HE Taught Award Regulations: Part B

Section: 6: Assessment and Feedback Procedure
Version: 1.4
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REVISION HISTORY

Ver	Date	Author	Description
1.0	May 2014	Scott Smith	Initial Approval of Assessment and Feedback
1.1	April 2016	Scott Smith	Addition of conflict of interest section and removal of forms
1.2	July 2016	Scott Smith	Amendment to titles and names
1.3	March 2017	Scott Smith	Updates relating to feedback from the procedures implementation
1.4	January 2018	Scott Smith	Inclusion of assessment regulations pertaining to: • Word count • Referencing • Spelling, punctuation and grammar

APPROVAL

Ver	Committee	Date Approved	Comments
1.0	HEAB	14 May 2014	
1.1	ASDC	20 April 2016	
1.2	ASDC	26 Oct 2016	
1.3	ASDC	29 March 2017	
1.4	ASDC	21 March 2018	Approved all amendments

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B6.1 INTRODUCTION

These regulations relate to the provision of higher education programmes delivered at Blackpool and The Fylde College awarded by Lancaster University, Pearson, SQA and Blackpool and The Fylde College. Students undertaking a programme of study awarded by Liverpool John Moores University at Blackpool and The Fylde College may access the University's regulations here:

- https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/public-information/academic-quality-and-regulations

B6: Assessment and Feedback has been produced in consideration of the Quality Assurance Agency's UK Quality Code: Chapter B6 Assessment of Students and the Recognition of Prior Learning.

This procedure ensures that students receive fair and equal access to assessment, which is free from discrimination and is made by well-informed and well-supported first markers. It also ensures that the standard of assessment remains consistent across time and between candidates with respect to individual first markers, and that there is consistency and standardisation between markers.

There are two stages to this process:

- **Verification:** To ensure assessment instruments (assignments and examinations) are fit for purpose, i.e. they enable the student to produce evidence that meets the assessment criteria and learning outcomes and that students are provided with all pertinent details including distribution and submission dates.
- **Moderation:** Assessment decisions accurately judge the students' work against the module grading criteria/learning outcomes and that assessment and grading are consistent across a programme

Note: To ensure guardianship of the College's Regulations and to prevent any potential ambiguity each stage of the process **must** be recorded.

B6.2 EXTERNALITY

Externality is a vital part of the assessment process as it ensures that assessments are set and marked appropriately. Samples must be considered by the External Examiner(s) associated with a programme at both stages of the process.

B6.3 PREPARATION

In preparation for an academic year programme teams must create:

- A sampling matrix that identifies the students, tutors, assessments and dates that will make up each moderation sample.

An assessment schedule that identifies the type of assessment and the distribution and submission dates for each assessment. This will assist students ensuring that the volume,

timing and nature of assessment supports them in achieving the intended learning outcomes.

B6.4 VERIFICATION

B6.4.1 PRE-DISTRIBUTION

The requirements for pre-distribution review vary on awarding body:

- Lancaster University require all examinations to be externally reviewed prior to their issue
- Blackpool and The Fylde College programmes must have at least one assessment per module externally reviewed at all levels, this will ensure academic rigor, standardisation and consistency are maintained at each stage of the programme.

In addition to the sample sent to external examiners and before distribution to students all assessment briefs must be undergo Verification. The outcome of Verification must be recorded. Peer reviewers as internal verifiers are encouraged to utilise the comment section on the Verification Form in order to contextualise the feedback to a first marker. A rigorous peer reviewer will provide advice on what can be done to improve the assessment. If an action is identified, the first marker must complete the actions and return the brief to establish that it is of the required standard.

If remedial action is identified externally or internally, the action must be completed by the first marker prior to the distribution of the assessment to students; internal verification must be recorded on the Verification Form. This process will ensure the assessment is fit for purpose and that:

- The tasks and evidence will allow the student to address the learning outcomes
- It is written in a clear and accessible language

Once the assessment meets the standards required, it may be issued to the students

B6.4.1.1 INTERNAL RECORDS

The internal process must be recorded by the tutor assigned to peer review the assessment on the Verification Form and ensure that the Assessment Front Sheet:

- Has accurate programme and module details
- Taken from the validation document, Identifies the learning outcomes to be assessed
- Has clear deadlines for assessment in terms of date and time
- Shows all relevant grading criteria for the module(s) covered in the assessment
- Indicates relevant grading criteria targeted against each task
- Clearly states what evidence the student needs to provide
- Is likely to generate evidence which is appropriate and sufficient

- Is set at the appropriate level
- Has a time period of appropriate duration
- Uses suitable language
- Has a clear presentation format
- That grade descriptors inform students of the requirement to reach a particular level.

B6.4.1.2 EXAMINATIONS

First markers are responsible for, in accordance with deadline dates issued annually:

- Writing the examination paper, ensuring it has been checked against papers within the last three years to avoid duplicate and/or similar questions.
- Working with the programme team to ensure that all examination papers are sent to both the Programme Consultant (for Lancaster University programmes) and External Examiner for comment.
- Working with the programme team, to provide to the Achievements Team with:
  - electronically encrypted examination papers
  - completed Checklists for HE Examination papers
- Completing the examination front sheet.

Further details can be found in the Higher Education Examinations Policy.

B6.4.2 FIRST MARKING

First marking involves judging all submitted assessments against the grade descriptors identified in the assessment brief. First marking will normally be completed by the academic member of staff responsible for the delivery of the module.

The marking of examination scripts is routinely anonymised.

B6.4.3 MARKING REQUISITES

B6.4.3.1 WORD COUNT REQUIREMENTS

All modules validated by Blackpool and The Fylde College stipulate, for each assessment, its type and scope; this detail is recorded in the relevant module specification. Where an assessment is defined as coursework the scope of the assessment is defined in terms of a word count, this being the maximum number of words permitted for the particular assessment.

In designing an assessment strategy, word counts are included to provide students with an indication of the depth and criticality required to demonstrate their achievement of the learning outcomes. Similarly, word counts are also stipulated to encourage students to write accurately and succinctly, a key skill developed during higher education studies.

When considering an assessment submission, markers may only mark up to the permitted word count plus an additional allowance of 10 percent. Any content submitted in excess of the word count plus 10 percent will not be marked and will therefore not influence the mark awarded for the particular assessment. The references list and appendices are not included in the word count for any particular assessment submission. It should however be noted that appendices are considered to be supplementary to the core content and should not be used for substantive material. Anything which is essential to the assessment task should be included in the body of the assessment submission.

B6.4.3.2 REFERENCING REQUIREMENTS

Markers are not permitted to impart a penalty on an assessment because a reference is not presented in the format stipulated in the College's Referencing Guide. Feedback should however be provided to students to assist them in developing sound academic practices. If however a reference is in such a form that it is impossible for a marker to associate the reference with any meaningful piece of work then the mark awarded for such an assessment will almost certainly be negatively impacted and may result in a student being referred to an academic malpractice panel where the student may be penalised. Any such a penalty will be recorded on a student's record and may negatively affect their academic success.

B6.4.3.3 SPELLING, PUNCTUATION AND GRAMMAR

Blackpool and The Fylde College provides support for all its students to assist them in being appropriately prepared for employment. To that end, where required, students are provided with feedback relating to spelling, punctuation and grammar that is supportive and developmental.

Any work highlighted by a marker as being misspelt, incorrectly punctuated or grammatically incorrect will, normally, not adversely affect the mark awarded for a particular assessment; however where such errors prevent the marker from being able to extract meaning from the work, the error will almost certainly negatively impact the mark awarded.

B6.4.4 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Where a first marker has a personal interest in, or relationship with a particular student being assessed they must declare their interest to the relevant head of curriculum who will ensure that, wherever possible, other members of the team mark and moderate the relevant work. Any conflict of interest must also be recorded on the Moderation Form. Where it is not possible to select an alternative maker the assessed work must always be included in the moderation sample for each assessment. Where the assessment contributes to the final award it must always be moderated by the External Examiner.

B6.5 MODERATION

B6.5.1 MODERATION DEFINITION

To ensure the safeguarding of academic standards and to guarantee the assessment of students is of the highest quality and comparable with the expectations of the sector, second marking should wherever feasible be unseen double marked, that is, the second marker should mark the prescribed sample without sight of either the feedback or mark/grade of the first. Such a process will increase independent judgement and will provide a robust and appropriate methodology that ensures consistency, reliability and validity of all assessment decisions

B6.5.1.1 MARK OR GRADE MEETING

Once the prescribed sample, as defined at the start of the academic year, has been second marked the outcome must be recorded using the Stage 2 Moderation Form. The first marker and second marker must discuss the assessment of the sample. If there is a discrepancy between the majority of the sample marks one of the following actions must be recorded and where appropriate actioned.

- no further action necessary
- the first marker must reconsider the marks awarded for the entire cohort of students and, as a consequence, make changes to all marks, for example by scaling up or down the whole cohort.
- the second marker reviews all student work for an assessment. Following this review, discussion takes place between the first and second marker. As a result, and with the agreement of both, no further action may be necessary or changes may be made to some or all marks awarded

In the event that the first marker and second marker cannot agree an adjudicator, usually the programme leader[*], will consider the decisions making a judgement based on all evidence available to them. It is expected that in the event of a discrepancy in the marks or marks being agreed by adjudication that the external examiner will normally be informed of the judgement.

B6.5.2 TIMING

Assessments should normally be first and second marked as close to the submission deadline as is possible and in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy. This will ensure the quality of process and not

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[*] Where the programme leader is either the first or second marker an independent adjudicator must be found.

disadvantage students. To promote timely second marking unseen double marking could be either operated in a simultaneous or consecutive manner.

B6.5.2.1 STUDENT FEEDBACK

Students should be provided with assessment feedback only after second marking has occurred, this ensures that assessment decisions have been endorsed prior to students receiving feedback. In providing feedback, first markers are to follow the guidance provided in the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy.

B6.5.3 SAMPLE CONSTRUCTION AND SIZE

B6.5.3.1 CONSTRUCTION

Any sample should be constructed using a risk-based approach to identify the collection to be second marked. The sample must be constructed to ensure that every module assessment, first marker and student is sampled within any given stage of programme delivery.

B6.5.3.2 SIZE

The number of submissions sampled per module should vary depending upon the contextual factors which influence the module delivery. These should, wherever possible, be agreed at the start of the academic year by the academic programme team and may include:

- Cohort size
- A range of classifications
- Borderline decisions
- How recently the programme was validated (i.e. a new programme/module delivered for the first time may be subjected to a greater level of moderation to ensure the accuracy and validity of assessment decisions)
- Experience of the member of staff delivering the module (i.e. staff member is new to HE or new to the module in question)
- Historic feedback from students in relation to previous satisfaction of assessment, feedback, teaching and learning
- Feedback and comments from the external examiner and/or course consultant

Cohort size should typically be used as the initial factor to determine the minimum sample size. As a rule of thumb, the second marking sample size should reflect at least the square root of the size of the cohort, with a minimum of five submissions per assessment considered.

All dissertations will be subject to unseen double marking.

B6.6 STANDARDISATION

Is the process which:

- Helps to standardise first markers where more than one person assesses the same module in a within a programme, particularly if delivered at more than one location across College
- Should ensure that the standardisation of assessment briefs is carried out before assessment and second marking.
- May involve a further activity of standardisation of assessment outcomes where separate teams of first markers do not naturally regularly meet or delivery is of a particularly complex nature

Where a module and/or assessment is delivered and assessed by more than one person, standardisation must be carried out before any formal assessment has taken place. It is acceptable for these first markers to second mark each other's assessment decisions.

Assessment and Feedback Indicative Process

Process Start

Year Planning

Create an Assessment Schedule & Sampling Grid

Coursework/Practical

First marker writes assessment

Potential re-draft

Peer subject specific review

Peer checks assessment and completes/amends the Stage 1 Verification Form

First marker amends assessment

External Examiner views sample of assessments (Not Lancaster Programmes)

Assessment suitable for distribution

No

Yes

Assessment distributed to students

Assignments submitted and marked by first marker

Examinations

First marker writes examination

Potential re-draft

Peer subject specific review

External Examiner views examinations

Peer checks amendments

First marker amends examination

Examination suitable

Yes

No

Examination front sheeted and sent to Achievements

Examinations marker by first marker

Moderation

Sample second marked, followed by moderation meeting

Potential adjudication

Assessment Decisions Agreed

No

First & second marker meet to discuss moderation, sample widened

Yes

Process complete