Essentials of Being a Marker in Informatics

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Schedule

- Why are assessment and feedback important?
- What are the responsibilities of a marker? Rules and regulations on the assessment process
- Dealing with academic misconduct
- What makes for useful feedback?
- How can we get a sense of how well we are doing as markers?

Why are assessment and feedback important?

In small groups, discuss the advantages of marking and providing feedback:

- For students
- For the course team
- For the university

Why are assessment and feedback important?

- **For students:**
  - Checking progress, understanding, the grasp of the course content, the development of new skills, etc.
  - Indicating areas of improvement
  - Offering encouragement and motivation
- **For the course team:**
  - Getting feedback on course
  - Indicating topics which could be revised with students
  - Reflecting on own teaching style
- **For the university:** abiding to standards; validating degrees; ranking.

What are the responsibilities of a marker?

In small groups, take a few minutes to discuss your responsibilities:

- Before starting marking
- After marking

Marker Responsibilities (Informatics Teaching Support Policy)

- Marking assessed and formative coursework
- Providing feedback to students
- Answering student queries on marks and feedback
- Is provided with a detailed marking guide by the course lecturer
- Submitting initial marks for approval by the lecturer.

- **Exam marker:** Same as marker but marking exams.

Marker Responsibilities (Policy for the recruitment, support and development of T&Ds)

- You are expected to carry out work which is in line with your job description, pay grade, time allocated.

- For development, you may be given limited tasks which are not applicable to your grade; the course organiser (CO) will provide supervision and feedback.

- **Pastoral support: direct students to more specialised sources (e.g. student support officers)**

- You must not start work until provided with formal induction and cleared to do so by Teaching Support

- You must attend mandatory training/ complete Learn module.

Marker Responsibilities (Policy for the recruitment, support and development of T&Ds)

- The CO is responsible for supporting and overseeing any assessment and duties, including briefing you on process

- The CO will ensure that appropriate moderation processes are in place and that you are informed about them; more robust moderation in your case.

Responsibilities (Inf Teaching Support Policy)

- Monitoring your hours of work and submitting weekly timesheets to Informatics Student Services (ISS)

- **Hours spent marking + hours for other roles + hours in Informatics training = hours paid**

- If you think you might exceed your allocated hours, raise this with the course lecturer who will report to the ISS

- **DO NOT work extra hours until you get permission from the ISS (normally for max 15% extra time)!**

What are the responsibilities of a marker? Let's learn more

- Individually, use the handout to find replies on the following questions:

1. What are the normal deadlines for returning marked coursework? What about exams?

2. How and where should you present the marks and feedback?

3. Where should you return the marked cw/exams?

4. What marks count towards 1st class UG degree/PG distinction?

5. How is late submission generally considered? How should you treat it?

6. What are the most applicable types of academic misconduct for your courses? How you handle them in next slides…

Marking deadlines

- Coursework: 10 working days (2 weeks), could be more for substantial work or very large courses
- Exams:
  - <=70 scripts: within 5 working days of exam
  - >70 scripts: discuss with the Informatics Teaching Organization (ITO) to return in batches, with first batch within 5 working days and last within 10 working days of exam
- **If expecting to be late, notify ITO immediately so that students could be informed!**

Recording and returning marks and feedback

- Coursework:
  - Clearly write mark on front of submission, and feedback to the student either on submission or on separate sheet (different if coursework is electronic)
  - **Return marks first to CO who might check them**
  - Complete webmark form with mark to be awarded in "Awarded mark"
  - Record "NS" (and not "0") in "Awarded mark" for non-submissions
  - If late penalties applied to student, record original mark (i.e. had he/she not been late) in "Raw mark" and mark with penalties in "Awarded mark" + write "late" in last column
  - **Return coursework and feedback to ITO**

Recording and returning marks and feedback

- Exams:
  - Use coloured pen
  - Write something on every page (mark/tick)
  - Write on paper margin marks awarded for each part of a question, and total encircled at the end of question
  - Indicate when deducting points (e.g. cross, exclamation mark, underline); short explanation useful, but no pejorative remarks!
  - Record in table at the front total for each question, and total mark for exam in box "Total"
  - **Return to ITO**

Dealing with late submissions

- You will be notified of them by the ITO
- Record in "Awarded mark":
  - zero by default for: Informatics 2C - Introduction to Computer Systems; Introduction to Java Programming; Computer Architecture
  - Otherwise, deduct 5 percentage points every calendar day or part thereof it is late, up to max 7 calendar days; then mark becomes zero
- Exceptions (no deductions) for students who are granted an extension for a good reason for max 7 calendar days; you will be notified of them by ITO

Dealing with academic misconduct

- Know the difference between:
  - **Plagiarism** = presentation of another person's work as one's own, without proper acknowledgement of the source, with or without the creator's permission, intentionally or unintentionally
  - **Collusion** = unauthorised and unattributed collaboration of students in a piece of assessed work
  - **Falsification** = an attempt to present fictitious or distorted data, evidence, references, citations, or experimental results, and/or knowingly making use of such material

Dealing with academic misconduct

- In case you detect misconduct in a student's work:
  - Apply a face value mark to the work as presented
  - Complete an Academic Misconduct Report
  - Submit it to the School Academic Misconduct Officer and copy to CO; or if postgraduate research student, to College Academic Misconduct Administrator
  - Attach all of the relevant documentation

What makes for good feedback on assignments for students?

In small groups, think about the characteristics that define good feedback in terms of:

- Structure
- Content (including language)
- Quantity

What makes for good feedback on assignments for students?

- Be timely, so that it is more effective
- Balance the content: good + bad + encouragement
- Try to present bad parts said in a positive way ; avoid writing "but…"
- Be constructive: what was needed, reading
- Be specific as to the good and bad parts
- Use questions to involve students in dialogue
- Be honest, but not hurtful
- Don't give too much feedback (overwhelming); offer "see me" option.
- Match feedback with marks
- Be kind and encouraging!

How can we get a sense of how well we are doing as markers?

- Through self-assessment (using checklists, proforma)
- From students (questionnaires, structured group discussion, post its etc.) BUT need to also be their tutor
- From colleagues (double marking, collaborative commenting)
- By checking the marks provided by colleagues, re-marking a revision of the assignment
- Important to get feedback through different means

In a future session (week 6) we will...

- Discuss how tutors could prevent/address difficult situations with assignments

- Discuss strategies for fast and fair marking

- Reflect more on what constitutes good and bad feedback, with examples

- Debate your own concerns with regards to marking

Resources

- Policy for the recruitment, support and development of tutors and demonstrators
- Informatics Teaching Support
- Informatics Teaching Support Staff Policy
- Informatics Teaching Support training webpage
- **UoE "Extended common marking scheme"**
- Academic services pages on academic misconduct
- ISS pages on the assessment process and late submissions
- UoE Assessment Regulations
- Informatics Coursework Marking Guidelines and Examination Marking Guidelines
- Informatics guide to using Webmark

Resources

- IAD pages containing advice on basic principles for assessment and feedback and quick ideas for feedback
- **"Tutoring and Demonstrating: a Handbook"** chapter 6 ("Marking and Commenting on Essays") and p. 36-7 chapter 4
- **"Assessment and providing feedback " material on the "IAD Resources on Tutoring and Demonstrating" channel in Learn**
- **IAD orientation courses on marking and feedback:**
  - "Assessment and providing feedback"- Wed 10 Oct
  - "Assessment and providing feedback in the sciences"- Wed 24 Oct