LONDON COLLEGE OF INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS STUDIES

LCIBS Since 1870

Marking and Moderation/Standardisation of Assessments Policy

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Introduction

1. This policy defines the College policy on the marking and moderation/standardisation of all work that is formally assessed as part of a College's programmes. It incorporates College policy on feedback on assessment, moderation, second marking and anonymous marking.

2. The policy has been developed In line with the QAA Quality Code Chapter B6 Assessment of Students and the Recognition of Prior Learning; specifically indicator 13: *"Processes for marking assessments and for moderating marks are clearly articulated and consistently operated by those involved in the assessment process"*

3. LCIBS' Assessment processes will be undertaken by the Department of Assessment and Performance Evaluation (DAPE) this department guides actions for improving student learning. It serves the LCIBS faculty by supporting assessment activities, coordinating the college's assessments, and fostering a culture of improvement.

DAPE supports LCIBS' efforts to continuously improve student learning by:

- Consulting with and assisting faculty and staff in planning, conducting, and interpreting assessment activities;
- Coordinating LCIBS-wide assessment and performance evaluation activities;
- Serving as a resource on assessment and performance issues;
- Working on a variety of special projects, as requested.

LCIBS assessment principles are set out in this policy. Reliability and standardisation is a key principle for assessment, meaning that the outcomes of assessment for a student should be fair and justifiable.

This may be difficult to ensure when dealing with large numbers of markers and a diverse student body and so, the policies for marking, and standardisation and moderation are designed to ensure that each student's work is considered appropriately, and to minimise the possibility of unfair outcomes for students. It also protects and supports the staff who are responsible for making judgments about the quality of student work.

Finally, it is a way of ensuring and maintaining academic standards in LCIBS and its partners.

4. This policy concentrates explicitly on procedures that should be followed when marking assessments; it does not take into account issues such as mitigating circumstances, assessment offences and late submission which are covered by other policies. A principle of the College's marking procedures is that each piece of assessment should initially be marked solely according to defined academic criteria; allowances for other circumstances should be made in accordance with these other policies.

5. Other College policies and procedures relating to assessment are defined elsewhere, notably the following:
    - College Policy on Mitigating Circumstances – student and programme handbook
    - College Policy on Late Submission of Coursework - student and programme handbook
    - College Policy on Assessment Offences: student, programme handbook and Academic Misconduct policy
6. It is recognised that there are many different forms of assessment, including non-written assessment (including assessment of presentations, oral assessment or assessment of contribution in seminars). This policy applies to all forms of assessment; exceptions are made for different types of assessment where appropriate. This particularly applies to policies on anonymous marking and double marking; in some forms of assessment (for example assessment of practical work or of presentations) anonymous marking and/or double marking will clearly be impractical or unnecessary.

Marking

7. All marks that are presented to a board/sub-board of examiners must be on a scale of 0 - 100, using whole numbers only. Normal practice is where the final mark is not a whole number, for the mark to be rounded to the nearest whole number, with 0.5 of a mark rounded up.

8. Criteria for the award of these marks will be defined during the programme / module development processes. Assessment criteria may be defined either at programme, module or element level and must be made available to students. Where appropriate this may be by a simple statement indicating how many marks are awarded for correct/ incorrect answers. Sample criteria are attached, as appendix one (undergraduate) programme teams are free to adopt alternative criteria, or to use or amend these sample criteria, subject to approval of the criteria during the programme / module development process.

Anonymous Marking

9. Anonymous marking is encouraged for all forms of assessment where it is practical to do so.

10. It is recognised that whilst the principle of anonymity ought to be retained, the blanket application of anonymity for students is not always appropriate and that there are some circumstances in which it is not advantageous or administratively viable for full anonymity to be applied. Examples of forms of assessment for which anonymous marking may not be practical include assessment of presentations, seminar contributions closely supervised work such as dissertations, practical work or group work. Where marking of assessment cannot be anonymous, sub-boards must ensure that marking is fair, reliable, consistent and transparent

11. In order to preserve the anonymity of candidates where anonymous marking is in place students should be encouraged to use either their candidate number or student ID number rather than their name on all work submitted for assessment.

12. All students are provided with a candidate number for examinations by student services. Marks and Awards supplied to College boards and sub-boards of examiners should be by candidate number rather than student name.

13. The principle of an anonymous marking policy is that work should, where practical, be anonymous while it is being assessed. Once a mark is assigned names may be re-assigned to the work for the purposes of providing feedback.

Second Marking and Moderation/standardisation

14. The processes of second marking and moderation are to ensure consistency in marking practice.

15. Second marking is defined as the marking of all pieces of submitted work for a particular assessment by an examiner other than the person originally designated to mark the work presented for assessment.

16. Moderation is defined as a process of sample marking of submitted work for a particular assessment by an internal examiner other than the person originally designated to mark the work presented for assessment.

17. Standardisation - a process to agree marks for a sample of papers, either before the main marking exercise (to establish standards), or after (to ensure standards adhered to).

    In specific circumstances (e.g. Where there are a significant number of new markers or a new programme or module is introduced) DAPE may conduct a marking standardisation exercise. E.g. a group of assessors all independently mark a sample of pieces of student work and assign grades using agreed criteria, compare and discuss the outcomes. The purpose of this exercise is to establish that all assessors are applying the agreed criteria consistently.

18. All summative assessment will be second marked or moderated. It is recognised that it is sometimes neither practical nor necessary to second mark all assessment. Normally, all dissertations will be second marked.

19. Where work is second marked, the two markers should attempt to agree a proposed mark to go forward to the relevant exam board. Where agreement is not possible the board will need to establish methods to ensure that one mark goes forward; this could be by appointment of a third marker, taking an average of the two marks, or some other method, which should be formally reported to the relevant board.

20. Second marking or moderation may take three forms:
    - "blind" marking (where the second marker does not see the marks or comments of the first marker);
    - "seen" marking (where the second marker sees both marks and comments awarded by the first marker)
    - "check" marking (for subjects where answers may be right or wrong, and where answers can be checked against an answer sheet and ensure no administrative error has been made).

21. Moderation should ensure an appropriate range of assessments are considered, by use of a representative sample. This would normally reflect;
    - the full range of marks, including firsts/distinctions, borderline cases and fail grades;
    - be of an appropriate size with respect to the size of the cohort
    - include all elements of the assessment for the module.

22. In each case the correct form of moderation or second marking should be agreed by the relevant chair of exam board in consultation with an external examiner.

23. It is advised that no mark except the marks agreed following the second marking or moderation process should be put on material which will be returned to the candidate.

24. The College's Data Protection Policy stipulates that examination scripts are not returned to the candidate, although the college will be required to provide a compilation of comments made on these scripts on receipt of a Data Protection Subject Access Request. It should also be made clear that all marks are subject to confirmation by the relevant board and may be subject to amendment.

Responsibilities

25. The head of DAPE (or other appropriate member of staff appointed by the head of DAPE) or programme lead (subject) will be responsible for ensuring that all the assessments for the relevant module are marked and the agreed marks are ready in time for the preparation of the report for the Board Examiners.

26. The pool of assessors is responsible to the head of DAPE and the Academic Board for ensuring that marking and moderation is adequately conducted within their subject area.

27. It is the responsibility of College Boards of Examiners to ensure that this Policy on Marking and Moderation is enforced and that trends in results are analysed to ensure that standards are comparable between programmes and cohorts

28. It is the responsibility of the Module Leader to ensure that assessment criteria have been drawn up for the assessment being marked. The Head of DAPE is to

coordinate the this process. These should be provided to all assessors involved in the marking/moderation process including any external examiner(s).

Feedback

29. Feedback should be provided to support students in their learning. Feedback will be provided on all assessed work (either formative or summative), and on other relevant aspects of a student's performance and progress in a module.

    This comprises a marker's comments on a student's performance in an assessment component. It should facilitate a student's understanding of their achievement in an assessment and should promote learning and self-reflection so that a student is provided with information to help their improve performance in subsequent assessments. Feedback may, for example, provide information on how the mark was derived, the extent of a student's success in meeting the assessed learning outcomes and an indication of areas for improvement in the future.

    Feedback should be given on all assessments and may relate to the content of an assessment and/or assessment technique.

    The type of feedback given will be informed by the nature and purpose of the assessment and the discipline, and as such will be linked to the task's learning outcomes, assessment criteria and grade related criteria. Module Leaders and head of DAPE are responsible for identifying and implementing the most appropriate methods for providing feedback on assessed work and informing the pool of assessors on this methodology. While still considering an appropriate level of consistency in relation to how that feedback is perceived by students. Pro-formas, which allow assessors to lay out how a student has met the learning outcomes being tested, may be used if appropriate.

    Consideration should be given to the type of feedback provided to students who are eligible to resit and the most appropriate mechanisms through which their learning can be supported.

    It is noted that feedback should not be used as a basis for negotiation on marks but to enable a dialogue on ways in which to improve performance for the future. The process of providing feedback must be kept separate from the extenuating circumstances and appeals procedures.

    Feedback will normally be accessed via the same channel a
    submission eg if submission is via Moodle, then feedback will be accessed from Moodle.

    Various types of feedback on assessed work exist. Some examples include:

    - Individual or group verbal feedback
    - Individual or group written and/or audio feedback
    - Model answers and/or example solutions

- Previous assessment questions/papers/performances
- Generic feedback

Definitions:

Assessors: A group of dedicated markers who will undertake 1st and 2nd marking as designated by the Head of DAPE

Assessment criteria: Based on the intended learning outcomes for the work being assessed, the knowledge, understanding and skills markers expect a student to display in the assessment task and which are taken into account in marking the work.

External Moderation: a moderation process carried out by someone other than a member of staff of the College (See Moderation)

Grade descriptors: encapsulate a level of achievement in relation to bands of marks. For individual assignments they indicate how well the assessment criteria have been met; for award classifications they indicate the level of achievement across a programme of study as a whole.

Internal Moderation: a moderation process carried out by staff of the College (See Moderation)

Moderation: A process intended to assure that an assessment outcome is fair and reliable and that assessment criteria have been applied consistently. Forms of moderation include: sampling, either by an internal or external examiner additional marking, for example of borderlines, firsts and fails, or where there is significant difference between the marks of different markers that cannot be resolved without the opinion of another marker review of marks: where there is a significant difference between several assessment marks, within or between parts of a programme, which indicate the marks may need to be reconsidered

Appendix One

EXAMPLE CRITERIA FOR THE AWARD OF MARKS FOR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

Bases of criteria

Work to be assessed towards an award should be assessed using the following criteria (not in order of importance):

1. Relevance of answer to question set.

2. Coverage of answer: appropriate range of facts, ideas and sources.

3. Accuracy of information.

4. Structure and organisation of argument.

5. Quality of analysis, argumentation and critical evaluation.

6. Quality of expression and presentation.

While there is no set order of priority among these criteria, the main emphasis is on evidence of understanding and the ability to think, to argue a case or to solve problems. These criteria are used to categorise submissions into the following classes (note that the narratives below are guidelines).

Criteria for marking

70+	**A (1st)**	**Excellent** **Distinction.** As this covers a range of thirty points, the following breakdown shows the variation **(85-100)** Marks awarded to work that is truly exceptional pieces of work. Marks of over 90 are reserved for research worthy material and show a true and full mastery of the subject. i.e. could be published in a high-quality journal **(80-84)** Work is highly original, sophisticated, or

		shows skills beyond what is expected. **(75-79)** Show originality**,** impressive and original research, higher critical ability, and a high degree of analytic skills. Goes significantly beyond lecture materials and course reading. **(70-74)** Performs the assigned task to an excellent standard, with accuracy and sufficient detail. For essay-based work shows a good range and high number of appropriate sources. Goes beyond material covered in lectures and demonstrates a critical ability, analytic/synthetic skills, and impressive research skills.
60-69	**B(2i)**	**Very Good.** Some critical thinking or reflection demonstrated. Many relevant points made which are clearly argued, accurate and coherent. Work includes a number of points covered in courses materials and lectures and shows an appreciation of their importance.
50-59	**C(2ii)**	**Good** a solid piece of work, which shows a level of understanding of the work and has presented it in a readable manner
40-49	**D(3rd)**	**Pass** **Minimum pass mark** - just sufficient evidence to pass. Provides some relevant information but show only a rudimentary knowledge of the subject matter. Little tie to relevant sources

0-39	**Fail**	**Fail.** Inadequate in conception, substance or argument. **(35-39)** A failing piece of work but could be brought to pass standard if either more information was included or better use of the information. Student could be eligible for referral. **(20-34)** Contains very little correct information and not centrally relevant to the topic **(0-19)** Completely inadequate in conception, substance or argument. No understanding of course materials.