



Second Marking and Moderation Policy

1. Principles

- The aims of second marking and moderation are to:
 - Provide a check that assessments have been marked in line with the expressed aims and learning outcomes of the unit / module / assignment / examination, and in terms of the agreed marking criteria
 - Ascertain comparability of standards across units within a subject area
 - Assure students of fairness of marking and hence the equal treatment of each student
- The work of Online students will – as much as possible – be treated in the same as that of taught students. It will also be moderated / second marked at the end of a semester.
- This policy has been checked against the QAA Quality Code Chapter B6.

2. Wales

The University of Wales provides the following guidelines for internal moderation:

2.1 Any policy should cover examination papers, class tests and continuous assessment (where the latter constitutes 50% or more of the total marks awarded for the module) which require the exercise of a substantial element of academic judgement by the marker and where the mark awarded by the first marker(s) falls into one of the following categories:

- First class/distinction marks
- Failing marks
- Any marking undertaken by persons other than members of the College's Academic Staff (full-time, part-time, associate and Online Learning tutors)
- Dissertations
- Rubric violations in examinations

2.2 Institutions should ensure that additional moderation to that under 1. above is undertaken such that the following minimum percentages of all examination papers or class tests that contribute towards the final award are moderated:

Number of students taking the assessment	Percentage of assessment to be moderated
Up to 5	100%
Up to 20	minimum of 40%
21-50	minimum of 30%
51-100	minimum 20%

The sampling should ensure that a full range of marks / degree classes is included and all borderline fails.

At level 4, the only work that is second marked will be work with a mark over 74, failing work and samples of work of exiting students. At levels 5 and 6 all work contributes to the final award and is therefore moderated.

3. Manchester

The University of Manchester specifies the following moderation samples:

- **Level 4**

1. 20% of all work (internally moderated, which includes 2. and 3. below)
2. A selection of failed work
3. Problem cases for which further advice is required
4. 25% of the work marked by teaching assistants and inexperienced markers

- **Level 5**

20% of all work, with a representative sample from each ten per cent band, which should include:

1. the highest scoring candidate, and the lowest if there are no fails
2. Problem cases for which further advice is required

Where there are fewer than ten candidates, all work will be moderated.

Internal moderators can recommend revised marks if their advice has been sought to help resolve problem cases. Cf. 5.3.

- **Level 6**

20% of all work, with a representative sample from each ten per cent band, which should include:

1. the highest scoring candidate, and the lowest if there are no fails
2. Problem cases for which further advice is required

Where there are fewer than ten candidates, all work will be moderated.

Internal moderators can recommend revised marks if their advice has been sought to help resolve problem cases. Cf. 5.3.

4. Practical outworking of moderation

4.1 At Spurgeon's College internal moderation is used as the main process to guarantee the quality of marking. The first marker's comment and grades will be known to the moderator via Moodle.

The first marker of any piece of work will normally be the person who taught the unit and who set the assessment. Moderators will normally be experts in the same subject area. Online tutors may be asked to moderate.

4.2 In the case of units marked by multiple markers, at least 20% of the work from each marker will be moderated.

4.3 The aim of moderation is to provide a quality check on the parity of marking across units. Moderators are not expected to change marks or provide comments on individual pieces of work, but they will enter a note on Moodle to indicate that moderation has taken place.

4.4 All moderators will be provided with:

- Samples of work
- Course unit outline
- Assessment questions
- Marking criteria (grade descriptors)
- Confirmation of how the first marking was done if team marked

4.5 At the discretion of the moderator, if the process of moderation raises concerns, the whole batch of work (or a proportion of it if the issue is more specific e.g. issues with borderline, fails or a classification bracket) may be second marked or the unit/ marks altered (in relation to agreed benchmarks and using appropriate guidelines) after due consultation with the first marker. Where moderation suggests that alteration of unit/

marks is required, this will be discussed between markers and the opinion of a third marker sought if required. The opinion of the third marker is decisive in the subsequent discussion. Only in exceptional circumstances will unresolved differences between marks be presented to the External Examiners for resolution.

4.6 First markers will normally annotate assessed work and enter comments on Moodle. The moderators will have access to the annotated versions.

4.7 Work that comes in after a unit has been moderated (late work and work from students with an extension) will be moderated, with all failed work second marked.

4.8 A programme of training for new moderators is in place.

4.9 Moderators should consider the following during moderation:

- Do the individual marks correspond with the comments made by the first marker?
- Has the full range of marks been used?
- Have the grade descriptors (marking criteria) been used?
- Is the feedback appropriate, and is there feed forward?
- Is the spread of marks appropriate?
- Are the boundaries between classes in the right place?
- Where multiple first markers are used, is the marking consistent across the markers?

5. Cases in which second marking takes place

5.1 All work for the master's courses and dissertations at all levels will be second marked.

5.2 The supervisor will not normally be one of the internal markers of a dissertation. After marking, master's dissertations will be forwarded to the relevant University for onward transmission to an external examiner for final scrutiny. The normal period for the internal marking of a dissertation is 6-8 weeks.

5.3 Individual assessments may be second marked at the discretion of the first marker. These are considered 'problem cases'.

Manchester defines 'problem cases' as any cases where the first marker requests an additional academic judgement. The terminology should not be understood to mean that the work contains poor practice. The first marker is merely asking a colleague to act as a sounding board. These are the only pieces of work where the moderator would actually scrutinize the text and academic content, because Manchester uses true moderation as opposed to second marking.

5.4 The Director of Studies and / or the Registry Team may request second marking of an individual student's work where there appears to be noticeable discrepancy in marks achieved across different units.

5.5 New members of staff who are inexperienced in marking will be given guidance as part of their induction programme. During their first year - as part of staff training - large samples of their marking will be second marked. An experienced second marker does not need to add comments or marks, but will use the opportunity to discuss the appropriate interpretation and application of marking criteria. This introduction process continues until all involved are satisfied that the new tutor has mastered the art of marking.

6 Pairing

The Director of Studies will draw up a list of moderators for each academic year. This list will take into account:

1. the importance of avoiding 'cosy pairs' and 'perpetual reciprocal pairs' between first markers and moderators
2. that a careful allocation of pairings of markers across years will enable consistency across units and across time
3. that online tutors and external subject experts can be used as moderators as well as second markers

Document control box			
Title	Second Marking and Moderation Policy		
Date approved	July 2011	Implementation date	
Next review date			
Version	7 (May 2017)	Supersedes version	6 (February 2016)
Approving body	Academic Board		
Quality Code consulted	B6		
Member of staff responsible	Director of Studies		