

Moderation Policy for MSc Dissertations

Agreed by Teaching Committee, 16/11/2016
Proposed by Frank Keller, MSc BoE convener,
in consultation with Richard Mayr and Vijay Nagarajan, MSc project organizers.

The aim of this policy is to comply with university regulations that require that we have an official, published moderation policy.

MSc Marking Practice

All MSc student dissertations are marked independently by two markers. Once the two markers have submitted their marking forms, they are expected to agree a joint mark, and submit a third form stating (and justifying) this mark.

There are, however, cases, in which a third person is called in, typically an experienced member of staff, to check the marks returned by the three markers. This person, the moderator, takes into account all available information (the dissertation, the two marking forms, and the agreed marking form if available) and comes up with a moderated mark, which he/she returns on a regular marking form. The moderated mark is then used as the final mark for the project.

This policy is meant to standardize when moderation happens, ensuring that marks are fair and reliable, while at the same time being compatible with the requirements of a large MSc cohort.

Moderation Rules

From 2016/17 onwards, will moderate all projects where at least one of the following criteria is met:

- (1) the agreed mark is a failing mark (<50)
- (2) the two markers cannot agree on a mark
- (3) the discrepancy between the two marks is more than 20
- (4) the discrepancy between the two marks is more than 15 and the merit/distinction boundary (70) has been crossed

Criteria (1) and (4) ensure that our marks are robust at the pass/fail and merit/distinction boundaries, as this is where appeals tend to cluster. Criteria (2) and (3) ensure that moderation is used to check marks if there is substantial disagreement between the two markers.