

Section 30 Marking and moderation policy and procedures

30.1 Marking principles

- 30.1.1 Assessments will be marked according to the assessment criteria agreed for the subject-area or programme which are communicated to the student via publication on Moodle.
- 30.1.2 Assessments will be marked using the University marking scales and conventions.
- 30.1.3 Schools have agreed 'Generic Assessment Descriptors' for undergraduate and taught postgraduate assessments. Marking criteria should be mapped against these. For further clarification staff and students should refer to their Head of School.
- 30.1.4 Where a potential error on an examination paper has been queried by a student during the examination, the Module Director/Tutor will be given any Examination Paper Query Form(s) completed by the student(s). These will be provided together with the examination scripts. The Module Director/Tutor must review the forms and determine the course of action. Refer to [section 12.15](#) regarding types of error and the suggested remedies.
- 30.1.5 Where special arrangements have been made to facilitate a student with a Learning Support Plan or exceptional circumstances, no further concession in marking the assessment will normally be made unless previously agreed by Disability Support and Inclusion team and the Academic Registrar.
- 30.1.6 Module Directors/Tutors or markers are expected to undertake the marking of the assignments electronically if the work is submitted electronically. Where assignments are submitted electronically, feedback is expected to be returned to students through the same system i.e., Moodle or Turnitin (refer to [section 11.6](#)).
- 30.1.7 Grades provided within the VLE (Moodle) are indicative until ratified by the School Assessment Board. All final and ratified grades must be entered into e:Vision via SITS (see [section 55](#)). Students must be made aware that any grades given via the VLE are provisional, until ratified by the School Assessment Board.
- 30.1.8 If academic misconduct is suspected during the marking process, then the marker must look at the University's resources which help with detection and explain what to do if it is identified. Refer to the 'Academic Misconduct Policy' (see [section 24](#)). For further information, please visit our [Managing and Report Academic Misconduct page](#).

30.2 Penalties when marking

- 30.2.1 Details for over-length work penalties and for late submission penalties are found in [section 32](#). Marking must be completed in the normal way. Penalties are applied after the marking has taken place and should be applied to the provisional **raw mark**. If a student incurs both an over-length penalty and a late submission penalty, the over-length penalty is applied first, and the late submission penalty is applied to the over-length adjusted mark.
- 30.2.2 In cases where a student submits work late that incurs a penalty mark of zero (i.e., a first attempt submitted after 5 working days from the submission date, or a late reassessment attempt), it is at the School's discretion to decide if the assessors will mark the work and provide feedback. There is no obligation to mark work and provide feedback for work submitted after 5 working days. If marked, the mark given would be for indicative feedback purposes only, and the student would retain the penalty mark of zero.
- 30.2.3 With regard to spelling, grammar or the presentation of work, the University's preferred approach is that assessment criteria should be drafted in such a way as to cover these issues. Such an approach is consistent with the University's expectations in respect of skills in communication as outlined in the Generic Assessment Descriptors. Marking will, therefore, respond to issues of spelling, grammar and presentation as part of the clarity, coherence, confidence and professionalism. The School should, however, adopt a consistent approach to identifying and supporting written communication skills and presentation skills for the benefit of students through formal feedback.
- 30.2.4 Schools are asked to deal with poor academic practice through normal marking and feedback procedures. Students requiring support developing effective academic practice will be offered detailed advice on how to improve the quality of their assessed work. Schools are asked to consider the early use of appropriate

formative activities, especially for Level 3 and 4 students entering higher education for the first time, so that all students have the opportunity to attempt some written work which will offer experience of academic writing and referencing outside their summative assessment.

- 30.2.5 Where students have not followed the instructions as expected in an examination, for example they have answered too many questions or they have not answered compulsory questions, refer to [section 12.18](#) for the protocol for marking.
- 30.2.6 Where a handwritten examination script is unreadable, the marker should refer to [section 12.19](#) for the protocol for marking.
- 30.2.7 If a student is asked to submit a new piece of work for their reassessment, and then submits exactly the same piece of original work without changes for reassessment, this would be classed as self-plagiarism and would be academic misconduct (refer to [section 24](#)).
- If the student is asked to improve on the original submission for their reassessment and they submit the same piece of work, the same mark would stand as it would be of no greater or lesser quality than the work they submitted the first time. This would therefore receive the same failure mark as the original.
- 30.2.8 Refer to [section 11.6.10](#) for information on the treatment of errors made during the submission process for example, submitting an incorrect file, or to the wrong Moodle site.

30.3 Calibration exercise

- 30.3.1 Calibration is considered to be good practice and so applying it to all situations would be advisable.
- 30.3.2 A calibration exercise **must** take place where:
- A marker is newly appointed to the institution.
 - A team of markers is involved in first marking on a module (except where all assignments are double marked).
- 30.3.3 The preferred process of calibration is as follows:
- The Module Director/Tutor selects at least 2 pieces of work at random from the module assignments submitted. These 2 scripts are independently marked by all tutors involved in the marking of the assignment.
 - All the markers meet to calibrate the marking and agree marks for each marked script, referencing the marking criteria and/or scheme. A brief rationale for the final agreed mark is clearly identified on the calibration sheet or equivalent. Agreeing the approach to feedback consistency is also good practice at this stage (see [section 33](#)).
- 30.3.4 A calibration exercise may be undertaken for other modules at the discretion of the Module Director/Tutor and Chair of the School Assessment Board.

30.4 Double marking (also known as second marking)

- 30.4.1 This includes:
- Double marking where the first marker's mark and comments are known to the second marker (sometimes referred to as 'seen double marking').
 - Double marking where the first marker's mark and comments are not known to the second marker (sometimes referred to as 'blind double marking').
 - The approach taken is one determined by the School.
- 30.4.2 Double marking is where all work for an assignment is marked by 1 or more other tutor(s), such as dissertations. First marker(s) complete the marking and provide the double marker(s) with access to all the student work (double marking does not need to wait until all first marking has been completed).
- 30.4.3 It is at the discretion of the School to determine which modules should be double marked. Associate Heads will be able to advise on the approach taken for the School. Where double marking takes place, individual marks can be amended after discussion between all markers, with a brief rationale recorded for any change.
- 30.4.4 The marking of performance-based assessments will be protected by either:
- The activity being joint marked simultaneously by at least 2 markers, or
 - Recording the activity in a way that can be appropriately double marked.

If parallel sessions are being held, then only 1 marker may be present in the room with another going from room to room to ensure parity of the marking process with regards to standards. In this case, double marking of a sample would be appropriate for quality assurance purposes. Where the activity presents no physical

evidence, such as a performance or OSCE examination, the activity will, where possible, be recorded using an appropriate medium.

- 30.4.5 A first marker may also request that a particular assessment script is double marked where they have some uncertainty or concerns.

30.5 Resolution of disagreements between first and second marker

- 30.5.1 The Module Director/Tutor will seek to make a judgement based on the evidence, drawing in additional marking or specialist expertise as necessary.
- 30.5.2 If the Module Director/Tutor is one of the markers involved in the original dispute, then an additional marker identified by the relevant Chair of the School Assessment Board must be used.
- 30.5.3 If the disagreement cannot be resolved at module level, the Chair of the School Assessment Board (SAB) will make a recommendation to the Board based on the evidence. The Chair of the SAB's decision will be final.

30.6 Internal moderation process

- 30.6.1 Where double marking does not take place, a process of internal moderation will be undertaken, on a sampling basis, to ensure first marking reflects the appropriate standard for the assessment and for the level of study. Internal moderators will be from within the subject discipline. Normally, the internal moderator will not have been a first marker for the assessment under scrutiny. However, where a group (2 or more) of markers is involved in the assessment, internal moderators may be drawn from that group to consider a sample first marked by others.
- 30.6.2 **Internal moderation is not a marking process:** internal moderators are neither marking the work nor providing additional feedback – they are providing a check that, in their judgement, the proposed assessments decisions are fair and equitable across the sample; as a guide this typically takes the form of the first mark awarded being within 5 marks either side (based on the 0-100 marking scale) regardless of grade borderlines.
- 30.6.3 First marker(s) complete the marking and provide the internal moderator with access to all the student work.
- 30.6.4 Internal moderators review a sample as follows:

Modules	Sample
For modules where calibration has taken place	<p>For assessment that does not contribute to the final award:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All academic fails <p>For assessment contributing to the final award:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All academic fails A selection across the classifications/bands based on 5% of the module cohort and with no less than 1 at each classification/band <p>For cohorts with 10 students or fewer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All assessments
For modules where calibration has not taken place	<p>For assessment that does not contribute to final award:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All academic fails <p>For assessment contributing to the final award:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All academic fails A selection across the classifications/bands based on 10% or the square root of the module cohort and with a minimum of 5 and no less than 1 at each classification/band <p>For cohorts with 10 students or fewer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All assessments
Reassessments	<p>If the original cohort went through the internal moderation process, then it is not necessary to internally moderate reassessments provided the marker is the same and the work is of a passing standard.</p> <p>All reassessment failures must be internally moderated.</p>

- 30.6.5 If the internal moderator(s) consider that marks are fair and equitable then no further action is required, all first marks stand, and standards are deemed internally assured. This will be recorded for internal and external purposes, with evidence of the process (including identification of student work sampled) provided to the external moderator(s) for the programme.

30.6.6 If the internal moderator(s) considers that there are clear patterns of difference between their judgement and the first marker's judgement, and standards may not be assured, then one of the following options should be followed:

Either:

- a) Agree a further sample to be internally moderated which, if it supports the trend, may lead to an agreed moderation of **all** marks in line with the findings of the internal moderator(s). If the review of the further sample does not support the trend, then **all** the first marks stand.

Only changing marks for the sample is unfair and inequitable for those within and out with the sample and should not be done.

Or:

- b) Agree that all work for that assignment be double marked and individual marks agreed between markers.

At each stage where changes are made, a brief rationale for the change should be evident on the relevant paperwork. In addition, the final agreed mark should be clearly identified.

30.7 External examiners

30.7.1 For information relating to external examiner refer to [section 49](#).

30.8 Process flowchart for marking, moderation, agreeing and releasing marks

