Assessment Procedures

This document should be read in conjunction with the Academic Regulations.

1. Procedures for the setting of examination papers and other assignments

1.1 The preparation of each examination paper/assessment brief is the responsibility of the named module tutor(s).

1.2 The programme convener is responsible for ensuring that all proposed assessment tasks at Levels 5, 6 and 7 are made available to the external examiner(s) for comment. At Level 4 this requirement applies only to Foundation Degree programmes (including the University Foundation Year). The programme convener establishes a procedure whereby comments made by the external(s) are considered before the final drafts are agreed and published. As a general guideline, externals are typically given at least ten working days to scrutinize the proposed assessment tasks.

1.3 Approved copies of examination papers only should be submitted to Registry according to the published timetables. The master copy should be signed in at the Registry.

2. Procedures for the marking of papers and other assignments

2.1 Wherever it is practicable, assessment is conducted without any student's name or personal identity being revealed to the marker(s). All examination scripts are marked anonymously.

2.2 The work submitted for assessment on each module within a programme is marked by the module tutor *and/or a member of the teaching team for the module. Where this is not possible, marking should be undertaken by a marker with the appropriate subject/discipline expertise, ideally someone who could deliver the module.* After the work has been marked, it is subject to the process of moderation which should take place before any marks are released.

2.3 All assessments will go through the moderation process using a moderation sample. The size of the sample will vary according to the number of students. A guide is that the sample should include 10% of assessments across the whole range of marks on a module with a normal minimum of ten scripts. On collaborative programmes the size of the sample should be 25% in the first year of a partnership. Departments should use academic judgement on whether this can be decreased to the standard 10% in subsequent years. In line with the marking procedures, moderation follows the same anonymity principle and therefore students should not be informed as to whether their assessments have been included in the sample.

2.4 Where delivery of the module involves more than one member of academic staff, and/or where delivery takes place over a number of different delivery locations, the function of the moderation process incorporates the need to ensure that marking is consistent and fair across all deliveries. To achieve this, a sample from each marker and/or delivery site, in accordance with 2.3 will be taken, and moderated to ensure such fairness and consistency.

In order to prepare for moderation, it is expected that the process of marking scripts from such deliveries will ensure communication between marking team is carried out to ensure initial marking is being carried out to the required standards.

2.5 All major assignments such as dissertations and extended essays should be second marked internally.

2.6 In exceptional circumstances where the first and second markers are unable to agree on a mark, the process of third marking will be applied.

2.7   All assessments should be marked as normal, without regard to any knowledge of medical or other extenuating evidence as set out in the University's mitigating circumstances policy.

2.8   When any assessment has been moderated, this should be indicated on the appropriate form (Internal Moderation Form or Moderation Form for Collaborative Programmes – partnerships only). The purpose of this is to ensure that there is clear evidence for the external examiner that this has taken place.

2.9   It should be noted that the outcome of the moderation process should be a completed moderation form, a list of module marks and a sample or samples which will be used for further moderation depending on the nature of provision.

The list of marks for the module should represent a set of marks which are believed to be fair and equitable across all students taking that module. Where this is not the case, the moderation process should require further marking of all assignments, or assignments within particular bands, until such a list of marks can be produced.

The samples should represent a cross section of assessments across the range of marks as required by the next stage of moderation, and should be presented in a form that will enable such moderation to take place.

It is not the purpose of moderation to 'second' or 'third' mark student scripts, and therefore no individual student will have their mark changed as a result of moderation.

Glossary of key assessment terms:

Examination Script The document containing the answers produced by a student from a formal examination.

Marking The process by which a marker matches the student's work against an agreed set of learning outcomes, and associated assessment criteria and/or a marking scheme, and as a result allocates a mark (normally a percentage). The assessment is conducted without any student's name or personal identity being revealed to the marker. This is also known as anonymous marking.

Team Marking The process by which more than one marker jointly assesses a piece of work. The markers will agree a single mark as a result of this process. Examples of this may include a dance or theatre performance.

Moderation The process by which a moderator checks the self-consistency of the marker. The (internal) moderation process is a verification process and not re- marking. The same process applies to external moderation (also known as external examining).

Re-marking The process of re-marking a batch of assessments if moderation shows an unacceptable level of inconsistency in marking.

Adjustment All marks in a batch of assessments may be adjusted if the moderation process has shown that marks are consistent but adjudged to be too high or too low.

The following processes may apply in exceptional circumstances:

Second Marking The process by which a second marker matches the student's work against an agreed set of learning outcomes, and associated assessment criteria and/or a marking scheme, and as a result allocates a mark (normally a percentage). *The second marker has access to the mark allocated by the first marker.*

Double Marking The process by which a second marker matches the student's work against an agreed set of learning outcomes, and associated assessment criteria and/or a marking scheme, and as a result allocates a mark (normally a percentage). The second marker does not have access to the mark allocated by the first marker. This is also known as double anonymous marking.

Third Marking The process by which a third marker is used to arbitrate after second marking has shown a major discrepancy. This should produce a valid third mark and not consist of an average of the first two. Please note that the external examiner should not act as a marker.

3.   Programme Examination Boards

3.1   At the Programme Examinations Board the following will be available to all members:

(i)   composite lists of all marks contributing to a module mark;
(ii)   composite lists of all module marks;
(iii)   comments and recommendations for each student where appropriate.

3.2   Confidential minutes of meetings of Programme Examination Boards will be recorded by a member of staff authorised by the Academic Registrar.

4.   Retention of Assessment Material

4.1   Examination scripts will be retained for a period of 12 months following the point of award at any level. Examination scripts must not be returned to students but staff are free to give students feedback on their performance. Other written work may be returned to candidates – arrangements for the collection of coursework from tutors should be outlined in the module booklet.