



**GUIDE TO POLICY AND PROCEDURES RELATING TO THE  
ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE ACADEMIC STANDARDS  
AND QUALITY OF TAUGHT PROGRAMMES OF STUDY (THE 'RED  
BOOK')**

## **ASSESSMENT PROCESS HANDBOOK - A CODE OF PRACTICE**

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<http://www.bolton.ac.uk/Quality/QAECContents/APPR/Documents/pdf/AssessProcessHandbook.pdf>

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This code of practice has been developed in line with the University's Academic Regulatory Framework and Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures and matches current sector practice, including the QAA Code of Practice on Assessment of Students (May 2000).

#### General Comments

1. In implementing this document Departments may need to make reference to the relevant parts of the following University documents:
  - Academic Regulatory Framework
  - Guide to Policies and Procedures Relating to the Assurance and enhancement of the Academic Quality and Standards of Taught Programmes of Study (the 'Red Book')
2. Departments are reminded that further advice in respect of the implementation of this and other documents is available from the Academic Quality and Standards Unit.
3. The Head of Academic Quality and Standards is responsible for the interpretation of this code.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The University bases its assessment methods, practices and procedures on the principles of: transparency; consistency; validity; reliability and fairness.
- 1.2 The University is responsible for ensuring that the academic standard of each award and/or award element is set at the appropriate level and that student performance is properly judged against this standard. This is achieved through the University's regulatory framework and policies and procedures on the assurance and enhancement of quality and standards.
- 1.3 The University requires that all student assessment (for postgraduate, undergraduate, HND/C and all other award- and credit-bearing sub-degree programmes) conforms to its policies, procedures and regulations on the setting of assessments and the marking and moderation of these assessments as detailed in this document and elsewhere.
- 1.4 Departments are charged with applying this code of practice and with developing specific procedures for the guidance of students and staff in respect of all aspects of their provision. Such guidance should be available to all students via their Programme Handbook and to all staff via appropriate statements of responsibilities and procedures.
- 1.5 All staff are charged with applying this code of practice in accordance with the University's implementation of the Data Protection Act (as embodied in published documents) and the University's Equal Opportunities Policy.
- 1.6 The precise manner in which this code of practice is implemented will vary with the Department, Subject and programme concerned, its size, organisational and administrative structures, processes and practices and the nature of the assessments under consideration. However the principles listed in 1.1 above remain paramount and must be adhered to so that the effects of implementing the code must be comparable across all areas of the University's provision and ensure that the principles are upheld.
- 1.7 Academic managers at various levels will carry specific responsibilities for control, monitoring and review of the assessment process. Chief amongst these are Heads of Departments, Subject Leaders, Principal Lecturers, Programme Leaders and Module Leaders. Similarly, Departmental Boards, Assessment Boards, Programme Teams and Committees, Module Teams and particularly individual academic and administrative staff, will be responsible for contributing to the implementation of the code and to monitoring and review procedures.

- 1.8 The code is not prescriptive about which individuals or groups are responsible for which parts of the assessment process. This must be determined by Departments in the context of the factors noted in 1.6 above. There should however be published information available containing clear statements of responsibilities in the assessment process.

## 2. **Glossary of Terms**

**Anonymous Marking:** This is where a student submits their assessments for marking without the student's name being made known to the marker.

**Assessment Criteria:** These are clear statements deriving from the module specification and given at the end of an Assignment Brief, which make clear to the student:

- Exactly what the student is expected to produce;
- The criteria against which the student will be assessed (eg, breadth of research, quality of analysis, presentation). The criteria may specify the weighting that will be given to the different parts of the assessment.

**Assignment Brief:** This is the information provided to the student which details the assessment task to be undertaken (eg, assignment question), the format in which the task has to be completed, where possible the deadline date by which the assessment must be submitted, and the assessment criteria for the work.

**Collaboration:**  
(see also  
Groupwork) This is where two or more students are permitted to work together on an assessment. The extent and nature of the permitted collaboration must be clearly detailed to the student in the Assignment Brief. For example, where students are permitted to collaborate in the preparatory work for an assignment, it must be made explicit at what stage the work must be done independently, and what would constitute unacceptable collaboration.

**Collusion:** This is where two or more students work together to prepare an assessment where collaboration has not been permitted in the Assignment Brief.

**Coursework:** This is any uninvigilated assignment and/or assessed

work given to a student to complete during his/her programme of study, to be submitted by a given date/deadline and which contributes to the result for the module.

Double (Second) Marking:

This is the separate and additional marking of assessed work by another marker. It will normally extend to the complete set of answers. Where double marking is sample based, this is defined as moderation and should comply with the regulations as laid down.

Examination:

This is an assessment method that requires a student to answer question(s) or solve a problem(s) in written, oral or other form within a stipulated time. This can be either:

Unseen: Open or closed book;

Seen: Students are given the opportunity to view the paper prior to the examination;

Case Study: Students are issued with a case study prior to the Examination. In the Examination they will be required to answer specific questions related to the case study.

Examinations take place under formal invigilation arrangements, normally in weeks 14 or 15 of the semester.

External Moderation:

This is the sampling of examination and coursework assessments and the outcomes and process of assessment by External Examiners, to ensure that the assessments and the level of marks being awarded are commensurate with the level of award studied and are comparable with the standards of other similar institutions.

Formative Assessments:

These are assessments wholly or partly designed to provide students with feedback on their progress and allow them the opportunity to identify areas of weakness. Formative assessments MAY contribute a relatively small percentage to the final overall module mark.

Groupwork:  
(see also  
Collaboration)

This is where two or more students are permitted to prepare an assessment together and submit a joint assessment for marking. Where this is permitted, the Assessment Criteria must clearly specify how the marks will be allocated in respect of the group of students and the individual student.

*(This is not the same as collaboration, where students undertake groupwork within a module as part of the teaching and learning strategy and are required to submit individual assessments)*

Internal Moderation: This is the sampling of examination and coursework assessments and the outcomes of assessment by subject staff internal to the Institute to ensure that the assessments and the level of marks awarded are consistent and appropriate for the module and programme of study.

Marking Criteria: This is a collection of general statements about the overall level of achievement expected at each of the standard grade classifications. The University has a set of agreed Generic Marking Criteria / Grade Descriptors, though these may be amended to incorporate specific terminology in the light of expectations in particular subject areas or programmes.

The Programme Handbook should contain a copy of the Marking Criteria / Grade Descriptors used within a student's individual course, whether it is the Generic Marking Criteria / Grade Descriptors or more specific ones.

Marking Scheme: This is a specification, which makes clear what is expected of the student to reach at least a satisfactory level of achievement (and preferably each of the higher levels) against each of the Assessment Criteria. This may be expressed in the form of a model answer (which may be more appropriate in some quantitative assessments), or in the form of the sort of information and analysis that would be expected in order to be awarded a 1<sup>st</sup>, 2.1 etc. The Marking Scheme should give sufficient guidance to enable another member of staff to assess the work fairly and consistently.

Peer Assessment:	This is where the Assessment Criteria permit the allocation of some or all of the marks to be awarded through the consensus view of other students undertaking the assessment.
Plagiarism:	This is defined as a candidate for assessment taking and presenting another's work as if it were their own, without acknowledging the source of the work. This may include a candidate presenting work of their own previously presented for assessment at the University or elsewhere.
Summative Assessments:	These are assessments designed to measure the final achievement of the specified learning outcomes of a module. Summative assessments WILL contribute to the final overall module mark.
Time Constrained:	This is an assessment undertaken within a stipulated time, and normally under supervised conditions, but not necessarily under formal invigilation arrangements.
Unseen Marking:	This is where a student's work is independently assessed by more than one marker without the knowledge of marks or comments assigned by other markers.

### 3. **Assessment Strategy**

3.1 The University has agreed the following assessment strategy for all of its award - and credit - bearing taught programmes. Programme Teams are responsible for devising the assessment strategy for each programme of study. Teams are encouraged to consider diversity and innovation in assessment, within the framework of the assessment regulations, this code of practice and the following principles.

#### 3.2 **Purpose and Nature of Assessment**

The purpose and nature of assessment should be related to Level so that it encourages and supports the development of the student in accordance with the expectations embodied in the relevant qualifications and levels descriptors.

#### 3.3 **Relationship to Learning Outcomes**

3.3.1 Assessment for a module must be designed to measure the achievement

of the assessable learning outcomes in the Module Specification.

3.3.2 Where groupwork is permitted the marker must ensure that each student is measured against their achievement of the learning outcomes as specified in the Module Specification.

### 3.4 **Balance and Loading of Assessment**

3.4.1 The overall assessment scheme for an award should demonstrate an appropriate balance between coursework and examination and have regard to the load on students.

### 3.5 **Approval of Assessment Regime**

3.5.1 The assessment regime (number, type, weighting) for a module will be approved at validation. The validated assessment regime for a module may not be altered without approval via the agreed quality procedures.

3.5.2 The Programme Handbook for an award must make clear all appropriate aspects of assessment.

## 4. **Assessment Calendar**

4.1 Programme, Subject, Department and University authorities are jointly responsible for setting and publishing the assessment calendar appropriate to their level of responsibility in respect of:

- Schedule of coursework assessments, including setting and hand-in dates;
- Examinations Timetable;
- Final deadline for assessments to be submitted for typing, internal and external moderation, sign-off and printing, release to students;
- Provisional and Final Mark entry onto the CAMS database;
- Dates of Assessment Boards.

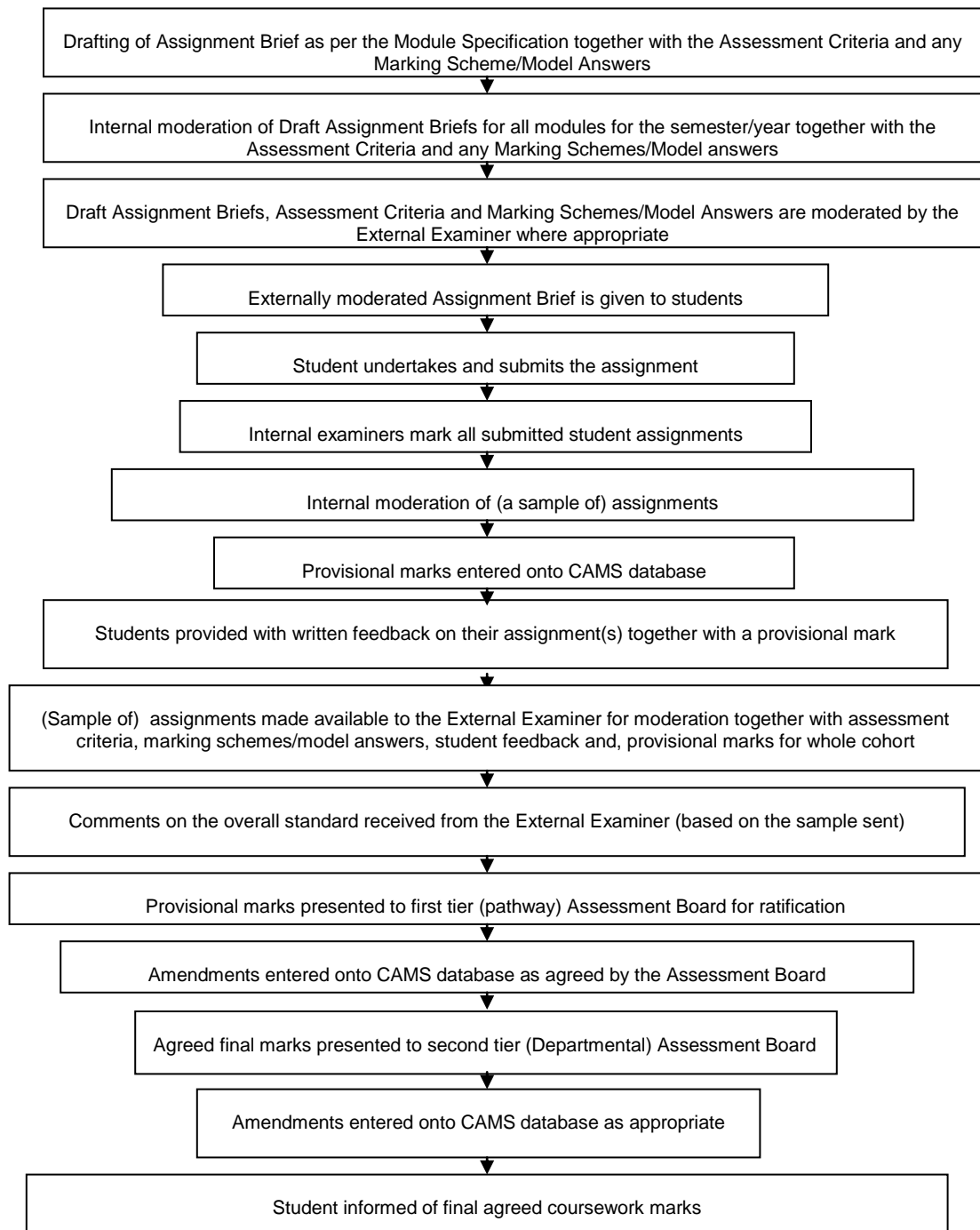
4.2 Assessment calendars containing information concomitant with their level of operation will be published by the relevant authorities at the appropriate times of year.

## 5. The Assessment Process

The following diagrams present the main stages of the assessment process for coursework and examinations respectively. The purpose of the whole process is to facilitate adherence to the principles given in section 1.1 above. Departures from the process and modifications to stages of their ordering should only be made where it is customary (eg it is not usual for external moderation of Level 1 assessments to be required), or demanded by the nature of the assessment (eg individually negotiated assignments, oral presentations, live performances, electronic assessment, poster and other visual displays), or dictated by the nature of programme delivery (eg overseas or other distance delivery). In all such cases the principles of assessment must be retained and modifications to the process must be agreed within the Department, Programme and where required, by the External Examiner.

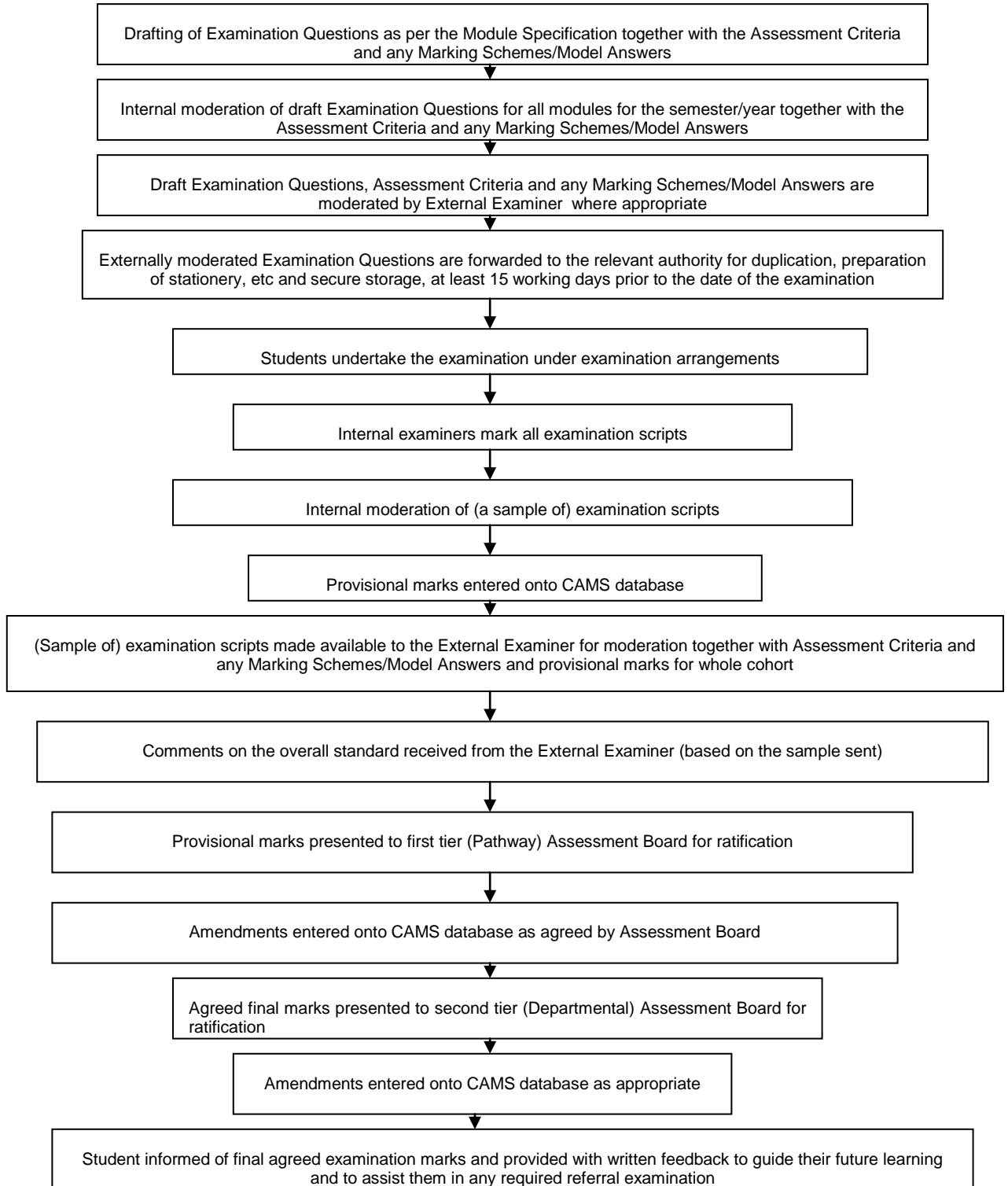
### 5.1 Assessment Process for Coursework

The following flow chart details the main stages in assessment process for coursework undertaken by the University.



## 5.2 Assessment Process for Examinations

The following flow chart details the main stages in assessment process for examinations undertaken by the Institute.



## 6. **Setting and Internal Moderation of Assessments (Coursework and Examinations)**

- 6.1 The assessment of a module is designed to measure the achievement of the stated learning outcomes for the module as detailed in the Module Specification.
- 6.2 Programme Teams are charged with establishing and operating a system to ensure that work set is such that the University may be confident in the:
- appropriateness of the task;
  - implied standard for the level and nature of the module;
  - accuracy, clarity and details of the instructions describing the assessment;
  - coverage of the specified learning outcomes;
  - clarity of the marking scheme/model answer and its match to relevant marking/grading criteria.
- 6.3 Programme Teams are responsible for ensuring the setting and internal moderation of all assessments as per the Module Specification and for ensuring that they are appropriate to the level and nature of the programme.
- 6.4 Programme Teams are responsible for ensuring the establishment of clear Assessment Criteria and Marking Schemes as appropriate for all assessments set.
- 6.5 Assessment Criteria must be made explicit to the student with the assessment; they should be appropriate to the intended learning outcomes of the module at the given level and suitably measured by the assessment methods employed.
- 6.6 Programme Teams should note that clearly specifying the Assignment Brief or Examination may reduce the opportunity for students to cheat and/or plagiarise.
- 6.7 Programme Teams should note that in specifying Examinations particular attention should be paid to:
- the extent to which annotation will be permitted
  - clear specification of supporting materials permitted into an examination
  - whether the type/format of the examination will measure the achievement of the learning outcomes.
- 6.8 Programme Teams should consider the benefit of designing assessments

which require the student to relate theory to their own individual practice.

- 6.9 Where all or part of an assessment comprises group work, the precise way in which marks will be allocated and the responsibilities of individual students must be made clear to students in the Assignment Brief.
- 6.10 Where some collaboration or co-operation between students is permitted, the exact nature of the permitted collaboration, and the specification of what would be considered inadmissible collaboration must be clearly stated, in writing, as part of the Assignment Brief.
- 6.11 The University requires all new assessments (coursework and examinations) to be considered via a formal process of approval before they are published or set to students.
- 6.12 In reviewing module assessments, Programme Teams should consider the overall assessment pattern in respect of the type, amount and scheduling of assessments across the programme and mode of study.

## 7. **Moderation of Assessments by External Examiners (Coursework and Examinations)**

- 7.1 Programme Teams are responsible for ensuring that all module assessments set are in accordance with the Module Specification and have been formally approved internally (see Section 6 above).
- 7.2 The External Examiner is responsible to the Institute for advising whether the Programme Team has fully undertaken its responsibilities in the setting and internal moderation of module assessments and that the University may be confident in the:
  - appropriateness of the task.
  - implied standard for the level and nature of the module;
  - accuracy, clarity and detailed instructions describing the assessment;
  - coverage of the specified learning outcomes.
- 7.3 The External Examiner is responsible to the University for advising whether the standard of all assessments that contribute to the final award is commensurate with sector norms.

## 8. **Distribution of Coursework to Students**

- 8.1 Programme Teams are responsible for ensuring that students are provided with a written Assignment Brief for every element of coursework.
- 8.2 Programme Teams are responsible for ensuring that all students receive a

copy of the written Assignment Brief at the commencement of the module or as soon as possible thereafter.

8.3 Programme Teams are responsible for ensuring that the written Assignment Brief provides full details to the student in respect of the:

- task to be completed;
- format for submission (written, typed, disc, presentation, report etc);
- the extent to which collaboration or groupwork will/will not be permitted;
- submission deadline;
- assessment criteria against which the student will be assessed (including any weighting to different parts of the assessment).

## 9. **Notification of the Examination Timetable to Students**

9.1 The University's Examination Timetable is published by the Academic Quality and Standards, based on the information received from the Academic Support Unit and on the assessment regime for validated modules being offered in the relevant time period.

9.2 Invigilated examinations normally take place in weeks 14 and 15 of the semester within which the module is delivered.

9.3 The Academic Quality and Standards Unit will publish and disseminate the Examination Timetable and any subsequent amendments to it to relevant postholders and via the University's internet site.

9.4 Departments are responsible for publishing the Examination Timetable and any subsequent amendments to it on the appropriate Student Noticeboards.

9.5 Programme Teams are responsible for ensuring that copies of the approved Examination Papers are forwarded to the relevant administrative authority at least 15 working days prior to the date of the examination.

9.6 Programme Teams are responsible for ensuring that the approved Examination Papers include full details of any special arrangements for the examination, particularly in respect of seen or unseen examinations or materials that may be taken into the examination.

## 10. **Submission of Coursework by Students**

10.1 Programme Teams are responsible for providing full details of the procedures for the submission of coursework by students in the appropriate section of the Programme Handbook.

- 10.2 Those responsible are advised to ensure that the procedures and any additional guidance for submission of coursework include details on:
- Where, when and how coursework should be submitted;
  - Submission Coversheets to be completed;
  - The relevance of any receipt of submission provided;
  - That students are advised to keep a photocopy of their submitted work;
  - How and for what reasons students can apply for an extension to the submission deadline;
  - The penalties for non- or late submission without acceptable reasons.
- 10.3 Programme Teams are responsible for ensuring that where a student submits a coursework assessment beyond the deadline submission date, without an agreed and documented extension, the coursework is considered under the relevant regulations for the late submission of assessed work.

## 11. **Internal Marking of Assessments (Coursework and Examinations)**

- 11.1 Coursework should be marked against the approved Assessment Criteria and any Marking Criteria and/or Scheme as defined in the Assignment Brief. *(The Criteria may specify the weighting that will be given to different parts of the assessment).*
- 11.2 Examinations should be marked against the approved Assessment Criteria and any Marking Criteria and/or Scheme. *(The Criteria may specify the weighting that will be given to different parts of the assessment).*
- 11.3 The criteria and basis for academic judgement must be made as explicit as possible to the student, marker, internal moderator and External Examiner.
- 11.4 Where an assignment is team-marked, the Programme Team is responsible for ensuring consistency of marking standards across the team.
- 11.5 Where a marker suspects cheating and/or plagiarism by a student or group of students within an assessment, the marker is responsible for progressing the matter in accordance with the University's regulations governing the use of unfair means.

11.6 Wherever feasible, internal marking (and moderation) should be carried out without knowledge of the name of the student whose assessment is being marked (ie. anonymously).

## 12. **Internal Moderation of Marked Assessments (Coursework and Examinations)**

12.1 The purpose of internal moderation is to determine whether the standard applied to the overall batch of answers conforms to the approved Assessment Criteria and Marking Criteria and/or Scheme and has been accurately and consistently applied.

12.2 All assessments will be subject to internal moderation. Formal procedures for the internal moderation of coursework, examination and other assessed work are the responsibility of Programme Teams. Where the assessment is by student presentation Programme Teams are similarly responsible for ensuring that appropriate moderation is undertaken.

12.3 Internal moderation should be carried out to confirm the overall standards applied in the marking of the assessment. The nature of the moderation and any changes made to individual or module results must be fully detailed. Normally, no single individual mark may be changed by an internal moderator unless they have moderated the entire sample of answers. The moderation of marks by routinely calculating the average of two marks is discouraged. The internally moderated sample may form the basis for any further external moderation.

12.4 Appropriate comments should be included either on the individual script, or preferably on an accompanying sheet (required where unseen double marking is used) to form a basis for discussion between the markers as to the nature and scale of any divergence. The level of detail available either to a second marker or a moderator must be sufficient to the purpose.

12.5 Internal moderation should normally be carried out before marked coursework is returned to students, where this is feasible.

12.6 Programme Teams are responsible for determining how internal moderation should be conducted and what sample of what assessments and for what modules should be internally moderated. A guide is that the minimum sample size should be at least the square root of the number of students taking the assessment in any particular occurrence of the module, although it is understood that particular categories of assignments at level H, especially project reports or dissertations, may be subject to universal internal moderation (ie. double marking). Supporting evidence must be available to demonstrate the internal moderation process.

12.7 Wherever possible, internal moderation should be carried out without the first marker's mark (or grade) or comments being made known to the internal moderator (ie. unseen) and without knowledge of the name of the student whose assessment is being marked (ie. anonymously).

13. **External Moderation of Marked and Internally Moderated Assessments (Coursework and Examination)**

13.1 All module assessments which contribute to the student's award will be externally moderated by an External Examiner.

13.2 The sample selected for moderation will normally include top, middle and bottom scripts across the full available range of mark/grade categories for the assignment in question. The number in the sample should be appropriate to the number of students taking the assessment. A guide is that the minimum sample size should be the square root of the number of students taking the assignment in any particular occurrence of the module. Whatever range and number is selected, the basis for the sample should be agreed with the External Examiner.

13.3 Departments are responsible for ensuring that the External Examiner is provided with all the necessary information to assist them in their moderation of the assessments. This should include a Module Mark Sheet for the whole cohort of students.

13.4 Further details on the role and duties of the External Examiner in the moderation of marked and internally moderated assessments are detailed in the relevant section of the 'Red Book'.

14. **Feedback to Students on Marked Assessments**

14.1 Staff are responsible for awarding provisional marks or grades for assessments and/or assessment elements in any module. The provisional nature of marks and grades must be made clear to students but should be given in order for students to have an opportunity to improve the quality of their later work within and beyond each level of study.

14.2 No provisional mark or grade is confirmed until it has been approved by a formally constituted Assessment Board.

14.3 **Coursework**

Written feedback on coursework should preferably be provided on an accompanying proforma in relation to the stated Assessment Criteria and Marking Criteria and/or Scheme in order to:

- support the judgement of the marker and the mark or grade awarded;
- enable the student to identify deficiencies in the work and specific areas for improvement.

Where oral feedback is provided to the student this is supplementary to written feedback.

#### 14.4 Examinations

Feedback to students should be provided which could usefully be in the form of a general, summary report on the major strengths and weaknesses of all of the answers given to a particular question, in addition to any specific comments on individual scripts. General and specific feedback might be in the form of summary judgements about the extent to which each assessment criterion has been met, linked to the marking scheme/model answer.

Especially where a student has failed an examination, appropriate feedback should be available to the student to assist them in their preparation for any required reassessment.

Where oral feedback is provided to the student this is supplementary to written feedback.

### 15. Retention and Return of Assessment Scripts (Coursework and Examinations)

#### Coursework

- 15.1 It is University policy that coursework, together with feedback comments and the provisional mark or grade, is made available for collection by students following internal marking (and internal moderation where feasible).
- 15.2 Where Programme Teams are required to retain coursework for a time for external moderation purposes, students should be informed of this in the Programme Handbook and should in any case be advised to routinely take a copy of all work submitted for assessment. The original coursework, feedback comments and (provisional) marks and grades can then be retained and a copy of the latter made available to students.

#### Examinations

- 15.3 The University's interpretation of the Data Protection Act is such that we are not legally obliged to provide students with their actual examination scripts. However the information recorded by examiners in examination scripts about a candidate's performance (comments, marks and grades) probably is personal data under the Act and thus would have to be made available to a student making a data subject access request. Comments,

in turn, must be intelligible and appropriate.

- 15.4 Although the absence from examination scripts of written comments, marks and grades would facilitate unseen internal and external moderation and is to be encouraged where it is practicable, this can often hinder efficient and transparent marking. It is also contrary to accepted practice in many disciplines and is often not what external examiners wish for. Further, it requires the development of alternative means of recording comments, marks and grades, e.g. on a form possibly containing the main points of a model answer, or the assessment criteria or marking scheme. Additionally, this information would probably not appear to the Data Controller to be of much value without the script itself.
- 15.5 In summary, students have the legal right of access to comments, marks and grades, whether they are written on the examination script or separately. In the latter case, if it is accepted that the comments are not of much value without the script, then students probably have right of access to the associated script also.
- 15.6 If students request access to their examination marks under data subject access procedures, a response has to be made within either five months of the date of the request or forty days of the date the results are published – whichever is the earlier.

### Procedures

- 15.7 In the light of the legal position and of the desire to conform to good practice in assessment, including an emphasis on open, transparent and accountable assessment practices, **the University will make coursework, examination scripts, marks, grades, and any related feedback proformas available for collection by students for a period of three months, commencing forty days following the publication of results (the ‘start date’)**. This provides a means of offering feedback without the need to engage with the Data Protection Act. It might be combined with publication of one or more of: model answers to questions; assessment criteria for answers; marking schemes used.
- 15.8 **Where a student fails to collect marked work and any individualised feedback comments within three months of the defined start date, the School or Department is permitted to retain these items and make a charge for access under the provisions of the Data Protection Act.**
- 15.9 **Coursework assignments, examination scripts and associated feedback comments which are not collected or requested must be retained by Schools or Departments for a period of twelve calendar months following the defined start date, following which they may be permanently destroyed by shredding or incineration.**

15.10 Guidance to students, whether in University, School/Departmental, or Programme publications, should include the following statements:

- **You are able to collect marked coursework, examination scripts and related feedback comments for a period of up to three months, commencing forty days after the date your results are published (the 'start' date).**
- **If you wish to have access to your assessed work and related feedback comments after this three month period has elapsed, then under the provisions of the Data Protection Act you will be required to make a 'data subject access request' to the University and pay the prevailing charge.**
- **After twelve months has elapsed from the defined start date, the University can permanently destroy your uncollected assessed work and related feedback comments by shredding or incineration.**

15.11 Following confirmation of the provisional marks by the Assessment Board, it is the responsibility of the School or Department to ensure that all students are formally written to with details of their confirmed marks, action required to make good any unsatisfactory performance and information on who to contact for guidance and advice.

15.12 An archive sample of marked coursework and examination scripts, along with associated feedback comments, should be available within Schools or Departments in order to assist with staff development activities, induction for new staff relating to assessment policies and practices, and internal and external programme/subject reviews. Such samples should reflect at least the most recently completed twelve month assessment cycle and may be similar or equivalent to the samples which have been internally and/or externally moderated.

## 16. **Entry of Marks on Student Records Database**

16.1 Departments are responsible for ensuring all module marks are input to the CAMS database as appropriate and according to the timescale agreed in the Assessment Calendar.

## 17. **Assessment Boards**

17.1 It is a requirement that moderated module marks are confirmed at formal Assessment Boards as per the University's Academic Regulatory Framework.

- 17.2 Assessment Boards are responsible for implementing the University's regulations in respect of permitted decisions on module results and student status.
- 17.3 Programme Teams are responsible for ensuring that, where a student is permitted to be reassessed in a module(s), appropriate work is provided to the student to ensure that the student can achieve the learning outcomes of the module.
- 17.4 Where a student completes reassessment during the next stage of their programme, the current, prevailing module specification and assessment will apply.

## 18. **General Assessment Issues**

### 18.1 **Cross-Departmental Programmes / Collaborative Partners**

- 18.1.1 Where a module and/or programme is delivered to students by more than one Department or by a Partner Institution, host Department for the module or programme (in association with the Link Tutor in any Partner Institution) is responsible for ensuring that the assessment is internally approved and moderated by the External Examiner where appropriate.
- 18.1.2 Where a module and/or programme is delivered to students by more than one Department or in a Partner Institution the host Department (in association with the Link Tutor in any Partner Institution) is responsible for co-ordinating the internal marking, moderation and any external moderation of the assessment as per regulations.

### 18.2 **Integrity of Assessment**

- 18.2.1 The assessment regime for a module, including coursework tasks, should be designed to ensure the validity of the assessment in measuring a student's individual achievement.
- 18.2.2 The approved system of referencing should be referred to in the Programme Handbook. The importance of consistent referencing should be drawn to students' attention in coursework at all levels.
- 18.2.3 Staff should consider the benefit of setting coursework tasks that minimise the opportunity for collusion or plagiarism. In this respect consideration should be given to the benefit of designing assessments which require the student to relate theory to their own individual practice, or otherwise maximise the potential for independent work.

## 18.3 Marking / Moderation Issues

### 18.3.1 Module Results

- In exceptional circumstances, following moderation, an Assessment Board may agree to scale a set of marks, up or down. The Institute recommends that this be done only in exceptional circumstances, with appropriate rationale, following consultation with the External Examiner(s) and, where it is agreed that scaling is the most appropriate action, it should be applied within relatively narrow limits and +/- 5% should normally be the maximum.
- Where it is evident that the level of the task was not appropriate to the level of award or where there was some general problem with the assessment, such as an ambiguity which affected all students, the Assessment Board should consider alternative measures to obtain a satisfactory result. This may extend to setting the whole assessment aside.
- Normally no single individual mark may be changed by an External Examiner unless they have moderated the entire sample of answers. The External Examiner may suggest that all answers in a group be re-marked prior to further moderation being carried out. Where there is an appropriate rationale the External Examiner may suggest that the marks for all students undertaking a module be scaled up or down. Where an External Examiner identifies that an individual mark is out of line with the sample he/she may suggest that the original marker revisits the mark.
- All actions identified above are subject to agreement by the relevant Assessment Board. Notwithstanding that the Board may decide not to follow suggestions made by an External Examiner, the Board is advised to reflect seriously on the issues raised and to take and report back to them on resultant action.

### 18.3.2 Moderation Sampling, Unseen and Double Marking

- The University has no standard requirement for universal double marking except for the undergraduate project / dissertation and all postgraduate dissertations, which should all be double marked unseen. Unseen internal moderation sampling should be the norm for all assessed work however.
- The University acknowledges that some external awarding/accrediting and professional bodies specify particular requirements in relation to moderation sampling, unseen and double marking which may vary

from University stipulations. Programme Teams are charged with implementing this where demanded.

### 18.3.3 **Anonymous Marking**

- The University encourages the development of procedures for the anonymous marking of coursework and examination scripts where feasible, and expects all Departments to promulgate this practice in each of their programmes.

### 18.3.4 **Use of Percentages**

- The University requires marks or grades for all assessments to be provided unless the assessment is marked as a pass/fail (eg, placements).
- Markers should avoid marking at the borderline wherever possible.
- Where external bodies stipulate other methods of grading assessments, eg, HND/HNC courses, Departments are charged with implementing this as demanded.

### 18.3.5 **Viva-voce Examinations**

- The University's Academic Regulatory Framework and Quality Assurance Procedures stipulate that External Examiners have the right to conduct viva-voce examinations to assist in the assessment of individual students in exceptional circumstances (not as an integral part of the assessment process).

#### **Notes:**

- *Special circumstances applying to the assessment of any particular student should comply with the appropriate University Regulations.*
- *Where a student is proven guilty of cheating or plagiarism their work must be marked in accordance with the prevailing regulations.*