Procedure 012: Marking

1. Purpose and Scope

1.1 This procedure articulates ACM's requirements and processes for marking, feedback and moderation at undergraduate level.

2. Procedure

2.1 All assessment for students commencing programmes in 2017 will now be assessed and marked within Canvas. This document outlines the procedures and processes when marking assessments and therefore should be viewed prior to assessment taking place. Its contents may also prove useful when setting up assignments.

2.2 The marking procedure has three stages:

i) The marking stage involving one or more examiners in marking assessments, mark checking and writing feedback. This phase allows for adjustments to marks to be made.

ii) The moderation stage which checks for consistent application of the marking phase by reviewing marks and feedback for a sample of assessments, and;

iii) External moderation stage, conducted by the External Examiner on the same sample of assessments, to provide further quality assurance of the marking phase.

Standardisation

2.3 In addition to the assessment brief, Module Leaders (ML) will offer standardisation guidance to marking teams. The stage at which standardisation is undertaken will be dependent on the assessment mode. This should be agreed with the Programme Manager (PM) and given in advance of the marking period commencing.

2.4 This procedure must not alter the grading criteria or any other information given to students in the assessment brief.

2.5 It is good practice to mark a small number of submissions as examples with the marking team.

First Markers

2.6 Any member of staff engaged in teaching a module should expect to be involved in first marking. Where required, additional markers will be agreed by the PM before passing to the

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relevant Senior Programme Officer (SPO) to ensure that all marking can be successfully carried out within the specified marking period.

2.7 First markers will be assigned the students' work that needs marking by the relevant PM. SPOs will inform markers of their allocation.   An email will be sent containing the number of students and the date for completion of the marking.

2.8 Markers must keep to the marking times designated by the validating institution. Specific instructions are given in the marking guidelines.

2.9 The relevant SPO will list the student ID on the Moderation form together with the relevant markers initials.

Marking Live Assessments

2.10 Live assessments such as presentations often require more than one marker to be present. Having more than one person assess the same student/group ensures that marks are secure and that students receive comprehensive feedback. This is especially useful where interdisciplinary modules are being taught, where different members of staff hold particular expertise (e.g. finance and tour management).

2.11 In these circumstances:

> i) Any documents that support the students work (e.g. pitches, composition, presentation slides etc.,) should be viewed ahead of the actual assessment taking place.

> ii) Each marker assesses the students independently noting comments as the students perform. Each marker notes down a provisional mark. A briefing should be held ahead of the live assessment taking place during which ML and markers can view any documents students have submitted. ML should brief the marking team of the main points. It would be good practice to discuss the rubric and grading scale at this point.

> iii) After all assessments are completed, markers compare comments against the grading scale and learning outcomes and agree the final grade. Markers should note where grades are being given per group or where individual grades are being applied. This activity forms the standardisation of marks.

> iv) Each marker enters their comments into Canvas. Students receive two (2) full sets of feedback. "I agree with the first marker" is **not** acceptable as feedback.

v) Markers should confirm between them who is to enter the agreed mark into Canvas and ensure this is done in a timely manner. This involves selecting the mark, and pasting the additional comments to the chosen mark.

Multiple Markers and using Canvas

2.12 Within Canvas it is possible to set up an assignment to allow multiple markers[1] to grade a student's work and create draft or provisional grades for an assignment. This functionality will be used to enable the ACM marking process.

2.13 Once an assignment has been set as a moderated assignment, the moderated assignment cannot be changed once submissions have been received.

Double Marking - written work

2.14 Double marking is used across a number of modules at Level 6. It occurs simultaneously, the student receives two full sets of feedback on their work but one overall grade.

2.15 Importantly the standardisation process takes place after marking has occurred;

i) Markers undertake their allocation of marking independently.

ii) Each marker enters their comments into Canvas.

iii) Once all marking has been completed markers meet to agree their marks and to ensure comments made reflect the grade awarded and the learning outcomes. The grade agreed is entered into Canvas.

iv) For dissertations/projects it is normal to be marked by the student's supervisor and one other marker. Any research project/dissertation which is marked by the supervisor, must be double marked blind.

Awarding a grade (percentage)

2.16 Markers must use the grading scale to award their marks. The appropriate awarding body's scale will be included in the marking guidelines given with the module marking pack.

2.17 In the grading scale / rubric select the description that best matches the work. More specific guidance and diagrams will be given within marking guidelines.

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[1] Within Canvas markers are referred to as 'Reviewers'.

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2.18 Adjust the score to refine the grade (the upper or lower end of the range).

2.19 Half marks should not be awarded (e.g. 54.5) or marked on a grade boundary (e.g. 39%, 49%). Work that falls just below/above a marking threshold should be graded sufficiently clear so that marks are unlikely to be adjusted (e.g. 38% rather than 39% or 52% rather than 50/51%.

Feedback

2.20 Feedback is an integral part of the learning process. Constructive feedback should be added to the comments box. Markers should begin by making an encouraging opening comment such as:

> "This is a nice piece of work…"
> "You have chosen some very pertinent themes"

2.21 Comments on work should be written under the following headings;

1. Best features of the work:
   - "Exceptional / Outstanding / Excellent / Good job on…"
   - "Terrific work on…"
   - "I really enjoyed…"
   - "The strongest part of the work is…"

2. Areas to improve:
   - "...was not successful, and could be improved by..."
   - "...did not meet the brief."
   - "...displayed a limited range of knowledge / skill..."

3. To take forward into future assessments:
   - "One suggestion would be…"
   - "Don't forget to…"
   - "Next time try to…"
   - "Continue to work on..."
   - "Read or refer to.."

2.22 Feedback and language used should be appropriate to the level being studied/marked. All comments should feed forward into the next assignment. Adjectives such as outstanding and exceptional should reflect work of 80%+, excellent for 70%+ very good, good as per the scale. Feedback should always close with a positive comment.

Students whose work has failed (below 40%) should receive extensive feedback. Feedback should focus on what needs to be done to ensure they pass when the work is resubmitted.

2.23 Comments made should focus on the work, not on the student.

2.24 Good feedback is constructive and leads students to ways they can improve their knowledge, skills and performance.

2.25 Speedgrader in Canvas allows the use of video and audio feedback, as well as annotating written work. This way of giving feedback is considered to be best practice, it is thought that students respond more favourable to feedback given this way. Specific instructions on how to do this are given in the marking guidelines.

2.26 Some examples of feedback which should be avoided are as below:

- Unfocused comments:
    - "Confused"
    - "Generally sound"
    - "Adequate"
    - "Careful how you begin your sentences"
- Dismissive, sarcastic comments:
    - "Did you experiment to find all this?"
    - "Most of this is straight out of the book."
- Comments that 'pass the buck':
    - "You need help with your English."
    - "See an academic skills advisor."
- Comments sending mixed messages:
    - "Text is based on only a few readings and not on your own thinking."
    - "Follow your own advice."

2.27 Once the marking has been completed, the ML will allocate a moderation sample and complete the relevant sections of the internal moderation form**.**

2.28 Module leads are expected to comment on the grades awarded, the spread of grades, the quality of the submissions they have marked as well as highlighting any areas of concern.

2.29 Once completed this should be immediately passed to the nominated moderator.

2.30 Any work identified that does not follow the format above will be returned for re-marking. No additional time will be given for this.

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Moderation

2.31 Moderators normally have one week to complete the moderation process, however this period may be shorter. An independent moderator or moderation team scrutinises the marks awarded on a sample basis to verify that the marks and feedback are appropriate and consistent in relation to the assessment criteria for the particular piece of work and the FHEQ level.

2.32 Moderation should represent 10% of the work submitted across the grade boundaries, with a minimum of seven (7) pieces of work. Specific instructions of how to select the work for moderation are given on the form itself.

2.33 Moderators will collate moderation forms completed by the ML and after scrutiny will complete one document that will include comments on

1. The marks awarded across the cohort;
2. Quality of feedback given;
3. Any issues arising either from the marking or teaching of the module;
4. Other comments arising (for example assessment mode).

2.34 These reports will be made available to external examiners should they require access to them.

2.35 Moderation will be carried out for all summative assessed work. Moderation of each assessment component may be undertaken separately, or all assessed work relating to a module may be moderated together.

2.36 Moderators will be expected to complete the moderation report form by the set date by the PM within the week - once completed this should be forwarded together with the marks for the module to the PM and relevant SPO.

Adjudication

2.37 A process whereby an adjudicator determines the final mark in cases when the first marker lead and ML cannot agree. The adjudicator takes into account all available evidence, including the marks awarded and comments made by the module lead.

2.38 Where a moderator disagrees with the feedback/grade given by the first marker/ML, the moderator needs to contact the first marker/ML to discuss.

2.39 If the disagreement in marks is less than 5%, the marker and moderator can agree a new grade and update Canvas. Where the difference in grade is greater than 5%, over a

grade boundary, or an agreement cannot be met, the PM will act as an adjudicator to facilitate an agreed grade.

Student Progression and Achievement Board (SPAB)
2.40 It is important to note that all marks are provisional until they have been ratified by a Student Progression and Achievement Board (SPAB) and Finalist Exam Board (FEB).

3. Responsible Parties

3.1 The Procedure lead is responsible for the cyclical monitoring and review of the policy and procedure in liaison with the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager. The Marking Procedure lead is:

- Group Head of Education

3.2 Decisions and appropriate actions in support of the implementation of the Procedure will be authorised by the following designated staff:

- Head of Quality and Student Experience
- Programme Managers
- Module Leaders
- Tutors

4. Related Documentation
- Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy
- Internal Moderation Form
- Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policy

5. Date of Approval and Next Review

Version: 1.0

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Approved by: Academic Board

Next Review: 01 Aug 2019

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