

# Verification, Marking and Moderation Policy

## 2023/24



## Contents

Verification	3
Calibration	3
Marking	4
Second Marking	4
Moderation	5
Internal Moderation	5
External Moderation	5

Version	2.0
Owner	Assessment Management
Author	Assessment Management
Approved date	21 June 2023
Approved by	Academic Board
Last reviewed	June 2023
Date for review	June 2024
Changes in last review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New section on calibration exercises.</li><li>• Clarification of assessments not covered by the stepped marking scheme.</li><li>• Stepped marking scheme amended to replace 80 with 78.</li><li>• Retention information added in line with the University's Retention and Disposal Schedule.</li><li>• Guidance added on marking of very late submissions.</li></ul>



# Verification, Marking and Moderation Policy

This policy applies to all summative assessments delivered through undergraduate programmes (FHEQ Levels 3-6) and taught postgraduate programmes (FHEQ level 7).

## Verification

---

All assessments should be verified prior to publication to students. The verification process must:

- consider the consistency and appropriateness of the assignment task in relation to other units at the same level in the same discipline;
- check that the assessment is appropriate to the unit learning outcomes;
- ensure that marking criteria are appropriate.

Internal verification is carried out by a member of academic staff who does not directly contribute to that particular assessment. Verification may be carried out on an individual or group basis. A record of internal verification must be kept by the academic team and in accordance with the University's **Retention and Disposal Schedule**.

External verification should be carried out by the Subject External Examiner. The Examiner should consider all assignment briefs in order to confirm the currency, appropriateness and standards shown by the brief.

Once an assessment has undergone internal and external verification, the assignment brief need only be re-verified where there are changes to the assessment task.

## Calibration

---

Where practicable, Unit Leaders should ensure that a calibration activity (also referred to as standardisation in some departments) is undertaken prior to marking. Calibration activities are designed to build confidence in the consistency of marking and feedback across the team. Calibration involves independent marking of a limited number of shared pieces of work with a follow-up meeting to discuss the outcomes and any actions which the team would like to take as a result. This activity is particularly valuable if you have many markers grading the same assessment task, but it is equally effective for small teams marking many assessments between them. In addition, where there are historical concerns over the distribution of marks on a unit, this process gives confidence in the academic judgements being made.

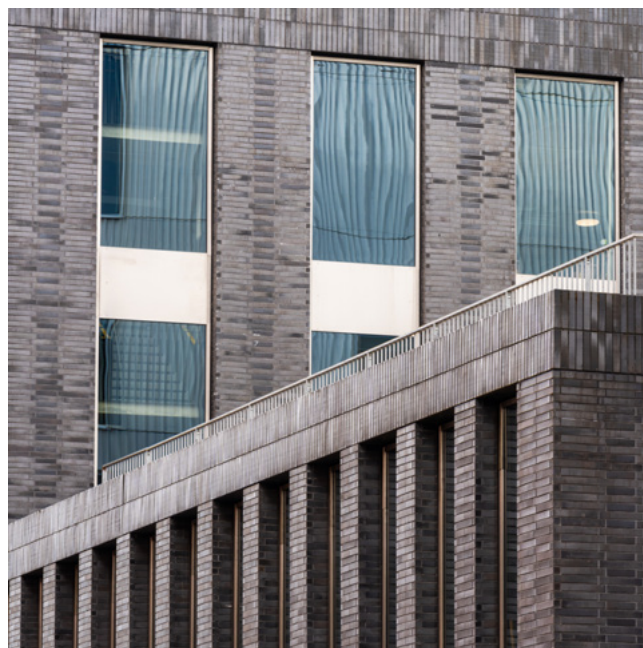


## Marking

Marking involves judging submitted assignments against the unit learning outcomes and the assessment criteria in the assignment brief, shared with students at the start of the unit delivery. It should include the provision of feedback in accordance with institutional policy and be completed within four working weeks. Final marks allocated to assessment elements which are assessed using marking criteria must align to the University's Stepped Marking Scheme (below).

Stepped marking is not applicable for all assessments. Where the final assessment mark is arrived at by adding up marks for individual sections, in line with the marking scheme, the assessment will be given the mark as calculated. Final unit marks are calculated as a weighted average of the relevant assessment marks and therefore won't align to the Stepped Marking Scheme.

Mark	UG Classification	PGT Classification
<b>95 – 100%</b>	Outstanding	Distinction
<b>90%</b>	Very High First	
<b>85%</b>	High First	
<b>78%</b>	Mid First	
<b>75%</b>	Low First	
<b>72%</b>	Marginal First	
<b>68%</b>	High 2.1	Merit
<b>65%</b>	Mid 2.1	
<b>62%</b>	Low 2.1	
<b>58%</b>	High 2.2	Pass
<b>55%</b>	Mid 2.2	
<b>52%</b>	Low 2.2	
<b>48%</b>	High Third	Marginal Fail
<b>45%</b>	Mid Third	
<b>42%</b>	Low Third	
<b>38%</b>	Marginal Fail	Fail
<b>35%</b>		
<b>32%</b>		
<b>28%</b>	Clear Fail	
<b>25%</b>		
<b>22%</b>		
<b>18%</b>	Very Poor Fail	
<b>15%</b>		
<b>12%</b>		
<b>8%</b>		
<b>5%</b>		
<b>2%</b>		
<b>0%</b>	Non-submission	



Where large numbers of students undertake the same assessment, the division of marking responsibilities across the teaching team is at the discretion of the Programme Leader. First and, where required, second marking should be carried out by designated members of the unit team and qualified colleagues, as determined by the Programme Leader.

Assessments submitted more than 28 days late should not be marked.

## Second Marking

Second marking of assignments is **only required** for tasks which exceed 30 credits in value (e.g. taught postgraduate independent study assessments).

Second marking can take three forms:

- **Independent marking:** when the second marker marks the assignment exactly as it was submitted, with no access to the marking and/or feedback comments provided by the first marker.
- **Team marking:** when two or more markers work together in making judgements about and providing feedback on submitted work. Markers should come to independent judgements before discussion wherever possible.
- **Seen marking:** when the second marker marks the assignment with access to the marks and feedback provided by the first marker. This form of second marking is rarely appropriate and may sometimes be confused with moderation.

If there is significant disagreement between first and second markers, then a marks calibration meeting should take place to ensure an agreed mark is reached.

## Moderation

---

Moderation of assessment is a key aspect of the University's processes for assuring the academic standards of its awards. It provides confirmation of the consistent application of clear and transparent assessment criteria and marking practice.

The moderation processes should not seek to amend or determine the marks for individual students. Where an internal moderator or External Examiner raises serious concerns about the standard and equitability of marking, changes may only be applied to the cohort as a whole.

As marks for reassessment tasks are capped at the threshold pass mark, internal and external moderation is only required for first submissions.

## Internal Moderation

---

Internal moderation involves the review of a sample of marks and feedback on assignment tasks to ensure that **marking criteria have been fairly, accurately and consistently applied** during first marking.

Internal moderation should be carried out by colleagues from the discipline, but not from the unit teaching team. It is not necessary for internal moderators to be experts in the topic being assessed. The internal moderator should review two assignments per grade band (1st, 2.1, 2.2, 3rd, Fail). Where marking has been carried out by more than one member of staff, the internal moderator should review sufficient assignment tasks to determine whether assessment has been conducted consistently by each team member.

Where the internal moderator raises concerns regarding the application and appropriateness of marking criteria within the initial sample, a larger sample shall be made available for further review. Internal Moderation may commence before all of the work for a cohort has been assessed.

Where, following review of a wider sample, an internal moderator retains concerns that assessment criteria have not been fairly, accurately and consistently applied, one of two remedies should be applied:

- An appropriate increase/decrease in marks applied to all marks across the cohort;
- or
- A full remark of work across the cohort is undertaken.

The most appropriate remedy should be agreed with the Unit Leader, and clearly recorded. An internal moderation feedback form is [available online](#).

Internal moderation should be completed within the turnaround time for release of provisional marks to students (normally 28 days).

## External Moderation

---

External moderation requires the review of a sample of marked submitted work by the Subject External Examiner. This is normally a representative set of work for two students at each level of study. Where the External Examiner raises concerns regarding the initial sample, a larger sample shall be made available to them for further review.

External Examiners should not be involved in the determination of marks for individual students. The purpose of this external moderation is to provide the programme team with an external, independent overview of their marking processes and the fairness and effectiveness of these processes.

Where, following review of a wider sample, the External Examiner retains concerns regarding the fairness and effectiveness of marking processes, marks for the whole cohort may be scaled up/down by an appropriate amount (usually no more than +/- 5%). The final decision on whether to scale marks should be taken by the relevant Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellor and confirmed at a subsequent Assessment Board.

External moderation should commence when an appropriate sample of student work is available and must be completed in good time ahead of the Assessment Board. An external moderation feedback form is [available online](#).



