which can be only with very great difficulty and even then, only very approximately.

If a minute is analysed it will be seen to contain the elements -

1. writing
2. references to earlier papers, regulations, circulars, etc., and
3. thinking processes.

The time taken for pure writing can be easily assessed. The time taken for making references too can be approximately assessed if the inspecting officer is familiar with the filing set up in the University. The time taken for thinking cannot be measured; it is only possible to make a guess. In assessing the time taken for the preparation of a minute, adequate time should be allowed for writing and for making references. In the large majority of cases of minute writing this estimate would be sufficient as these minutes are largely an application of known circulars and regulations to the instant case. In exceptional cases where a substantial amount of thinking has been done, as will be evidenced by the content of the minute, it will not be possible to make even an approximate measurement. Such cases will of necessity have to be left out.

5. Inspecting procedures - In practice, different ways may be adopted for making a quantitative assessment of an officer's work. For ascertaining the time taken to dispose of files as indicated in the cage entitled "Types of

Work" in the inspection form, the officer himself may be asked to give an estimate of the time required for preparing a minute or a report; an officer who has done the same work before may be asked for his views; the Head of the Branch or a former Head of the Branch may be asked for his views; and the inspecting officer may thereafter make his own assessment having regard to the time taken for making references and for writing the minute as evidenced by the content of the minute. Where it is considered that sufficiently accurate data cannot be obtained in this way actual performance may be tested by giving the officer a sample block of 10 or 15 files and seeing how long he takes to finish with them.

In any case it will not be possible to make precise assessments and say that an officer should dispose of a file in so many minutes or hours. Taking each kind of work separately a rough average of the quantity of work an officer may do in a day can be decided, and this is the best possible year stick for assessing work load quantitatively.

6. The cage entitled "Work Load Average" contains four different items. Each of these in isolation may not give an accurate picture of the average work load but all of them taken together with the information collected as in the preceding paragraphs should give a fairly accurate idea of the load of each individual officer. The report form also suggests assessing peak periods and slack periods, so that arrangements may be made to make use of idle clerical time in clearing peak loads in another section.

7. The section dealing with Quality is self-explanatory and should afford a useful basis for preparing the annual confidential report. The section on Morale is designed to remove any small grouches which the officer may have connected with his work. In exceptional cases a good officer may be off colour temporarily on account of private difficulties. In such cases it is suggested that the officer's work be re-inspected after the difficulties are over to make a proper assessment of his work.

GUIDELINES TO OFFICE SYSTEM IN THE UNIVERSITY

PART VIII

MISCELLANEOUS

1. Division of Work - An important factor that has a bearing on office system is the division of work between officers. Work may be divided on the basis of subjects, functions, area, etc. The commonest division is on the basis of subjects. It is possible to use one basis of division at one level and another at a lower level; for instance, work may in the first instance be divided by areas and under each area work may be sub-divided by subjects. There should be only one basis of division at each level, and it is unsound to confuse two divisions at the same level. The system of dividing work among staff officers on the basis of Departments or areas, and among clerks on the basis of subjects results in the same subject clerk having to report to two or three staff officers. This is very unsatisfactory and can lead to considerable confusion. The best way out of this difficulty would be to group the subject clerks also on the same basis as staff officers and with the group, sub-divide by subjects, thus eliminating the necessity of one officer having to report to two or three staff officers. Whatever the basis of division the general rules of classification should be observed, namely, that the classes should be collectively exhaustive and mutually exclusive.
2. It is essential for efficient working that duties of each officer be defined clearly and precisely. If this is not done, papers are liable to go round from officer to officer with the endorsement "not my subject" and when something goes wrong everyone will disclaim responsibility. In allocating duties to officers the principle to be observed is, there should be no gaps and no overlaps. Duties should be set down in writing and responsibility for each item of work should be pinpointed.
3. Absent and Acting Officer - An absent officer must send to the Head the keys of his desk if his papers are under lock and key. Acting officers who have agreed to act will be expected to attend to the additional duties with as great a care as they do in the case of their work. If an acting officer is appointed in an emergency, he may find it difficult to attend to all the work of the absent officer, but he must do his utmost to keep at least the routine procedure fully up to date.

Acting officers should be specially supervised and assisted by the Head. He should see that all reasonable action is being taken to prevent the work of an absent officer falling into confusion. Immediately on his return, the officer who has been absent should go through all his papers and should lose no time in remedying any ill effects of his absence.

4. Overtime - Save at times of special pressure, there should be no necessity for clerks to work overtime. If however, it is the normal practice for clerks to work overtime this may be due to one or more of the following reasons :-

- a. the particular clerks are incompetent workers.
- b. the distribution of the office work is defective.
- c. the staff is inadequate.
- d. the office system is faulty.

The matter should be investigated and every effort made to correct the defects which lead to the necessity for extended hours. There appears to be no adequate reasons why a reasonably competent clerk, working an efficient system, should not be able to cope with ordinary current work within the usual office hours.

5. Exchange of duties - The occasional exchange of duties between clerks in the same office has a number of advantages including the following -

1. Clerks will add to their experience;
2. the change will stimulate their interests;
3. it will lead to clerks discovering more congenial work and thus results in an increase of efficiency;
4. acting arrangements can be more easily made and be more satisfactory than under a rather haphazard system;
5. it will lead to the detection of irregularities, including suppression of papers, if any.

Interchangeability of staff should be provided for as far as possible. The main objection to such exchange of duties is that the work will suffer while the new officer is learning the work. The fall in output would generally be temporary. Further the adverse effect can be minimised, if not eliminated, by making the exchanges at fairly wide intervals (in any particular branch) and during slack periods.

6. Standard Replies :

In several instances, it will be found that the same form of reply can be used repeatedly, and if the number of repetitions is considerable, it will be clearly advantageous to have the reply printed or otherwise manifolded. The commonest cases are reminders and acknowledgements which can be obtained in printed forms, but there are probably several more, e.g., replies referring petitioners to their legal remedy, special plaint forms, agreements and others. These standard forms of reply with the signature franked, should be issued to the Subject Clerks and at the discretion of the Head of the Department, the Clerks should be permitted to despatch them, on orders recieved, without being signed by a Staff Officer. The Subject Clerk should initial franked standard replies and reminders below the designation. Office copies of the standard replies should not be kept, but a note should be made on the papers of the standard form used.

7. Interruptions :

Clerks should also make it a point not interrupt each other any more than is absolutely necessary and they should obviously not indulge in desultory conversation when they are at work.

8. Fixed intervals for meal hours for each Officer are necessary to secure to the Clerks uninterrupted meal hours and to enable the supervising officers to check unauthorised absence. The meal hours of the various Officers should be so arranged that a few Officers are left in the Branch at all working hours.

9. Telephone Calls :

Telephone calls about official business are very frequent and the Telephone Operator is expected to be familiar not only with the technical details of the switchboard, but also with the division of work and the names and location of the branches.

Occasionally a call may be connected to a branch in error. In such a case the Officer answering the call should remember that the outside customer can do nothing to get the correct connection and that it was probably not his fault that he was connected to the wrong branch in the first place. The Officer should therefore ask the Telephone Operator to transfer the connection to the correct branch, but before doing so he should make sure that the branch suggested by him is the correct one.

10. When an Officer answer a call he should start by stating who he is instead of merely saying "Hello". He should speak clearly into the transmitter, pronouncing his words deliberately in a medium pitched voice, so that he may be clearly heard and understood. It is advantageous to use the left hand for holding the receiver, as he may have to take down notes or turn over some pages in a file with the right hand, while continuing the conversation. The conversation with the customer should not be interrupted by chats with a friend near the telephone, or by attending to less urgent office work.

9.1 APPENDIX - I

Basic Parts of a Letter

1. UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

2. "College House"
Colombo - 03

.....

3. My No: C/R/

Your No:

4. The Registrar,
University of Moratuwa,
MORATUWA

5. Attention of Senior Assistant Registrar/Examination & Academic

6. Dear Sir,

7. CONVOCATION

8. Thank you for your kind invitation to the Convocation of
your University which is to be held on 29th November 1991.

Since, we are having a Meeting of the Council on that date,
I regret that I am unable to accept you invitation.

I wish the Convocation every success.

The admission card is returned.

9. Yours sincerely,

10. Registrar.

11. Encl: Admission Card

12. cc : Secretary,
Convocation Committee

1. Printed Letter Head
2. Address and Date
3. Reference No.
4. Inside Address
5. Attentiona Line
6. Salutation
7. Subject
8. Body
9. Complimentary Closing
10. Designation of Signer
11. Enclosure
12. Carbon Copy to

9.2 APPENDIX - II - Procedure - Meetings, Conferences :

1. Written Notice (time, place of Meeting, matters to be discussed)
2. Agenda (order of business - sometimes a copy made for each person)
3. Minutes (official record of proceedings - marginal headings)
 - (a) List of those present
 - (b) Presiding Officer
 - (c) Decisions recorded in full
 - (d) Resolutions, motions recorded in full together with names of proposers and seconders
4. Minutes are signed by the person who took them or by the Presiding Officer.
5. Minutes are duplicated and copies sent to members.
6. A minute book is maintained where the minutes are pasted for permanent record.
7. The draft minutes are confirmed at the next subsequent Meeting. Action is not taken on important matters until the minutes have been confirmed, unless it was specially decided not to await confirmation of the Minutes.

9.3 APPENDIX - III - Hints for Typists

1. Avoid worn carbon paper so that each letter and figure is clear and sharp.
2. Check tables, figures after typing, preferably with the help of another.
3. Be familiar with the number of typewriter spaces to an inch.
4. Be familiar with the number of typewriter lines to an inch.
5. Use of marginal stops, back space key and tabulator keys.
6. Rulings, both horizontal and vertical for rough drafts of tables can be made with a pencil, or ball point pen held against the card holder while moving the carriage right to left or while turning the roller (platen) up.
7. Line spacing - single, double, triple
8. Centre the title
9. Normally leave $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches margin on the left and $\frac{1}{2}$ inch on the right side. Allow a two inch margin on top.
10. Page numbers - Set between hyphens.
11. Check spellings of words you doubt with a dictionary.
12. Dust the external and accessible parts with brush daily. Brush eraser crumbs. Move carriage front to extreme left and then to extreme right, wiping the rods and exposed surface with a dry cloth.
13. Clean the type with a type cleaner or brush once a week. Clean the cylinder.
14. Always have the machine covered when not in use.

9.4 APPENDIX - IV - How to Type a Rough Draft

1. Use coloured paper for drafts.
2. Leave generous margins at least 1 inch all around.
3. Double or Triple space - to allow room for re-writting.
4. Number pages carefully.
5. Single-space exact quotations because they are rarely revised.
6. Do not make carbon copies.
7. Do not throw away earlier drafts or written manuscript until final letter/report has been done.
8. To save time in recopying cut up and paste material that is picked up exactly from earlier drafts or minutes/reports.
9. Be accurate.
10. In revision of rough draft many Staff Officers make use of Proof Reader's marks to save time.

9.5 APPENDIX - V - Proof Reader's Marks

<u>Mark in Margin</u>	<u>Meaning</u>	<u>Illustration of Mark in Copy</u>
↑	Insert as indicated	It is necessary ^{to} know
.....	Dots under words mean to retain crossed-out material	Item is often, ^{stet-} by mistake over looked
≡ ≡	Straighten lines; line up. Line up; make even	To : // ^{All} New Teachers From : // Superintendent
No #	No paragraph here	No # in any case, the
#	Make a paragraph here	to help themselves. # some of
to	Transpose as indicated	the daily charge
S	Take out matter indicated	Money is also used to
lc	Use lower case (Small letter)	Information in the R report
○	Write it out; spell it out	The (dr.) said that (2) or (3) were
○	Close up; no space	Shown in the foot () note below
#	Add space	that you [#] will enjoy
[Move to left	[and the next day
]	Mover to right] the afternoon mail came early
≡	Capitalize	this is the end
∫	Delete	stable of contents