

# Marking, Moderation and Feedback Policy

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## 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, Part C: Assessment Regulations](#), 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 Taught level
  - 2.3. Work related learning programmes
  - 2.4. Mobility programmes
  - 2.5. Pathway programmes
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 AQF7 Part C.
6. Associate Director for Teaching and Learning 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 Categorical Marking Scheme as

detailed in AQF7 Part C Assessment Regulations. Full account should be taken of the University's [Generic Grade Criteria](#) to help ensure accurate and consistent marking of assessments by markers and moderators.

9. The Categorical Marking Scheme and definitions of the types of marking can be found in AQF7 Part C Assessment Regulations.
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 Associate Director for Teaching and Learning in their Faculty, who will decide whether any further action needs to be taken.

### Marking Formative Assessments

12. There is no requirement for anonymity in formative assessments.
13. 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.
14. 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).
15. 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

16. Examination scripts are not routinely shared with students however the markers should still provide minimal annotation on the scripts to support the internal and external moderation process. If there are no annotations on a page, markers will need to initial it to indicate that it has been marked. For examinations that have taken place online, markers need to confirm that they have read the whole script and provide generic annotation, identifying what was done well and what areas could have been improved.
17. If a marker is unable to read a script, and the Associate Director for Teaching and Learning confirms it is illegible, the student will be asked to

dictate the script for transcription. The Marking Illegible Scripts Policy can be found in AQF 7 Part C.

18. 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.
19. 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.
20. 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

21. 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 30% or more, should be double marked.
22. Where opportunities for effective double marking/moderation are limited, the weighting given to this form of assessment should be carefully considered.
23. For oral assessments at Levels 4 or 5, less than 30% of the course mark, have one marker. All of these oral assessments are recorded and a sample is moderated.
24. Sample oral assessments at all levels must be moderated by the External Examiner.
25. For further information, please see AQF7 Part C.

### Marking for Students With Specific Learning Differences or Difficulties

26. 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.
27. Upon the recommendation of Student Support and Development (SSD), students with evidence of an SpLD are able to request reasonable adjustments.

### Moderation

## Moderation Policy

28. 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.
29. Moderation must be carried out by a moderator with appropriate academic knowledge and experience.
30. Internal and external moderators are not required to produce comments on individual pieces of work.
31. 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

32. 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.
33. 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.
34. 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. All borderline fails must be included in the moderation sample.
35. 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.
36. 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.

37. 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.
38. 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

39. 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.
40. External Examiners are asked to moderate the marking of internal markers for courses at all Levels and are sent the same sample that has been internally moderated.
41. 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 Internal 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 (excluding the study break periods for the work related learning programmes) 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 (excluding the study break periods for the work related learning programmes).
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 (excluding the study break periods for the work related learning programmes).

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 VLE for students to review, once results have been published.
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 must be adhered to:
  - 57.1. Marking and internal moderation = 21 calendar days
  - 57.2. Administrative processing and quality checks = 7 calendar days
58. On occasion, due to the requirements for student mobility across Northeastern's global campuses, the marking and moderation timeline might be shortened. Staff will be made aware of this shortened timeline at the earliest opportunity so work can be managed accordingly.
59. Faculty will be given a deadline for which the moderated marks must be returned to Registry.
60. 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 seven calendars of the original deadline.

## Further Advice

61. For more information relating to the Marking, Moderation and Feedback Policy, please contact [Registry](#).

## Version History

<b>Title: Marking, Moderation and Feedback Policy</b>				
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Referenced documents	AQF7: Academic Regulations, Part C: Assessment Regulations; Variance to Academic Regulation Form; Assessment Handbook; Generic Grade Criteria; Internal Moderation Record; Internal Examiner Report; Student Disability Policy.			
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