HE Moderation Policy

Policy Title	HE Moderation Process
Policy Category	Compliant
Owner	Deputy Director HE Quality and Standards
Group Executive Lead	Deputy Principal Newcastle College, Executive Lead HE
Date Written	July 2023
Considered By	HE Quality and Standards Committee
Approved By	HE Quality and Standards Committee
Date Approved	September 2023
Equality Impact Assessment	The implementation of this policy is not considered to have a negative impact on protected characteristics.
Freedom of Information	This document will be publicly available through the Groups Publication Scheme.
Review Date	September 2026
Policy Summary	This process document outlines HE moderation activity.

Applicability of Policy	Consultation Undertaken	Applicable To
Newcastle	Yes	Yes
Newcastle 6th Form	No	No
Carlisle	Yes	Yes
Kidderminster	Yes	Yes
Lewisham	No	No
West Lancashire	No	Yes
Southwark	Yes	Yes
Group Services	No	No
HE Partnerships (*partner may have an equivalent policy)	No	Yes

Changes to Earlier Versions	
Previous Approval Date	Summarise Changes Made Here
January 2022	*Previous version contained only a link to the intranet page. Additions, minor updates and corrections made.*

Linked Documents	
Document Title	Relevance

Equality Impact Assessment

	Judgement
EIA 1 - Does the proposed policy/procedure align with the intention of the NCG Mission and EDIB Intent Statement in 2.0?	Yes
EIA 2 - Does the proposed policy/procedure in any way impact unfairly on any protected characteristics below?	
Age	No
Disability / Difficulty	No
Gender Reassignment	No
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No
Race	No
Religion or Belief	No
Sex	No
Sexual Orientation	No
EIA3 - Does the proposed policy/processes contain any language/terms/references/ phrasing that could cause offence to any specific groups of people or individuals?	No
EIA4 - Does the policy/process discriminate or victimise any groups or individuals?	No
EIA 5 - Does this policy/process positively discriminate against any group of people, or individuals?	No
EIA 5 - Does this policy/process include any positive action to support underrepresented groups of people, or individuals?	No
EIA 6 - How do you know that the above is correct?	Consultation has been carried out with relevant colleagues within NCG and with a higher education (HE) committee within our HE deliberative structure, which includes HE student representation.

1.0   What is Moderation?

Moderation is a process separate from the marking of assessments, which provides assurance that an assessment outcome is fair, valid and reliable, that assessment criteria have been applied consistently, and that any differences in academic judgement between individual markers can be acknowledged and addressed.

Moderation focuses on the marks awarded to the full set of assessed work for an assessment, module or course, in the context of the academic standards for the award and is not about making changes to an individual student's marks. It ensures consistency in marking within cohorts and across time.

All assessment grading and feedback is subject to internal and external moderation as appropriate and formal ratification by exam committees.

2.0   What Needs Moderation and When?

The focus of moderation is of module guides and assessment decisions. The moderation process involves internal moderation, mostly undertaken by a member of staff working in the same department or curriculum area, and external moderation, which is mostly undertaken by a designated external examiner.

2.1   Moderation Plans

Each programme leader creates a moderation plan as part of the annual planning process. The moderation plan identifies an internal moderator for each module assessment of the programme. The role of internal moderator is to moderate the module guide as well as assessment decisions.

The plan clearly indicates deadline dates for each assessment component within a module and when the internal moderation process is scheduled to take place. Moderation of assessment decisions typically follows assessment submission and marking.

2.2 Moderation of Module Guides

Module guides are all internally moderated prior to being issued to students using the 'Internal Moderation of Module Guide' form. Module guides which are for the final level/year of all programmes (e.g. level 4 Cert HE, level 5 Foundation Degree, level 6 BA/BSc Hons Top Up and 3 year degree, and level 7 PGCE and Masters) are also sent for external moderation by the programme external examiner using the 'External Moderation of Module Guide' form.

2.3 Internal Moderation of Assessment Decisions

A sample of assessment decisions and feedback are internally moderated across all levels for all assessment components. The purpose of internal moderation is not to 'remark' the work, and care should be taken by the internal moderator to ensure that this does not occur.

The purpose of internal moderation is to:

- Review the sample of work, including the mark allocated and feedback, and confirm the judgment of the first marker(s).

- Confirm the standard and quality of the work submitted meets the required level of the qualification.

- Agree the marks of the 1st marker if no significant differences are found (+/- 5%).

- Report any necessary discussion, recommendations or issued relating to consistency of standards within the 'Internal Moderation of Assessment Decisions' form.

2.4 External Moderation of Assessment Decisions

A sample of assessment decisions and feedback are externally moderated for all final level/year of all programmes (e.g. level 4 Cert HE, level 5 Foundation Degree, level 6 BA/BSc Hons Top Up and 3 year degree, and level 7 PGCE and Masters) for all assessment components. Typically, this is the same sample used for internal moderation. External moderation is usually undertaken by the programme external examiner.

The purpose of external moderation is not to 'remark' the work, and care should be taken by the external examiner to ensure that this does not occur.

The purpose of external moderation is to confirm the standards of student performance are comparable with similar programme(s) or subjects in other UK institutions. The external examiner does this by sampling work across all modules that contribute to the final award classification. The external examiner must sample the work of students before the marks are presented at a Module Examination Committee. Student marks will not be ratified at an examination committee without first being reviewed and standards confirmed by an external examiner.

3.0   Moderation Sample Size

Typically, the moderation sample size will be at least 6 samples for each assessment tool within the module, or all assessments if cohort is less than 10. The sample should include:

- Assessments from each of the classification bands (where available).

- All work awarded a fail.

- Borderline pass/fail.

- A full cohort list with all module marks should be provided with the sample.

- A module 'Module Review Summary' form.

- The internal moderation form must be included for external moderation.

- If relevant (see section 5.0 below) a 'Concealed Double Marking' form must be included.

Larger sample sizes may be required where there are academic assurance concerns, or for large cohorts of students.

4.0   Moderation Outcomes

Assessment decisions and outcomes are confirmed at the Module Exam Committee. Outcomes of moderation are recorded on the internal and external moderation forms, including and comments on strengths and areas for development.

External examiners are required to endorse the marks they have sampled by completing the 'External Examiner Endorsement of Assessment Decisions' form. Programme leaders must provide a copy of this form to the chair of the Module Examination Committee as proof of the external scrutiny.

If the moderation reveals significant issues with the sample provided, a review of all assessments may be conducted. An independent person may be assigned to moderate the work. Examples (not exhaustive) which could require the entire cohort to be reviewed may include:

- Inconsistency of a 1st marker.

- New or inexperienced marker.

- New module.

- Concerns raised by Internal Moderator or External Examiners.

- New assessment type for the module.

- Specific requirements of the Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body.

5.0   Concealed Double Marking

All dissertations or modules with a credit value of **40 credits or more** at undergraduate or postgraduate level are concealed double marked. The concealed double marker is required to mark **all work** for the module.

Concealed double marking is a process where a 2nd marker will independently mark all the work for the module. The concealed double marker must not have sight of the first marker's comments, feedback or marks allocated.

Role of the concealed double marker is to:

- Mark the assessed work without prior sight of the 1st marker/assessors marks and comments.

- Compare the judgement of the marks awarded and feedback meet the standards and level of the qualification.

- Agree the marks of the 1st marker if there are no significant differences (+/- 5%) found. The concealed double marker will report any necessary recommendations

relating to consistency of standards within the concealed double markers form. The student will only receive one set of marks and feedback signed by the first marker.

- Record the process and discussion by completing the 'Concealed Double Marking' form.

If there are significant issues between first and second markers, e.g. spanning across classifications, or grades which are more than +/- 5% different, this should be:

- Referred the to the Curriculum Leader, where an independent person will be assigned to mark the work (third marker).

- The outcome and the process will be recorded on the 'Concealed Double Marking' form.

- In exceptional cases where the issue has not been resolved the Curriculum Leader will contact the HE Quality lead/or equivalent to discuss the next steps.

6.0 Moderation process

The following internal link provides access to the Moderation Process.

http://intranet.ncgrp.co.uk/newcastlecollege/HE/SitePages/Moderation%20Project.aspx