Marking, Moderation and Feedback Policy

Introduction

1. This Policy sets out the approach to marking, moderation, and feedback practices at Northeastern University London (the University). It should be read in conjunction with AQF7 Academic Regulations for Taught Awards - Part C, and Assessment Regulations for Taught Awards, and is intended to inform staff and students as well as individuals from outside the University, such as External Examiners.

2. The Policy applies to:

    2.1. Undergraduate level

    2.2. Postgraduate level

    2.3. Work related learning programmes

    2.4. Mobility programmes

    2.5. Pathway programmes

    2.6. Diploma

3. Any exemptions or variations to this Policy need to be formally approved using the Variance to Academic Regulation Form. Otherwise, all marking, moderation and feedback should be carried out in accordance with the principles and procedures set out in this Policy.

Marking

Marking Principles

4. The marking and recording of student results should be consistent, fair, accurate, equitable, reliable, and transparent, and an audit trail must be maintained.

5. This Policy specifies that work should be marked anonymously wherever possible in order to provide reassurance that marking is fair. Similarly, decisions on progressions and awards must be made anonymously. The Anonymous Marking Policy can be found in Assessment Regulations for Taught Awards.

6. Heads of Faculty (HoF)/Programme Directors (PD) or their nominees will assign markers and internal moderators to all summative assessments, indicating where instances of double marking are applicable.

7. New members of faculty involved in the summative assessment of student work should receive a copy of this Policy, and all course information (Course Descriptors, Course Syllabus, Assessment Briefs, Assessment Criteria and Marking Schemes).

8. All assessment elements must be marked, and the mark entered on to the Mark Sheet in accordance with the Common Assessment Mark Scheme. Full account should be taken of the University's generic marking and classification criteria to help ensure accurate and consistent marking of assessments by markers and moderators.

9. Definitions of the types of marking are listed in the Assessment Regulations for Taught Awards.

10. Once summative marking is completed, Mark Sheets are kept by Registry.

11. Where markers feel that an assessment or examination script contains any inappropriate content, they should contact the HoF/PD or Registry, who will decide whether any further action needs to be taken.

Double Marking

12. Double marking of assessment elements must take place for all Level 6 and Level 7 dissertations and final projects.

13. Double marking must be carried out by a marker with appropriate academic knowledge and experience.

14. When double marking, both markers assess the work according to the defined Assessment Criteria and Marking Scheme (where appropriate) with the second marker seeing the first marker's mark and feedback. The work and marks awarded should then be discussed so that both markers can arrive at an agreed mark and enter it onto the Mark Sheet.

15. The marks and comments of all markers and the agreed final mark must be kept for reference by the Course Leader and submitted to the External Examiner where such works form part of the External Examiner sample.

16. Assessments that have been double marked will not be subject to internal moderation.

Marking Formative Assessments

17. There is no requirement for anonymity in formative assessments.

18. When marking formative assessments, feedback should be focused on helping students to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding required, be helpful in identifying areas for improvement, and be appropriate for the type of assessment.

19. Formative assessment takes many forms, and courses can include opportunities for self-assessment, peer-assessment, and instructor feedback (whether in timetabled teaching or office hours). Where formative assessment includes an indicative mark, these marks do not contribute to an overall mark for a course, level, or award. Where students are given a mark for formative work, a qualitative indication of where in

the range 'First/Upper Second/Lower Second/etc.' a piece of work lies will be given, rather than a precise numerical mark (unless this is appropriate, as e.g., for a maths exercise). The mark will be communicated to students at the time feedback is given, for it constitutes an element of that feedback.

Marking Summative Examinations

20. Examination scripts are not routinely shared with students and the marker typically does not need to write extensive feedback on individual scripts except insofar as it may help to show how marking decisions were made.

21. Markers are required to write factual annotations on examination scripts. If there are no annotations on a page, markers will need to initial it to indicate that it has been marked.

22. If a marker is unable to read a script, and the HoF/PD confirms it is illegible, the student will be asked to dictate the script for transcription. Full details of the procedure for dealing with illegible scripts can be found in Assessment Regulations for Taught Awards.

23. If a marker finds that a script is missing, or that a script is conspicuously incomplete, they should inform the Deputy Head of Registry (Assessment) immediately so that a check can be initiated with the invigilators, Academic Services, and any other markers immediately.

24. Copies of the Internal Examiner Reports (generic comments on the cohort's performance) are shared with students and, where relevant, with the External Examiner for the moderation process.

25. There is no requirement to show on students' work that second or double marking or moderation has taken place. However, a clear record of the nature and extent of second or double marking or moderation should be submitted to and kept by the Head of Registry and provided to the External Examiner.

Marking Oral Assessments

26. Oral assessments should ideally be double marked. All oral assessments should be recorded for moderation purposes. Oral assessments that are at Levels 6 or 7, and worth 25% or more, should be double marked. Where opportunities for effective double marking/moderation are limited, the weighting given to this form of assessment should be carefully considered. For further information, please see AQF7.

Marking for Students With Specific Learning Differences or Difficulties

27. As outlined in the Student Disability Policy, students with specific learning differences or difficulties (SpLDs) can be at a considerable disadvantage in a text-based environment.

28. Upon the recommendation of Student Support and Development (SSD), students with evidence of an SpLD are able to request reasonable adjustments.

Moderation

Moderation Policy

29. Moderation is a process intended to ensure that an assessment outcome is fair and reliable, and that the Assessment Criteria have been applied consistently, and that feedback to students is appropriate and consistently provided.

30. Moderation must be carried out by a moderator with appropriate academic knowledge and experience.

31. Internal and external moderators are not required to produce comments on individual pieces of work.

32. Where there is a wider issue over the soundness of an assessment and/or substantial queries raised concerning the consistency of marking leading to the re-marking of the assessment for the whole cohort, the Chair of Progression and Award Board must be informed. The Chair of Progression and Award Board will consult with the Academic Registrar and the External Examiner(s) to agree any actions necessary before the Progression and Award Board.

Moderation Principles

Internal Moderation

33. Internal moderation must be carried out on a sample of all marked work for all summative assessment excluding work that has been double marked. The Course Leader must ensure that samples of work from all markers involved in assessing a course are moderated.

34. For internal moderation, the size of the sample of work submitted for each summative assessment will be a minimum of 10% or at least five pieces of work – whichever is the greatest figure.

35. The moderation sample must be properly representative and include borderline cases between each band of award classification (including pass/fail), and an example of a first-class piece of work and a clear Fail, if applicable.

36. At the conclusion of the internal moderation process, the internal moderator should indicate on the internal Moderation Record for each piece of work included in the sample that they have read the work and that the range of marks awarded in the sample are confirmed. They should also note any necessary action points relating to fairness and reliability of the assessment outcome, consistent application of the Assessment Criteria, and appropriateness and consistency of feedback to students. The moderator should then sign this Record.

37. Where an internal moderator identifies a discrepancy in marking (e.g., with an individual mark, a subset of the sample, or the entire sample), their consultation with the marker must consider the impact of this on the entire cohort. This may require a review of a wider sample of work. If an agreement can be reached, the marks should be adjusted accordingly, and a written record of the process made.

38. If an agreement cannot be reached, the sample must be referred to a third marker. The third marker may arbitrate on the marks, scrutinising a wider sample if necessary. The judgment of the third marker will prevail.

39. The internal moderator's comments regarding the sample of work selected must be retained by Registry for reference and submitted to the External Examiner.

External Moderation

40. External Examiners are asked to moderate the marking of internal markers to ensure that marking is accurate, consistent, fair, equitable, reliable, transparent, and in line with national standards for the provision.

41. External Examiners are asked to moderate the marking of internal markers for courses at FHEQ Level 5 and Level 6. External Examiners must not be asked to arbitrate or moderate disagreements between internal markers/moderators, or be used as a third marker.

42. In order to carry out the role effectively, External Examiners must have available to them:

   42.1. A representative sample of marked student work for all summative assessments.

   42.2. A sample of any recorded performance-based assessments for the purposes of external review.

   42.3. The Course Descriptor, relevant assessment brief(s), Assessment Criteria, and marking schemes.

   42.4. A copy of the Moderation Record for each piece of work.

42.5. Completed mark sheets with the moderation sample highlighted for ease of reference, a copy of which must be kept by Registry for reference.

43.　It is desirable that External Examiners have access to the course VLE.

44.　Where the external moderation of assessment raises substantial queries concerning the standards of consistency of marking, the External Examiner has the right to recommend to the Progression and Award Boards a change to element marks and, where appropriate, course marks.

Feedback

Feedback Policy

45.　This is the University's Policy on feedback.

46.　Students must be provided with feedback opportunities for all assessments. Where necessary (e.g., written examinations), this feedback can be generic and should be accessible to all students who have taken the assessment, via the University's VLE.

47.　Students should receive feedback on their performance and how they have met the learning outcomes. Students should be given clear explanations as to where they have performed well and areas where further development would be advisable.

48.　Students should be told when and in what form they will receive feedback.

49.　Students can expect to receive feedback on all summative coursework within 28 calendar days of the submission date. The 28-day deadline does not apply to work submitted late.

Feedback for Formative Assessments

50.　Students receive formative feedback on their formative work. This yields immediate developmental feedback. Faculty are able to tailor the feedback to suit the level at which the students are performing, and this enables students to explore their own arguments and comprehension of the subject at hand.

Feedback for Summative Assessments

51.　For assessment elements which are assessed during the programme or course, including projects and written assignments, feedback must be returned within 28 calendar days of submission.

52. Exceptionally, when this is not achievable (for example, due to staff absence), Registry will notify students as soon as is reasonably possible of the revised date and the reason behind the change.

Feedback for Summative Examinations

53. For mid-term summative written examinations, students typically receive individualised feedback within 28 calendar days of the date of the examination.

54. For other summative written examinations, students typically receive feedback in the form of an Internal Examiner Report, where students are provided with indications of the main areas where the cohort performed well and the main areas where further development would be advisable.

55. Internal Examiner Reports are published on the course pages of the VLE for students to review.

56. Individual feedback should be made available on request to students who, for example, are required to re-sit examinations.

Marking, Moderation and Feedback Timeline

57. To ensure that all staff are able to meet the feedback policy requirements, the following timeline should be adhered to:

    57.1. Marking and internal moderation = 21 calendar days

    57.2. Administrative processing and quality checks = 7 calendar days

58. Faculty will be given a deadline for which the moderated marks must be returned to Registry.

59. If, due to unforeseen circumstances, the moderated mark deadline is going to be missed, Registry must be informed at the earliest opportunity so the students can be informed of the delay. A new deadline should be proposed, which would normally be expected to be within 7 calendars of the original deadline.

Further Advice

60. For more information relating to the Marking, Moderation and Feedback Policy, please contact Registry.

Version History

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Referenced documents	AQF7 Academic Regulations for Taught Awards; Assessment Regulations for Taught Awards; Variance to Academic Regulation Form; Assessment Handbook; Assessment Regulations for Taught Awards; Generic Grade Marking Scale and Criteria; Internal Moderation Record; Internal Examiner Report; Student Disability Policy.			
External Reference Point(s)	UK Quality Code Theme: Assessment			

Annex A: Common Assessment Marking Scheme

Common Assessment Marking Scheme - Undergraduate

1st Class	Upper Second Class	Lower Second Class	Third Class	Fail
100	68	58	48	35
90	65	55	45	20
85	62	52	42	5
80				0
75				
72				

Common Assessment Marking Scheme - Postgraduate

Distinction		Merit		Pass		Fail	
100	Highest possible distinction	68	High merit	58	High pass	48	High fail
90	Extremely high distinction	65	Mid merit	55	Mid pass	42	Mid Fail
85	Very high distinction	62	Low merit	52	Low pass	35	Clear Fail
80	High distinction					20	Fail
75	Mid distinction					5	Almost no attempt
72	Low distinction					0	No attempt Late Submission