

## **04.11**

# **PROCEDURES FOR INTERNAL MODERATION OF ASSESSED WORK**

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### **1. Definitions**

#### **1.1 Internal Moderation**

Internal moderation of student work ensures the use of agreed marking criteria, comparability and equity of standards, consistency and fairness of marking. Internal moderation may be undertaken via double seen marking or double unseen marking.

#### **1.2 Internal moderation by sampling of the cohort**

Regardless of the assessment weighting, if the assessment is not individual in nature, and where a number of students will be using the same title and rubric and the cohort size is not too small, then internal moderation can be done via sampling. The sample should include sufficient examples from each of the classification bands if the size of cohort permits, that is, three fails, three 40s, three 50s, three 60s and three in the 70s and above, or 10% of the cohort size from across the classification bands, whichever is the greater number of samples. Where a large cohort is marked by a large team, it may be necessary to moderate a greater sample in order to ensure consistency of marking across the team. It is not necessary to include in the sample all fails and all firsts unless this is specifically requested by an external examiner. If a module has two external examiners (e.g. where there is an academic and a practitioner) then arrangements should be made for both external examiners to review the **same** sample of work.

#### **1.3 Internal moderation by double marking the whole cohort**

It may be appropriate for all work in a cohort to be internally double marked if the numbers on the module are low and sampling would not provide a sufficiently representative group of work.

#### **1.4 Double Seen Marking of Assessments**

A process which involves a second member of academic staff using their professional judgement to mark fully pieces of work with sight of the comments and marks of the first marker. It involves a second member of academic staff using their professional judgement to confirm the validity and equity of the marks for the cohort, taking into account the marks and comments of the first marker; and that

marking schemes have been properly applied. The second marker reviews the marking and may comment on how the work does (or does not) meet the learning outcomes. This process of internal moderation should be clearly visible and the comments of the second marker should be available for external examiners.

### **1.5 Double Unseen Marking of Assessments**

A process which involves a second member of academic staff using their professional judgement to mark fully pieces of work without sight of the comments or marks of the first marker. The process of internal moderation should be clearly visible and the comments of the second marker should be available for external examiners.

## **2. Aims of internal moderation**

2.1 The aims of internal moderation, in line with chapter B6 of the Quality Code are:

- (i) to provide a check that an assessment has been marked in line with the expressed aims and learning outcomes of the assignment/examination, and in terms of marking criteria;
- (ii) to provide assurance for students of fairness of marking and hence the equality of treatment of each student;
- (iii) to assure internal consistency of assessment within a module;
- (iv) to provide an approach to the comparability of standards across modules within a subject area.

## **3. Ensuring fairness and consistency**

3.1 As students are not permitted to appeal against academic judgement, it is important to ensure fairness and consistency through the internal moderation process. In addition the External Examiners will review the marking process and marks awarded. Both the overall results of assessment as well as each individual student's result will be further scrutinised at the meeting of the final Examination Board.

3.2 Borderline marks are not subject to routine special consideration at the level of individual assessment or module. Where a marker is uncertain which side of grade boundary an assessment should be

graded it is recommended that script is included in the moderation process for a final decision. At programme award level the university processes for raising the degree, diploma or certificate class, as detailed in the assessment regulations 04.1, apply.

- 3.3 Written examinations are subject to anonymous marking. Anonymity is lifted after the marking and moderation process is complete, and before examination boards take place. While anonymous marking is not always feasible for coursework, it is encouraged where appropriate and practicable. Performances and presentations are not subject to anonymous marking.
- 3.4 The University recognises the need for Schools and Examination Boards to conduct the assessment of students in a manner that is appropriate to individual disciplines and to the methods of assessment employed, although Schools are expected to adopt the following procedures in regard to internal moderation. Where programmes are subject to Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) regulations, these procedures may be adapted to meet their specific requirements:
  - (i) Student work and marks should be returned to students after internal moderation has taken place, though feedback could be returned sooner. This will normally be before the student work has been externally moderated and passed through an examination board, and therefore students should be advised that these marks are unconfirmed.
  - (ii) Performances and presentations are normally attended and assessed by two members of staff, one of whom is a subject specialist. The mark is agreed by both assessors and feedback is provided using set assessment criteria. If only one member of staff is available, the assessment will normally be recorded and moderated by another member of staff after the event.
  - (iii) Where a module is delivered by a franchised partner, if normal moderation processes do not lead to a satisfactory outcome, the script should be referred to the link tutor or moderator.
  - (iv) For all level 7 dissertations, and in some instances, at other levels, where the assessment usually carries all or most of the marks for the module, the assessment is of an individual nature with each student undertaking their own specific title, and where the cohort is

usually marked by a group of staff, then sampling is not appropriate and all students' work must be double unseen marked.

#### **4 Mark Variances between the First and Second Markers (double marking)**

- 4.1 These can be expected and arise naturally from independent academic judgement. Nevertheless, the External Examiners and the Board of Examiners Meeting must be given a single set of agreed marks.
- 4.2 Where differences in marks arise in cases where the assessments have been double marked they should be resolved through a discussion between the markers on the application of the assessment criteria. An average mark can only be utilised where the two marks are within the same degree classification and not more than 5% apart.
- 4.3 Should the above measures fail to resolve differences (between the two marks which cannot be resolved), a 3<sup>rd</sup> marker should be employed.
- 4.4 Only in very exceptional circumstances should unresolved differences between marks be presented to the External Examiners for finalisation.

#### **5 Double marking versus sampling in terms of changing marks**

When all work for a cohort is double marked then individual marks can be changed as a result of the internal moderation process by agreement between the markers. If the work is moderated by sampling then individual marks cannot be changed. However, if a sample is moderated which indicates that it would be appropriate to change marks for the whole cohort, then it is possible to change all marks in the cohort as a whole.

#### **6 Internal moderation of retrieved work**

Since internal moderation of student work will have been done for the first submission, further internal moderation for in-module retrieval is not required. For retrieval work all fails will be subject to internal moderation.

#### **7 Organisation of Internal Moderation**

- 7.1 The first marker will normally be the person who set the assessment or the module leader.
- 7.2. A clear record of which individual pieces of assessment have been moderated must be kept to ensure that the process can be audited.