

Guidance for Second Marking and Moderation Procedures for Summative Assessment (Healthcare Programmes)

This guidance is intended to assist staff to meet the University's regulations on moderation procedures as in the Academic Quality Handbook and should be read in conjunction to the University policy.

Second marking and moderation

Moderation is a process intended to assure that an assessment outcome is fair and reliable and that assessment criteria have been applied consistently through the sampling of assessed work. It applies to both the first and second diet of assessments.

Second marking is a process by which assessed work is either double or double blind marked. For double marking, the second marker assigns a mark to the assessment having seen the annotations and/or mark awarded by the first marker. In the double blind marking, two markers each assign a mark independently without conferring or seeing the marks/comments of the other marker during the initial marking process.

The moderation process requires the second marking (double or blind double marking) of a sample of all examination scripts. The sample should contain all borderline fails (assessments attaining a CGS grade E1) in addition to a representative 10% of the remaining assessments (minimum of 10). Where a class contains fewer than 20 students the sample should contain 50% of the assessments. The representative sample should include a range of CGS grades. In addition, a sample of coursework that individually contributes more than 30% to the course grade should also be second marked.

The moderation process for the healthcare programmes is normally sampled second/double marking which involves one or more first markers marking all students' assignments for a component of assessment, and a moderator reviewing these marks including all fails and a range of CGS grades for the specified proportion of students' assignments.

Assessments that have a clearly defined correct answer and that contain no subjective elements (i.e., single best answer questions) do not need to be second marked but all such assessments must be checked to ensure the accuracy of the mark/grade. The written coordinator should review item analysis statistics to check for any anomalies e.g. mis keyed correct answer.

The written/course coordinators are responsible for organising and supervising the moderation processes for the assessments for their courses. They should arrange for one or more member(s) of academic staff (normally with of experience of marking or having undergone training) to undertake the moderation activities for each assessment. The moderator should not be a first marker for the assessment. However, if two or more examiners teach the same course and mark different scripts, they can moderate one another's marking. The written/course coordinators should also ensure that those involved in the marking and moderation process understand how the process will operate, so that they have a shared understanding of how the moderation process will be applied.

Process for agreeing marks

Where a number of different markers are involved in marking an assessment there should be a discussion between markers to outline the marking criteria to be used and agree a marking scheme. The process by which the mark is agreed should be explained i.e. is this by discussion or numerical average?

The moderator should review the first markers' marks and comments for the sample, and check that marking for the sample is consistent with the relevant common marking scheme, grade descriptors and marking criteria. If the moderator is not satisfied that the marks are appropriate, they should discuss them with the marker(s) concerned and agree an action. The action agreed should be applied to the entire cohort, not just the sampled assessments. For example, if concerns were identified about the accuracy or consistency of marking for one question on an examination paper, the relevant parts of the assessment for the entire cohort should be remarked.

If there is no agreement between the two markers, the sample must be reviewed by a second moderator, organised by the written/course coordinator. The second moderator should independently review the relevant assessments and the first marker's and moderators' marks and comments, and to seek to resolve the disagreement (and, if necessary, to determine appropriate outcomes for the assessment).

Recording of the process

The outcome of the moderation/second marking process must be recorded showing clearly the rationale for any decisions taken for the purposes of the relevant examiners' meeting.

The report should include the form of moderation and particulars of sampling, where marking differences have been discussed, details of the difference including raw marks and the method and rationale by which the agreed marks were arrived at including any adjudication.

The role of external examiners

The moderation process takes place before review by External Examiners. External Examiners should have the opportunity to view samples of all assessed work. If the assessment cannot be easily viewed by the External Examiner the process by which the assessment has been graded should be made available to the External Examiner.

External Examiners should be asked to comment on the general standard of marking and assessment and may recommend an increase or decrease in all grades for a particular assessment. Any actual change to grades, however, needs the approval of the final Examiners' Meeting. External Examiners may not make isolated changes to any student's grades.