

Summary of Consultation Feedback: Policy on Marking, April 2015

Feedback	Faculty	Comments/ Action Taken
Paragraph 3.1 (and 6.1) - the Policy states that the Academic Unit Lead is <i>appointed by the Examination board</i> . Feedback stated that this was normally done by the Programme Committee, not the Examination board.	MHS, MRes and Humanities	Amended wording in the Policy to say that the Academic Unit Lead is appointed by the School.
Paragraph 3.1 – The academic lead might not be the appropriate person to write model answers, though they should be the person to ensure they are produced.	MHS, School of Psychological Sciences	Amended wording in the Policy.
Paragraph 3.1 and 3.2 – The Academic Unit Lead and the Internal Examiner can often be the same person. Clarity is sought that this is appropriate.	Humanities	Added a note to the Policy to state that this is acceptable.
Paragraph 3.2 – No credentials identified regarding who might be an Internal Examiner. To accommodate large class sizes we are keen to utilise selected Teaching Assistants for marking exams - selected from our PhD cohort and under the close supervision of the Unit Lead - Is this acceptable?	EPS, EEE	Agreed that this should not be added to the Policy but could be added to additional guidance.
Paragraph 3.2 and 3.3 – Our internal examiners and moderators are appointed by the programme exams officer who will have an overview of marking load across all staff and all assignments.	MHS, School of Psychological Sciences	Amended wording in the Policy to state that the Internal Marker is appointed by the Academic Lead <i>or nominee</i> and that Internal Moderator is appointed by the <i>School</i> .
Paragraph 4.1 – The School does not currently allocate a mark to formative work. This would likely cause grievance where students may present the argument of “I got 80% for my draft but 40% for my summative. Why?”	MHS, SNMSW	TO BE DISCUSSED BY TLG - to consider whether marks <i>should</i> always be allocated for formative work.

Paragraph 4.1 – Is this singular or plural marking scheme(s)?	MHS, School of Psychological Sciences	Updated in the Policy.
Paragraph 4.2 – This statement implies that <i>all work should be moderated</i> . Need to refer to paragraph 7.2 where multiple markers may be used, and a sample moderated.	MHS, SNMSW	Amendments have been made to this paragraph in the Policy.
Paragraph 4.2 –It was thought that this was based on the level of engagement stated on the external examiner’s nomination form regarding how much taught work they moderate.	MHS, MRes	No action needed.
Paragraph 4.2 – Is there any difference between the role of the internal moderator and external examiner? Will they be looking at the same sample of work?	MHS, Faculty T&L Office	They do look at the same work. The role of the External Examiner is defined in the Guidance on External Examiner Procedures (see reference in 9.1 of the Policy on Marking).
Paragraph 4.2 - One member of staff with a lot of senior experience outside the university made a good point: “I do think that it is much better if the guidelines were much clearer re the intent that is wishing to be achieved vs setting up more rules/guidelines etc. to follow ... This feels like a number of similar issues I have seen in my past life where individuals went over the top on rules and regs and forgot about getting people to understand the intent behind it all.”	EPS, SEAES	See amendments to section 2 regarding the purpose and intent of the Policy.
Paragraph 4.2 –This implies that all assessment is reviewed by an external examiner, whereas points 9.1/9.2 refer to a sample. It is suggested that 4.2 is reworded to better reflect the intention. Nothing has been noted about presentations being moderated. This needs to be clearly specified.	Humanities	Amended wording has been added to the Policy.
Paragraph 4.3 – ‘Overseen by the Academic Lead’ is quite a vague statement.	MHS, Faculty T&L Office	TO BE DISCUSSED BY TLG.

Paragraph 4.3 – Do our NHS colleagues fit the definition of an ‘employed member of staff’? If not, this has unsustainable implications for aspects of the programme, e.g. for project options.	MHS, MMS	TO BE DISCUSSED BY TLG.
Paragraph 4.4 – The definition “indicative answer” is not clear and led to some dissatisfaction from colleagues.	MHS, SNMSW and Humanities	Replaced ‘indicative answer’ with ‘model answers’ in the Policy and added clarification that it is just examinations that should be accompanied by these. TO BE DISCUSSED BY TLG.
Paragraph 4.5 – Could OSCEs be included here as an example to give more of an MHS focus?	MHS, Faculty T&L Office	Added to the Policy.
Paragraph 4.5 – Anonymous marking – the current system used within the MBChB for certain assessed elements, e.g. the project option, do not fit with this.	MHS, MMS	Amended the wording in the Policy.
Paragraph 6.1 – The statement was queried: “All units will have an Academic Lead who is appointed by the <i>Examination Board</i> to oversee the assessment on a unit.”	MHS, Manchester Pharmacy School; MHS, SNMSW; and Humanities	Amended the wording in the Policy to state that the Academic Unit Lead is appointed by the School.
Paragraph 6.2 – Isn’t this covered by 4.2? This seems to imply that one marker marks all assessments. Multiple markers are used for large cohorts (refer to paragraph 7.2).	MHS, School of Psychological Sciences; and MHS, SNMSW	Removed paragraph 6.2 from the Policy.
Paragraph 6.2 – Is there anything to stop the Academic Unit Lead appointing themselves?	MHS, Faculty T&L Office	As above, 6.1 has been amended to state that it is the School who appoints the Academic Unit Lead, so processes should be in place to ensure that AULs cannot appoint themselves.
Paragraph 6.3 – We don’t see that 6.3 is relevant to word counts. ...We think that the only clear rule is that any penalty to be imposed should be made clear in the rubric for the assessment task.	EPS, SEAES	No action needed – 6.3 does not refer to word counts.

Paragraph 6.3 – the use of the words ‘the following is advised..’ is queried. Clarity is sought on whether this IS advice and whether Schools can consequently adopt a different approach, or if these steps have to be followed.	Humanities	TO BE DISCUSSED BY TLG.
Paragraph 7.1 – Wouldn’t there be some PGT units where the total number of students was less than 10?	MHS, School of Psychological Sciences	Have added ‘suggested’ to the wording of the Policy so the statement reads: A suggested minimum of 10 scripts...should be moderated.
Paragraph 7.1 – Moderation should include all fails and borderlines as well as 20% sample, as these can be the most contentious, particularly in light of student progression issues.	MHS, SNMSW	Fails and borderlines were removed deliberately. TO BE DISCUSSED BY TLG.
Paragraph 7.1 – It’s unclear where the numbers “10” and “20%” have come from and some sort of statistical argument based on what we’re trying to prevent (which should be explicitly stated in the policy) would be appropriate.	EPS, SEAS	TO BE DISCUSSED BY TLG.
Paragraph 7.1 – Concern about the figure of 20% of scripts for every course unit. The guidelines seem to have been written with Humanities-style course units in mind, with much more subjective marking. The concept of a maths/science/engineering model answer needs considering...We would suggest 10% of scripts and an absolute maximum of 40 scripts... This has been written without consideration of larger courses of 400+ students. The practice in Humanities is normally 10%. We feel that the sample should be no fewer than 10 scripts and no more than 40 scripts, unless the number of markers necessitates that more scripts are included in the sample.	EPS, Chemistry; EPS, CEAS; and Humanities	AS ABOVE, TO BE DISCUSSED BY TLG.

Paragraph 7.1 –The current paragraph does not read correctly and perhaps should be rewritten as “the internal moderation will normally take the form of moderation of a sample of 20%, through the full range of marks awarded. A minimum of 10 scripts and no more than XX scripts should be moderated.”	Humanities	Wording has been amended in the Policy.
Paragraph 7.2 – Query regarding the difference between double marking and moderation. We think the guidance should direct double marking policies – we have adopted the FMHS approach. Point 7 covers moderation but this is different. Tolerances should be defined.	MHS, MRes; and Manchester Pharmacy School	TO BE DISCUSSED BY TLG - whether double marking should be specifically added to the Policy.
Section 7 - There is nothing on what happens when the internal moderator disagrees with the mark awarded by the first marker. We assume that the whole cohort needs to be remarked?	MHS, Faculty T&L Office	TO BE DISCUSSED BY TLG
Paragraph 9.1 –Isn’t this also covered by 4.2?	MHS, School of Psychological Sciences	Yes, but it is important, so there is a cross reference to the Guidance on External Examiner Procedures and information on sample size.
Paragraph 9.2 –What’s the reason for the samples being totally overlapping? Of course the external needs to see some of the scripts that have been internally moderated but if a proportion are different from those which were internally moderated, then more student scripts will have been moderated overall.	MHS, School of Psychological Sciences	No action needed.
Paragraph 9.2 – Where team moderation occurs for a large cohort, the number of scripts internally moderated may be too high for an external to subsequently moderate again. The External Examiner should moderate enough	MHS, SNMSW	TO BE DISCUSSED BY TLG

scripts to ensure they are satisfied that marking has been consistent.		
Paragraph 9.1 & 9.2 – Current practice in Humanities tends to be that the same includes both scripts which have been internally moderated and scripts which haven't been moderated.	Humanities	TO BE DISCUSSED BY TLG
General comments		
Suggestion that the Purpose should be widened beyond consistency to include issues of quality and fairness.	Humanities	Added this wording to the Policy.
Guidance on sampling would be helpful.	MHS, Manchester Pharmacy School	To consider adding to supporting guidance.
The Personal Excellence Path (PEP) Lead generally agreed with the content of the Policy. In terms of compliance, PEP had moderation in Phase 1 PEP (both preliminary and Group). PEP has moderation of fail grades in Phase 2 PEP but it seems this should be widened to possibly random sample. To do so, thought would be needed regarding the resources needed.	MHS, MMS	No action needed.
Support for the process of internal examination, internal moderation and external examiner moderation outlined was received and the proposed cap for external moderation for large courses made sense. Particular interest with this document regarded the process of moderation rather than blinded double marking. Blinded/independent double marking was felt to be excessive for smaller summative assessments for taught modules (whilst concurring that it is probably important for dissertations worth 30 - 90 credits) - and the external examiner agreed.	MHS, MMS	Noted; no action needed.

<p>Exact guidance would be much appreciated so we can implement a uniform system. It would also be good to specify whether the policy on moderation applies to all forms of summative assessments – including dissertations. However, support was also received for a process that recognised the differences between programmes, those with professional regs and those without for instance- isn't some flexibility useful, and a tariff system advantageous?</p>	<p>MHS, MMS</p>	<p>Yes, the guidance applies to dissertations and wording has now been added to section 1 of the Policy.</p> <p>Do we need to add anything about flexibility / professional body requirements? – TO BE DISCUSSED BY TLG</p>
<p>Two things differ from our current practice, sample moderation being 20% in all years (we currently do 10% in year 1), and asking our external examiners to moderate the sample. Currently the externals carefully scrutinise the marking schemes (detailed model answers for all course units), they concentrate their efforts on borderline cases when they visit.</p>	<p>EPS, Chemistry</p>	<p>TO BE DISCUSSED BY TLG</p>
<p>Word count penalties – TO BE DISCUSSED BY TLG</p>		
<p>We agree word count penalties should be consistent across the University and should be included.</p>	<p>MHS, Manchester Pharmacy School</p>	<p>Agree with word counts penalties being set.</p>
<p>This should be included in the policy, but perhaps as a guide which can be administratively applied based on a School protocol. Word counts are also an important professional skill/requirement to adhere to. NWSW currently don't penalise students whose work is under the word limit as they are actually penalising themselves and this will be reflected in the mark. Students who exceed the word limit +10% get a 1% mark</p>	<p>MHS, SNMSW</p>	<p>Agree with word counts penalties being set – but as a guide that can be decided on by Schools.</p>

reduction for every 100 words exceeding that upper limit.		
We see no reason for a University level policy on penalties for word count... We think that the only clear rule is that any penalty to be imposed should be made clear in the rubric for the assessment task.	EPS, SEAES	Don't agree with word counts penalties being set and included in the Policy.
I think the word count penalties should be a subject Unit level decision as it will vary depending on the subject and individual assessment type. The important thing is that students are made aware of any penalties and degrees of latitude and this is made explicit e.g. in the unit handbook, assessment brief or such like.	EPS, Materials	Don't agree with word counts penalties being set and included in the Policy.
We do not think word count penalties should be included in the policy, this should be a School level decision. However if word count limits are imposed, the penalties should be made clear beforehand and should be applied consistently.	EPS, CEAS	Don't agree with word counts penalties being set and included in the Policy.
The word count limitation may be difficult to implement: in year 1 Preliminary PEP there is page number limit rather than word count. PEP has always used word count as a suggested quality indicator but not absolute grade definer.	MHS, MMS	Don't agree with word counts penalties being set and included in the Policy.
Sample for moderation by the External Examiner - TO BE DISCUSSED BY TLG		
Getting this number wrong either way has major negative consequences. Second marking (our comment is wider than the specific question about external examiners) too little leaves us exposed, Second marking too much consumes a lot of staff time that could be better spent	EPS, SEAES	No action needed.

achieving the university's ambitious plans. We don't get the sense that enough time has been spent deciding what the appropriate level is.		
I don't think an exception should be made simply because the unit is large. It may be more effective to reduce the % for all units to 10% (with a minimum number). I think making an exception for a 'large' unit undermines the point of having moderation. The University has to provide adequate resource to allow the process to take place regardless of cohort size...How would a decision be made about what constitutes a 'large' unit; also a small cohort may have a large piece of assessment and vice versa and then the policy does not take account of that dimension of 'size'.	EPS, Materials	TO BE DISCUSSED BY TLG
Moderation by externals - I don't think we should (or could, given time scales for externals being here) seek to change. In fact we should actively seek to leave it alone. For all the exams that I have seen, over several years, the model answers are often so complete that second marking is almost redundant.	EPS, Chemistry	Noted, no action needed.
Our externals and our accreditation body (The Royal Society of Chemistry) encourage us to incorporate more problem-based questions and less discursive material. This makes marking easier (and more precise). The trend will continue. Our system works and the 20% re-checking by externals, will have no impact on it.	EPS, Chemistry	Noted, no action needed.