

LTC12D098

Title: Proposals relating to Moderation and Double Marking in the NAM
Author: Dr Adam Longcroft (Academic Director of Taught Programmes)
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Issue

Proposals from the Working Group on Internal Moderation and Double Marking for revised processes/definitions etc. under the New Academic Model. This paper was considered at TPPG on 13 March 2013. The Working Group, which was Chaired by Sara Connolly and includes cross-Faculty representation, has been working over the past 15 months to develop a revised set of regulations and guidance. This paper comprises a summary of their recommendations.

Recommendation

LTC members are asked to consider and formally approve the recommendations contained in the paper.

Resource Implications

No significant resource implications are envisaged, though there will be changes to existing procedures and requirements.

Risk Implications

Many of the recommendations contained will have a 'risk' element for the University in the sense that decisions about policy issues will have an impact on processes and outcomes for students, and the student experience. However, the risks involved in this particular document are minimal. The Working Group's proposals will reduce the levels of 'risk' surrounding the marking and moderation of coursework by setting in place more consistent, cross-University practices and expectations.

Equality and Diversity

It is not envisaged that any of the recommendations contained in the report will impact on groups with protected characteristics.

Timing of decisions

This paper contains a new set of regulations for approval by LTC at its 20 March 2013 meeting. They will be implemented as part of the NAM.

Further Information

Contact: Dr Adam Longcroft, Academic Director of Taught Programmes, UEA 01603 592261
a.longcroft@uea.ac.uk

Background

TPPG is an advisory group which provides guidance and advice to the Academic Director of Taught Programmes on issues relating to UEA policy and teaching/pedagogy in general. TPPG is not a decision-making body and has no executive powers – it is a body with cross-University membership which puts forward recommendation to LTC for the latter to consider and/or approve.

Discussion

The paper is for discussion and contains recommendations for approval.

UEA Code of Practice on Assessment

These guidelines on moderation and double marking apply to all summative items of assessment at UEA

Comment [c1]: We need to make clear that all summative items of assessment that form part of a UEA degree course (ug, pgt) are subject to these guidelines. Otherwise, there will be confusion as we will potentially allow for exams to be remarked in certain circumstances and this was not the case before. Is this a hostage to fortune? Can we be more specific?

Introduction

These proposals relating to moderation and double marking will eventually form a sub-section (Section 5) of a new *Code of Practice on Assessment* which is in development. The proposals contained herein represents the work of the Internal Moderation and Double Marking Review Group chaired by Sara Connolly. They are presented to TPPG for scrutiny and discussion prior to being approved by LTC later in the academic year (May/June). The ADTP has highlighted some issues in red text.

5 Moderation of Assessed Work

- 5.1 Moderation is important in assuring that examiners apply marking criteria consistently, and that there is a shared understanding of the academic standards students are expected to achieve.
- 5.2 It is essential that marked coursework and exam scripts are properly scrutinised in order to ensure that staff, students, external reviewers, external partners and stakeholders (and the wider public) can have faith and confidence in the marks awarded and the awards conferred on students.
- 5.3 The aims of moderation are to:
- Provide a reliable check that assessment has been marked in accordance with the aims and learning outcomes of the assignment, and according to marking criteria;
 - Ensure that teaching and marking standards have been applied consistently within and across modules, programmes, Schools and Faculties across the whole University;
 - Ensure equality and thus fairness of treatment for students.
- 5.4 Moderation should be constructive and developmental. Besides being an element of assurance of standards and quality, it may also provide peer support and staff development for academic staff.
- 5.5 Moderation can take place in a number of ways and at UEA two major ways of dealing with moderation have been identified as set out below. The directions below represent a minimum requirement and Schools are free to carry out additional moderation if they wish.
- 5.6 Marking takes place before moderation, i.e. each submission is considered and a mark is awarded based on the marking criteria.
- 5.7 Blind/unseen double marking**
- 5.7.1 Definition: Two examiners/assessors mark the assignment independently and subsequently agree a mark.
- 5.7.2 Blind/unseen double marking should be used for supervised projects or dissertations worth at least 40 credits.
- 5.7.3 Blind/unseen double marking should also take place where an assignment is the sole summative assessment for a module worth at least 40 credits.

- 5.7.4 Presentations weighted at 30% or more of the overall module mark should be double marked (by means of two markers attending the presentation) or recorded for purposes of moderation and/or remarking as necessary.
- 5.7.5 Copies of each submission are marked 'blind' or 'unseen' by two or more independent markers. If markers disagree, they can change/alter marks on an individual submission. If the markers cannot agree, an appropriate third party will adjudicate.
- 5.7.6 The adjudicator should be an appropriate office holder within the School, for example:
- Chair of the Board of Examiners
 - School Director of Learning and Teaching
 - Assessment coordinator/lead or equivalent position
- 5.7.7 Adjudication duties may be shared so that the same person does not have to oversee every case within a School or within a module. The adjudicator considers the 'case', rather than the script. The adjudicator should consider the marks and comments of the two markers, and take advice from a third party as needed in order to determine the final mark for the assignment.
- 5.7.8 Where work has been double marked as set out above further moderation is not required.
- 5.7.9 Where work has been double marked as set out above a student is not eligible to apply for a remark or to appeal the mark (though a student may be eligible to submit an appeal relating to the assignment on other grounds, for example, inadequate supervision of a project).

5.8 Internal moderation

- 5.8.1 The module organiser shall be responsible for ensuring that moderation is carried out.¹
- 5.8.2 Assessed work at levels 4, 5, 6 and 7 that has not been double marked should be moderated (i.e. should have the marking process checked) by means of reviewing samples as follows:
- At least one item of assessment for each module
 - Any assignment which contributes at least 30% to the overall module mark
 - Assessment tasks marked by new or less experienced markers (*i.e. those with less than 2 years' experience of marking in HE setting*)?
 - Where concerns or issues have been raised through quality assurance processes or professional body requirements. Issues may include, but are not restricted to:
 - High failure rates or otherwise poor performance
 - An unusual distribution of marks, e.g. a large number of extreme marks
 - Concerns raised by student evaluation
 - Concerns raised by External Examiners
- 5.8.3 For any given assignment, where no sample of work is selected for moderation, the assignment is deemed to be single marked, but where a sample of work is reviewed, the assignment is deemed to be moderated.

¹ In other circumstances a suitable alternative person shall be responsible (for example, in the Norwich Medical School this may be the assessment lead). Depending on circumstances, the module organiser or other responsible person may not be directly involved in the sampling or moderation process, but shall be responsible for ensuring that it is done.

Comment [k2]: Discussion needed about whether all presentations should be double marked or recorded so that evidence is available for a remark, otherwise if a student requests a remark we have to ask them to do the presentation again (there have been several such cases recently).

Presentations are widely used as part of employability training and are important and we do not want to increase any administrative time spent by academic colleagues or hub colleagues on double marking or recording presentations.

Alternatively we could just offer double marking for presentations weighted at a certain percentage of the module mark (to be decided) and require all other presentations to become formative assessments. In that case it should be made clear to students that the formative presentation is integral part of the module and that they are expected to deliver the presentation.

- 5.8.4 The sample of work taken for moderation will take account of the following:
- Submissions across the full range of marks
 - All submissions with a fail mark
 - Submissions marked by each marker
 - For modules with 10 students or fewer, all submissions should be moderated
 - For modules with more than 10 students, at least 10% of all work submitted or 10 submissions, whichever is the higher number. *Where the cohort is over 200 students, would we be happy to require that the sample be 5% of all work submitted?*
- 5.8.5 The internal moderator should be an experienced marker (i.e. have at least 2 years' experience of marking work at HE level, or other relevant experience or training). *(This is important since moderators need to have the experience and confidence necessary to challenge the marks of much more experienced, senior colleagues. We do need to be cognisant of the impact of 'hierarchies' on professional dynamics).*
- 5.8.6 In some circumstances, because the School does not have the relevant subject or language expertise, it may not be possible to double mark or moderate assignments internally. In such cases, the School should make a case to the relevant Faculty Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning for the assignment to be reviewed externally. Where approval has been granted by the Associate Dean, the School will appoint an external moderator/assessor with the relevant expertise. The marked work should be returned to the Hub/students but the marks are provisional. Copies of the work and the distribution of marks will be sent to the external moderator for review.
- 5.8.7 The moderator will check the application of marking criteria (The UEA Senate Scale/s or bespoke criteria relating to the exercise, specifically devised/set by the tutor) by each marker and consider the overall distribution of marks and complete a Moderator's report.
- 5.8.8 If the moderator identifies significant inconsistencies (i.e. where there is a variation of 10% or more between the original mark and the mark the moderator would award in at least 10% of the moderated submissions or where there is a discrepancy in the means of the two markers which is greater than 5%.) or an anomalous distribution of marks, s/he can suggest remarking or a suitable adjustment of marks:
- for all submissions, i.e. not for individual submissions (except where a pass is felt by the moderator to be a fail and there are implications for a student's fitness to practise);
 - for all of the work marked by individual markers, but not individual submissions;
 - for sections within a submission for all submissions (for example, where a problem is identified relating to one question on an examination paper).
- Any adjustment of marks should be recorded on the Moderator's report.
- 5.8.9 If the concerns relate to one submission only or to particular parts of the distribution or where there is disagreement between the moderator and the marker, an appropriate third party will adjudicate.
- 5.8.10 The adjudicator should be an appropriate office holder within the School, for example:
- Chair of the Board of Examiners
 - School Director of Learning and Teaching
 - Assessment coordinator/lead or equivalent position

- 5.8.11 The adjudicator should consider the Moderator's report and may consult the External Examiners. The adjudicator shall be responsible for making the final judgement.
- 5.8.12 Internal moderation must be completed before marked work is returned to the Hubs/students.
- 5.8.13 Where work has been single marked or moderated as set out above a student may be eligible to apply for a remark or to appeal the mark, see 5.11 below.

Comment [SC3]: Where should this be recorded?

5.9 External examiners and external moderation

- 5.9.1 An external examiner has the right to see the assessed work of all students on any of the modules/programmes for which they are responsible. However, Schools will normally make available a sample of assessed work, sufficient to ensure that an external examiner can reach a judgement on the appropriateness of marking and other academic standards. *(My view is that if the moderation sample has been selected in accordance with the requirements set out in these proposals, then it would probably provide a suitable and appropriate sample for the external examiner to moderate. It would also negate the need for LTS staff to select a different sample, and thus produce considerable savings in terms of staff time).*

Comment [SC4]: Should this include some of the moderated and unmoderated samples?

LINK TO EXTERNAL EXAMINERS' CODE OF PRACTICE

5.10 School review of assessment and moderation

- 5.10.1 Marks are considered to be confirmed following internal moderation. Marks cannot be adjusted (via scaling or adjustment of individual marks) once moderation is complete.
- 5.10.2 Schools shall review their assessment strategy, and review and analyse information relating to module assessment with a view to:
- ensuring a coherent approach (i.e. avoiding bunching of deadlines, an appropriate mix of assignments, meeting programme as well as module level learning objectives)
 - identifying and addressing (via adjustments in assignment types or changed marking criteria) any anomalous module marks or variations in marking levels across programmes that might result in inequalities in the treatment of students
 - ensuring that the assessment strategy ensures that the programme meets external expectations (QAA benchmarks, professional body requirements)
- This review should form part of the School's Quality Assurance processes.
- LINK TO MODULE REVIEW, COURSE REVIEW AND UPDATE**
- 5.10.3 Schools may use their existing structures to support this review process (i.e. Exam Boards, Teaching Committees/Executives), or they may convene a dedicated 'Assessment Group', the composition of which should reflect the structure/diversity of the subjects and programmes offered by School.
- 5.10.4 The Assessment Group or an equivalent body shall receive and consider moderators' reports.
- 5.10.5 Once moderation is complete for all assignments within a module the Learning and Teaching Service (LTS) shall confirm the module marks in the Student Records System.
- 5.10.6 The Assessment Group or its equivalent would usually hold a main annual meeting immediately after the stage and Final Examination Boards. LTS staff will support and assist Schools in convening such reviews and will provide information that enables anomalies and variations to be identified and discussed.

5.11 Student requests for a remark and student appeals

5.11.1 Where an assignment has been blind/unseen double marked (unseen), a student cannot request a remark or appeal the mark.

5.11.2 Where an assignment has been single marked (where no sample is reviewed) a student may request a remark (within the specified time scale).

5.11.3 Where an assignment has been moderated (where a sample has been reviewed, whether or not the student's submission was part of the moderation sample) a student may request a remark (within the specified timescale) but will need justification (evidence is required):

- The mark is significantly at odds with the student's past marks
- The mark is not consistent with the feedback given
- Feedback suggests that part of the student's submission has not been considered

The University may then decide to offer a remark as a concession (NB there is no right of appeal against refusal to grant a concession).

5.11.4 Where an assignment has been double marked (either originally or as the result of a remark request) the student cannot appeal the mark.

LINK TO REGULATIONS ON REMARKS AND ACADEMIC APPEALS