MARKING and MODERATION POLICY

Marking and Moderation Policy

1 The University of Law's Marking and Moderation Policy has been informed by the Office for Students Sector-Recognized Standards and the General Ongoing Conditions of Registration and has regard to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. These definitive reference points for all English higher education institutions set out how academic standards are established and maintained and how excellence in the quality of learning opportunities is assured.

This policy sits within The University of Law's Quality and Standards Code, which provides a suite of policies designed to safeguard the academic standards of The University of Law and to assure the quality of learning opportunities offered; this policy should therefore be read in conjunction with other relevant policies within the code.

Introduction

2 The University of Law (the University) recognises that central to this policy is the University's responsibility for the academic standards of all awards granted in its name and the quality of learning opportunities for students. This policy sets the framework of expectations within which the University seeks to ensure fair, inclusive, and consistent assessment of work through marking and moderation.

Responsibility for this policy

3 Ultimate responsibility for the development of clear and effective processes and procedures associated with the maintenance of standards and quality assurance of academic provision and overseeing their application lies with Pro Vice-Chancellor Academic Development.

Expectation

4 The University has in place equitable, inclusive valid and reliable processes of assessment which enable every student to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes for the award.

Key aims and principles

Key aims

5   The University operates transparent and fair systems for marking and moderation and ensures that robust, effective and consistent marking and moderation processes are being applied across all Campuses, and programmes which the University awards either on its own or with partners.

6   This document sets out the expectations of the University in respect of its marking and moderation processes and applies to all University modules and programmes, including any programme regulated by a Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) or other Accrediting Body, or delivered in partnership with any partner organisation. The precise details of these processes may vary according to individual programme and PSRB requirements. Full details of relevant marking and moderation for a course can be found in the relevant programme protocols.

Key principles

7   There are four stages to the marking and moderation requirements at the University, namely:

  7.1   setting the standard to achieve uniformity of marking across the University (standardisation);

  7.2   first marking by a subject tutor which may necessitate second marking as appropriate;

  7.3   internal moderation by a second subject tutor who may be the subject moderator;

  7.4   review and approval by the external examiner of the standard and consistency of the internal marking and moderation.

8   For each assessment marking guidance is drafted by the assessment designer and provided to all members of the marking team to ensure consistency of marking across all Campuses and that the appropriate academic standards are met in relation to both the relevant learning outcomes and the relevant level.

9   Internal moderation ensures that markers apply assessment criteria consistently and that there is a shared understanding of the academic standards students are expected to achieve. The moderation processes are therefore designed to:

9.1   provide a reliable check that assessments have been marked in accordance with the relevant aims and learning outcomes, and according to the relevant marking guidance;

9.2   ensure that marking standards have been applied consistently within and across modules, programmes and Campuses

9.3   ensure equality and thus fairness of treatment for students.

10   All marking and moderation of assessments on validated programmes is subject to confirmation by an independent and suitably qualified external examiner. The external examiner's appointment is approved by the Academic Board.

11   Wherever possible, all marking of students' submitted work is carried out anonymously. The anonymity continues until after the Examination Board has confirmed the final results.

12   Moderation procedures generate evidence that may be used in programme monitoring and review.

13   The process by which marks for assessed work are allocated, including details of the internal moderation process to which they are subject, is clearly communicated to students via student handbooks, along with the criteria for assessment.

Standardisation

14   When any assessment is set marking guidance is prepared for the relevant assessment and submitted for approval by the relevant external examiner. All marking guidance are based on the assessment criteria, set out in the programme material available on the VLE. The marking guidance gives guidance to the individual marker to assess the outcome against the agreed criteria.

15   A conference call is convened comprising all relevant subject moderators as soon as possible after the date of the assessment and before the internal marking process begins. The aim of the conference call is to set University-wide standardisation of the marking.

Marking

16   All markers mark in accordance with the agreed marking guidance and standard.

17   Early in the marking period, each marker submits three papers to the subject moderator for moderation. These are then reviewed by the moderator and returned to the marker to ensure ongoing moderation. At any stage, an individual marker may submit an assessment to the moderator for guidance.

18   At any stage the moderator, if there are variations from the agreed standard, may intervene and require the marker to re-mark scripts to the agreed standard.

Internal Moderation

19   Internal moderation is the process through which a sample of assessed pieces of work are reviewed by a second internal marker, as appropriate.

20   The purpose of internal moderation is to ensure consistent standards are applied across a range of marks for any module.

21   At any stage, the moderator may intervene if the marks awarded by the first marker deviate from the agreed standard, and the marks may be corrected by scaling if there is consistent deviation or if it is erratic, by re-marking all of the assessed work.

22   For assessed work that is not in written form, all summative presentations by students shall be recorded for later review by a moderator in accordance with the key aims and principles.

23   Statistical analysis of each marker's marks for the assessed work is produced to ensure that there has been no deviation from the agreed standard.

Review and approval by the external examiner of the standard and consistency of the internal marking and moderation

24   Before any scripts are sent to the external examiners, a statistical check of the overall results profile for each module and cohort is conducted by the Academic Registry to identify any problem areas worthy of further investigation to ensure that moderation has achieved consistency.

25   Evidence that an internal moderation process has taken place must be available for scrutiny by external examiners and other interested parties. This is done by providing a mark sheet showing the original marks, and relevant second or moderated marks along with an appropriate sample of the submitted assessment. The contents of such a sample are previously agreed by the

external examiner and may be increased during the process by the external examiner requesting further scripts within a particular mark-band if required.

26   If the marking guidance has been amended, this must be submitted to the External Examiner for information. If the marking guidance has been amended in any material way, it should be submitted to the external examiner for approval.

27   Confirmation of the marks and the appropriateness of the marking standard for the sector by the external examiner completes the marking and moderation procedure. Individual marks cannot be changed by the External Examiners but the External Examiners may refer scripts back to the Programme Team for review if considered appropriate to do so.

Responsibility for the provision

27   Responsibility for the effective implementation of the Marking and Moderation Policy is shared by the Programme Directors, Operational Services and Registry functions of the University.

Monitoring and evaluation of provision

28   Formal responsibility for monitoring and evaluation of this provision lies with the Pro Vice-Chancellor Academic Development

Version history

Version	Amended by	Revision summary	Date
V1.0	Learning Quality & Assessment Director	Initial drafting	19/09/13
V1.1	Registry Officer	Structure and formatting	23/09/13
V1.2	Academic Registrar	Coherence activity amendments	26/09/13
V1.3	Head of Students, Chester	Revisions	12/05/14
V1.4	Academic Board	Review	21/05/14
V1.5	Head of Students, Chester	Revisions	17/07/14

V1.6	External Consultant	External review	31/07/14
V1.7	VP – AGQS	Review	07/08/14
V1.8	Proof Reader	Proofing	11/09/14
V1.9	Academic Board	Approval	19/09/14
V2.0	Vice Provost – Programme and Student Affairs	Re-drafting	10/04/16
V2.1	Programme Directors Group	Quality Assurance	03/05/16
V2.2	Academic Board	Approval	19/05/16
V2.3	Academic Registry	Final amends	23/05/16
V2.4	Senior Quality Officer	Change to the document coding convention	30/03/20
V3.0	Project working group	Review – approved by Academic Board	October 2021

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Appendix 1 – Flow Chart

Marking & Moderation Process

| Standardisation | 1st Marking & Moderation | Second Marking | Review & Approval |

Standardisation:
- Assessment paper & marking scheme approved by External Examiner
- Guidance to markers / how to assess outcome against agreed criteria
- University-wide standardisation conference call
- Centre standardisation at centres with multiple markers

1st Marking & Moderation:
- Early stage sampling & moderation
- Borderline sampling & moderation

Second Marking:
- Second mark at least 10% of cohort: Fails, Sample borderlines, Any papers requested by original marker
- Interventions: Re-marking if erratic, Scaling if consistent

Review & Approval:
- Post-marking statistical review of marking
- Statistical review cross-subject
- Recommendations to External Examiner
- External Examiner confirms standard