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 modules within a subject area
- Assure students of fairness of marking and hence the equality of treatment of each student

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. a selection of failed work
  2. problem cases for which further advice is required
  3. 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

- **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
  3. all borderlines (aggregate marks ending in 9)

Moderators may recommend changes to individual marks for problem cases, as well as global changes to the marks of a particular teaching assistant or inexperienced marker. Where there are fewer than five candidates at level 5 and 6, all work will be moderated.

4. Practical outworking
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 the database.

4.2 The first marker of any piece of work will normally be the person who taught the module and who set the assessment. Moderators will normally be experts in the same subject area.

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

4.4 At the discretion of the moderator, if the process of moderation raises concerns, the whole batch of work may be second marked or the unit/ module marks altered after due consultation with the first marker. Where moderation suggests that alteration of unit/ module 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.

4.5 First markers will normally write comments on assessed work and enter comments on the database. They can also add comments on the electronic copies of work. The moderators will have access to the annotated electronic copies. They also have the right to request the annotated hard copies, even after it has been returned to the students

4.6 Students on taught courses will submit the electronic copy of their work to an email address at the College which is overseen by the Assistant Registrar; Online Learning students submit via the website.

4.7 Any work that comes in after a module has been moderated (late work and work from students with an extension) will be second marked.

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

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 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.

5.4 The Academic Dean and / or the Academic Registrar may request second marking of an individual student's work where there appears to be noticeable discrepancy in marks achieved across different units / modules.

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 Academic Dean will draw up a list of moderators for each academic year. He 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 modules and across time
3. that external subject experts can be used as moderators as well as second markers
4. that Online tutors are involved

7. Spurgeon's Online [This paragraph still requires attention]
[In addition to random quality assurance checks and normal moderation procedures (under Wales, 1 above) at the end of each academic year, moderation checks take place on the marking of Online tutors. Through a random selection three pieces of marked work (across the low, middle and high ranges of the marking scale) will be forwarded by the Director of Online Learning to an internal tutor for moderation. Internal tutors are responsible for this moderation according to subject area. Moderation does not involve commenting on individual work or changing marks, but rather a quality check on parity of marking and the quality of the feedback.]

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Title	Second Marking and Moderation Policy		
Date approved	July 2011	Implementation date	May 2015