

## Marking and Moderating Assessed Work

When setting a specific piece of assessment and its related assessment guidance, the tutor should ensure that these have been checked with another internal examiner and, in the case of Levels 5 and 6 (Levels 4 and 5 for Foundation Degrees) with the external examiner. Departments/Areas should ensure that they have procedures in place for assuring that there is no unplanned overlap between coursework and examination questions.

Examinations are marked anonymously (i.e. the script does not have the name of the candidate on the front sheet). A programme or module marking team may determine whether to mark other forms of assessment, such as essays, anonymously. However it is recognised that practice and practical forms of assessment often exclude the possibility of being marked anonymously.

**All students (where practicable) will be given the opportunity to submit their work online.**

When marking any assessed piece of work the course team/programme leader will ensure that a 'marking scheme' has been prepared. This would be an articulation of indications of the types of features within the assessment submission that students may include in order to demonstrate all of the module learning outcomes. As such it is a guide to markers and moderators. The marking scheme would not normally be a list of 'answers' but relate to the indicative scope of answers, other than when closed responses are required. This is conducive to the complex nature of higher education study and allows for contestation and creativity.

The marking scheme will link to the assessment criteria which will have been notified to students, and will be shared and agreed by all those involved in marking a specific piece of work. It should also be available to any internal moderator and to external examiners if the assessment is at Level 5 or above (Level 4 and 5 in the case of Foundation degrees).

Since assessment criteria and marking schemes are available, and all assessed work will be moderated (see below) there is no reason for unsighted second marking to be the norm. (The assessment of Postgraduate Research is subject to separate guidance). It is important that the reasons for awarding a particular grade are made explicit in the feedback for a piece assessment or on an examination script. Samples of work will be moderated in line with the guidance in the following paragraph. Course teams may decide to use unsighted second marking as part of their own moderating process, for the staff development of members of their course team who are less experienced assessors, and/or for the first run through of any new or innovative form of assessment.

**All feedback will be made available in 'type' on departmental coversheets** and should make specific reference to learning outcomes and assessment criteria for the

level of the assessment. Feedback should be timely, and some form made available for all students for all items of graded assessment.

All examinations will be followed by feedback to students. As a minimum, this will be in the form of a general presentation to students indicating common strengths and weaknesses exhibited in papers, advising upon how performance could be improved.

Staff should agree and publish dates by which they will return assessed work with relevant grades and detailed written feedback to students. The time period may vary depending on the nature of the piece of assessed work (e.g. a short essay compared with a lengthy dissertation) and on the number of pieces of work to be assessed, but Institutional policy requires a maximum turn-round time of 4 weeks.

All assessed work will be internally moderated. Subjects should ensure that all work is checked for any incorrect addition and should moderate a sample of both coursework and examination scripts for each module. An appropriate sample here is taken to be the square root of  $n$ , rounded up to the nearest integer, where  $n$  = the number of students undertaking the piece of assessment. For example for 100 students, the sample size would be 10. Any such sample should include firsts and fails and hence may, on occasions deviate from this formula, by exceeding the formula sample size. For assessment with less than 25 students the sample will be at least 5 students and fails and 1sts should be similarly included in the sample, and the range of performances across classes should also be represented, thus the sample size will be, on occasions, greater than the indicative sample size. Consideration of representation of such a range should also be made for cohorts smaller than this. Sampling across the full range of marks is the key consideration for internal and external moderation/examining.'

The moderator should review the 'scripts' with the sight of the marker's comments and grade; but should focus on establishing the appropriateness of the grade/class of each script rather than being excessively concerned with a precise numerical score. Markers and moderators should agree final marks for the scripts. Where the variance is greater than a class, it may be appropriate to engage a second moderator. Discussion between marker and moderator should also review the appropriateness of the marking scheme (see above). Where the moderator identifies a consistent variance (over or under) across the majority of the sample, they should request an additional sample. Moderators will consider the involvement of the External Examiner in if such process does not lead to mutual agreement. In extreme cases, where there is large and consistent deviation, marks may be scaled. This will be undertaken in close communication with the External Examiner, where appropriate.

Evidence of moderation should be clearly indicated on sheets student feedback as appropriate. Moderated work should clearly show the names of the tutors involved. A record of outcomes of the moderation process should be kept and used to inform evaluation of the module, and where appropriate, modifications to the assessment guidance/markings scheme. A record of the moderation process should be available for internal and external examiners.

Following internal moderation, a further sample of work will be sent to the external examiner for Levels 5 and 6 (and Levels 4 and 5 for Foundation Degrees). The precise nature and number of the sample will be negotiated with the external examiner concerned, following the general institutional guidance on the size of the sample (see above).

Where new staff have joined a course team; where staff inexperienced in marking assessed work join a subject; or where part-time members of staff are involved in assessment; the module/programme leader will have a responsibility to ensure that the member of staff is fully aware of the assessment criteria and marking scheme for the course. Staff development opportunities will be offered centrally to support such staff; and course teams are required to initially moderate all or a high proportion of that member of staff's assessments.

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