UNIVERSITY of CUMBRIA ACADEMIC PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES
APPENDIX 3b
Procedures Governing the Marking and Moderation of Assessments

Procedures Governing the Marking and Moderation of Assessments

1. Marking of Assessments

1.1 The principles for assessment, including the reliability of marking and moderation, are set out in Section F2 of the Academic Regulations. All markers must be familiar with the area of work being assessed. Where this is not possible, for example for practical or oral assessments, the Module Confirmation Board may approve an alternate form of moderation (eg statistical inspection).

2 Moderation

2.1 Moderation is the process of confirming with qualified colleagues that the standard and suitability of the assessments set, and the consistency of marking across tutors, modules, programmes and sites, is fair and appropriate.

2.2 The University operates a process of moderation of assessment tasks and briefs across each academic programme. This process is managed within Academic Institutes, using a baseline template which is reviewed regularly. The process of moderation of assessment tasks and briefs is sampled by Heads of Learning, Teaching and Student Experience.

2.3 All credit bearing assessment (except dissertations and theses of 20 credits or more which are subject to blind double marking), is subject to moderation. The moderator is provided with the assessment criteria and marking scheme and has access to full set of coursework or examination scripts from which he/she selects a representative sample. The moderator may have sight of the feedback, annotated comments, and the mark awarded by the first marker.

2.4 Moderation is based on a representative sample equal to the square root of n ($\sqrt{n}$) where n is the number of students in the module delivery group to a minimum of five items, plus all failed pieces. Where the number of failed items exceeds 3, the moderator may limit moderation to a representative sample of at least 3 of the failed items. The representative sample should include one script from each grade band. Where a module is delivered at different locations, each delivery group must be sampled, including groups based at collaborative partners.

2.5 A team marking approach to the assessment of modules may be used if appropriate, for example in some practice based modules, providing there are at least two markers within the team who assess work presented independently of each other.

2.6 For Collaborative Provision, the University academic link will actively engage with the Partner as part of its operation of the assessment process and be involved in the moderation of assessment for programmes running at the Associate Partner.

2.7 Intra-scheme moderation occurs when a module has multiple offerings in a given academic session. An analysis and comparison of the provisional marks and of the mean and standard deviation for each of the module offerings is required. Where possible, cross-site marking moderation should occur based on the sample as in 2.4 above.

2.8 Outcomes of moderation are considered through module internal moderation templates and should inform the Annual Monitoring process.

3 Blind Double marking

3.1 Where a dissertation or thesis is presented for the achievement of 20 credits or more, all such work must be blind doubled marked. The second marker is provided with the assessment criteria and marking scheme and they assess the work independently without sight of the mark or feedback of the first marker.

4 Anonymous Marking

4.1 As part of its commitment to fairness in assessment practice, the marking of examination scripts is anonymised. The University encourages programme teams to consider where anonymous marking for coursework may be possible and to implement this within their overall assessment strategy. However, it is noted that for some types of assessment (eg art, work based learning) completely anonymised coursework will not be possible.

5 Agreement of provisional marks

5.1 In moderation where the first marker and moderator's outcomes are largely in agreement (i.e. in the same grade band), the first mark stands. Averaging should not be employed to avoid regression to the mean and to ensure that there is neither advantage nor disadvantage to individual students, particularly in the sampling process related to moderation. However, if the marks differ by a grade band in most of the sample, a third marker must be employed to consider the marks of the whole cohort (or in the case of team marking, the whole of the work marked by that particular team marker). Where a third marker is employed, final provisional marks will be those of whichever marker is closest to the third marker. In exceptional cases the External Examiner may be called upon to adjudicate across the whole of the cohort. The Programme Leader is responsible for ensuring that any differences between first markers and moderators are resolved.

5.2 In blind double marking, the marker and moderator should discuss their provisional marks and decide on the mark to be awarded.

5.3 The outcome of the marking process for each item of assessment must be documented, with the first marker, moderator's and agreed provisional marks being evident. This information should be made available to the External Examiner via a secure digital storage and be accessible to appropriate academic and administrative staff.

6 Disclosure of Provisional Marks

6.1 Internally agreed feedback and provisional marks, for both examinations and coursework, should be disclosed to students within 20 working days (which excludes weekends, public holidays and periods of University closure only). This is before moderation by the External Examiner and confirmation by the Module Confirmation Board.

6.2 In exceptional circumstances when it is not possible to complete the internal moderation process, the minimum expectation is that feedback, which may include the provisional mark, will be given within this period (ie 20 working days).

6.3 In both 6.1 and 6.2 the documentation must clearly state that the marks are still provisional and may be subject to alteration in the confirmatory process.

7 External Examiner Moderation

7.1 External moderation is the process of ensuring via an external view that the suitability and standards of assessment tasks and the consistency of marking across tutors, modules are appropriate fair and comparable with standards in UK higher education in general.

7.2 External Examiners are required to approve all examination questions and briefs before publication. Additionally, they are asked through annual reporting to report on the appropriateness of modes of assessment for the modules learning outcomes and level of award.

7.3 The responsibilities of External Examiners are set out in Section J3 of the Academic Regulations and Appendix 4 of the procedures. The main concern of the External Examiner is the appropriateness of assessment and the standards of marking although they may exceptionally be consulted about the marks of an individual student (see 7.6).

7.4 External Examiners are asked to moderate both examination scripts and coursework and to ensure that each student is fairly placed in relation to the rest of the cohort. Normally, unless the number of assessment items is sufficiently small for all to be scrutinised, an agreement with External Examiners will be reached on the sample of work to be submitted for moderation. This should include representative samples of each grade or class of degree, cases of failure and cases identified by staff as being of particular interest to ensure that each student is fairly placed in relation to the rest of the cohort, including samples from each delivery group where a module is delivered across different locations, and different collaborative partners where applicable. The External Examiner has the right to see the work of all students proposed for the highest available category of the award and for failure and samples of the work of students proposed for each category of award. They may see the work of all students assessed if they wish.

7.5 Internal markers must ensure that the External Examiner receives copies of their Assessment Criteria and Marking Schemes.

7.6 If an External Examiner is concerned about accuracy and consistency of marking and wishes to change marks, all work falling into the area of concern should be re-marked. The final decision on the mark(s) to be awarded in individual cases, or in the case of a whole cohort, lies with the Module Confirmation Board.

7.7 All examination scripts and coursework contributing to the final assessment must be available to External Examiners should they be required. In particular, the work of any candidates likely to be discussed at the MCB should be made available to the External Examiner before the meeting and should have been fully internally moderated.

7.8 All assessment items submitted on-line should be made available for moderation by the External Examiner electronically, through the virtual learning environment (via Blackboard or Pebblepad). Other arrangements must be put in place for the external moderation of other forms of assessment e.g. performances or production of physical artefacts, this may include recording the activity or the External Examiner moderating in person (e.g. attending an exhibition or observing professional practice).

Note: E-mail is not a secure method of transmission.

8 Provision of module marks to the Academic Registry and completion of mark sheets

8.1 The mark sheet indicates the number of elements and their weightings which contribute to the total assessment of the module as validated. The mark sheets also indicate the mode of that assessment. Each module mark sheet includes information on the mean, standard deviation and fail rate for that module. Following confirmation of marks by the Module Confirmation Board, the Module Leader may access summary module information (including mean and standard deviation) through ICON.

8.1.1 Examinations

(a) Marks for each module must be provided anonymously to the Academic Registry. The raw marks should be expressed in percentage terms and rounded up or down after aggregation of individual marks as necessary (0.5 and above are raised).

(b) The decoding will be completed by the relevant Academic Registry. The decoded mark sheet will be used for the Module Confirmation Board and copied to the Programme Leader.

8.1.2 Coursework

The Module Leader (or other tutors who have marking responsibility for the module) is responsible for providing the raw mark (expressed as a percentage or where the module is Pass/Fail as 'P' or 'F') for each element of coursework to the relevant Academic Registry administrator, through agreed protocols.

8.1.3 Professional Performance

Where professional performance, for example a work-based placement, is assessed separately from a credit-bearing module i.e. a Qualificatory Practice Unit, this should be recorded on a separate mark sheet. This is normally expressed on a Pass/Fail basis.

8.2 The aggregated module mark is calculated through the Student Records System (SITS) according to the validated weighted scores and is rounded up or down according to the same convention as in 8.1.1(a).

9 Review of the procedures

9.1 The University reviews these procedures periodically.

MARKING AND MODERATION PROCESS

Tutor/s design assessment tasks and examination paper according to the assessment methods identified in the current MDF (approved at validation)

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Internal moderation of assessment items across the Programme External examiner approves in advance all examination questions

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Turnaround time: 20 working days (excluding weekends, public holidays and periods of University closure only)

Students complete coursework / examinations

Turnaround time: 20 working days (excluding weekends, public holidays and periods of University closure only)

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Coursework / exams marked by internal marker in accordance with published module assessment criteria and University grade descriptors

Moderation

Representative sample $\sqrt{n}$ (min. 5) + fails marked with or without (dependent on assessment type), knowledge of first marker's grades. Moderator has access to full set of scripts, from which they select sample. They may have sight of comments and <u>must</u> be provided with assessment criteria and marking scheme. Moderator does not write individual feedback for students.
In moderation where the first marker and moderator outcomes are largely in agreement (ie. in the same grade band), the first mark stands. Averaging should not be employed to avoid regression to the mean and to ensure that there is neither advantage nor disadvantage to individual students, particularly in the sampling process related to moderation. However, if the marks within the sample differ by a grade band in most of the sample, a third marker must be employed to consider the marks of the whole cohort (or in the case of team marking, the whole of the work marked by that particular team marker).   Where a third marker is employed, final provisional marks will be those of whichever marker is closest to the third marker.   In exceptional cases the External Examiner may be called upon to adjudicate across the whole of the cohort. The Programme Leader is responsible for ensuring that any differences between first and moderators are resolved.

Intra-module moderation
Checking for consistency of marking and standards across modules which are offered more than once or at different campuses during the year.

Blind Double Marking

Applies to dissertations and theses presented for 20 credits or more. All assessment pieces are 'blind marked' independently. The second marker does not have sight of comments or mark of first marker, and must be provided with assessment criteria and marking scheme. Second marker does not write individual feedback for students

Emphasis is on consistent application of the marking criteria across the cohort. In blind double marking, the two markers should discuss their provisional marks and decide on the mark to be awarded. Third marker involved where an agreement cannot be reached. Feedback and provisional marks made available to students.
In exceptional cases the External Examiner may be called upon to adjudicate across the whole of the cohort.

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The **External Examiner** receives agreed sample items (including representative sample of each grade, cases of failure) for all modules for which they are responsible (External Examiner moderation is not required for L3 or L4 work within a Honours degree – they moderate the assessment which contributes to award classification). External Examiners submit an annual report which comments on the moderation process and consistency of marking standards and their report is responded to by the programme leader and monitored at University level). A summary report is presented annually to Student Success and Quality Assurance Committee.

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Module Confirmation Board
The Module Confirmation Board will confirm that internal and external moderation (by EEs) has been carried out in line with the procedures before confirming marks

Appendix 3b Marking and Moderation of Assessments