



**University of London
External System Academic Committee**

Double Marking in the External System

Executive Summary

There are three types of 'double marking' in use in UK HEIs: (a) 'sampled', (b) 'open' or 'seen', and (c) 'blind'. The current wording of the *Guidelines for Examinations* allow either 'open' or 'seen', or 'blind' double marking. A proposal to change this to only blind double marking was made to ESAC but current wording was retained subject to a paper on double marking analysing ES practice and practice internally in the Colleges of the University. Current practice in the External System for the larger undergraduate programmes and some of the postgraduate is for 'seen' or 'open' double marking with some of the postgraduate programmes having 'blind' double marking. Internal guidelines of the Colleges of the University vary; current practice ranges from moderated single marking to 'blind double' marking; the majority of the Colleges surveyed allowed 'sampled' and 'open' or 'seen' double marking. Blind double marking was only the norm in one College (LSE). Thus

- the Guidelines should remain allowing either 'open/seen', or blind double marking but be amended to reflect current good practice with use of external examiners;
- a series of recommendations to good practice are proposed;
- further consideration should be given to guidance to examiners on their responsibilities under the Data Protection Act and FOI Act.

Specifically:

- 4.5.3 shall be deleted.
- 4.5.6. and 4.5.7 should be redrafted following further research on good practice concerning Data Protection and FOI.

This new wording is proposed:

4.5.2 Every script and every essay/report/dissertation which is an examination element in its own right shall be marked by at least **two** Examiners or by **one** Assessor and **one** Examiner, who shall afterwards prepare an agreed list of marks. The marking of scripts and essays/reports/dissertations should be subject to internal moderation and sampled by an External or Intercollegiate Examiner

Wayne Morrison (Professor)

Queen Mary and Director of the Undergraduate Laws Programmes of the University of London.

**University of London
External System
Double Marking**

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1. Terminology of double marking practices

There are three types of double marking in operation in UK HEIs:

- 'Sampled double marking': in this process all scripts are 1st marked (in small numbers usually by the 'course leader' or 'chief examiner') and then a % is double marked by a 'moderator', or for 'verification'. In best practice the 1st marker has put their marks and comments on the assessed work or provided proforma ('report sheet'). If the moderator finds issues with the marking they may refer the whole set of assessed work to the Chair of the Board of Examiners who may ask for the set or be remarked by another examiner with experience and knowledge in the area. The moderator should provide a record of their assessment of the marking of the 1st examiner. This is increasingly common in UK HEI. In good practice the 1st marker is expected to record the reasons for their marks on the assessed work or a proforma (report sheet) and this is made available to moderator and/or external examiner.
- 'Full "seen" or "open" double marking': in this process all scripts are marked by two markers but the 2nd examiner marks with knowledge of the 1st marker's marks and comments. The 2nd examiner is expected to exercise independent judgement and the marks are agreed by averaging or negotiation. If the examiners can not agree or are unhappy with the averaged mark then a third party moderator is required. In best practice each examiner puts comments either on the script/assessed work or a proforma explaining their marks and this is used as evidence that the scripts/assessed work have been double marked and/or by third party moderator to judge which particular comments best fit the assessed work. If required to moderate the third examiner should record a reason for the final mark on the assessed work or the proforma. In good practice, as all examiners know their marks and comments will be seen (and are available to the students who apply), the comments/explanations for marks are constructed in a way that bears public scrutiny. This is the most transparent of the three kinds of double marking as the record of comments allows an observer – such as the External Examiner or the Chair of the Board of Examiners - to have an insight into the judgment process.
- 'Full blind double marking': in this process all scripts are marked by two examiners and the 2nd examiner marks with no knowledge of the marks or comments of the 1st examiner. This is said to 'maximise independence' in marking. Marks may be agreed by simply averaging (normal practice within particular 'class' classifications) or negotiation. When examiners can not agree a third party moderator is required (in the past this role was often given to the 'external examiner', but this is no longer good practice). It is usual that examiners keep an individual record of comments on all scripts either in their personal written files or on computer. Anecdotal accounts of examiners who engage in this process state that independence is often compromised in the process of agreeing marks, particularly if an institutionalised system of averaging and reference to a third moderator is not in place. The process of 'agreement' is open to abuse in that it may involve 'trading (i.e. I will give you a 2.1 on that piece of work but you must come down to 2.2 on this one', or 'assertions of seniority', or 'deference to knowledge on particular topics of the other examiner'). This agreement process is a 'black hole' in that it is not common for the examiners' full sets of comments and discussions on agreeing final marks to be kept with the final mark sheet. Consequently, blind double marking is the least transparent of the three types of double marking as there are no obvious comments or reason(s) for the mark made available to third party scrutiny; however the examiners individual records may be liable to recovery and made available to the candidate under the Data Protection Act (note: this is often misunderstood and some Universities present the issue as if only examiners' comments that appear on the examination script or proforma need be made available. Other Universities ask examiners to destroy their personal files of comments as soon as they have come to an agreed mark. But this negates the ideas of transparency and accountability of the process).

2. Status of Guidelines for Examinations

The University of London, External System: Guidelines for Examinations 2007-8 is a comprehensive and subtle document of some 51 pages (including Appendices and related guidelines and regulations). Its subtlety reflects the task of creating 'baselines' for University of London awards for external students that provide overall coherence to a range of diversity in practices in Lead Colleges (including members of Consortia).

Central principles are to ensure that:

- the standard for the award is consistent, in the field of study concerned, with that of the national university system;
- the processes for the assessment of External students are sound and have been fairly conducted;
- the standards set for the award are comparable with those of other Colleges of the University of London.

3. Inherent tensions between ES Guidelines and variety of internal practices

There is an inherent tension between the ES guidelines and practice of individual external programmes across the external system. The guidelines state: 'Wherever possible, practices and procedures should reflect those in place for the assessment of College-based students' (p. 47 with particular reference to external boards of examiners but of general applicability): the tension is between an aggregate or an individualist reading of the phrase 'reflect those in place for the assessment of College-based...'. In other words, should an individual external programme, for example Computer Information Systems (CIS, Lead College Goldsmiths), make its assessment practices and procedures exactly mirror (reflect) those in place for internal students at Goldsmiths studying Computer Information Systems, or should they fit the External System Guidelines which may 'reflect' a boarder consensus or streamlining as to the practices of 'College-based' students?

[Note: CIS internally adopts 'sampled' double marking but the external CIS programme operates 'seen' or 'open' double marking in accordance with the Guidelines.]

Moreover - and this is borne out by surveying College practice in assessment - if individual College practices and procedures vary, then how is that variation controlled or streamlined for a coherent ES Guidelines?

The particular answer to that dilemma may be that the ES Guidelines need to be pedagogically sound, fit and able to support board confidence in the fairness and aptness of ES assessment procedures and methodologies.

Changes to practices or procedures should be judged in accordance with this overriding consideration and the principles in 2.

4. Specification of Double Marking in the current *Guidelines*

Section 1: Boards of Examiners and conduct of assessment

4 Conduct of Examinations

- 4.5.1. The baseline guidelines below are to be followed by All External System Boards of Examiners. Any more specific Lead College/Consortium guidelines on marking must also be followed.
- 4.5.2 Every script and every essay/report/dissertation which is an examination element in its own right shall be marked by at least **two** Examiners or by **one** Assessor and **one** Examiner, who shall afterwards prepare an agreed list of marks. The marking of scripts and essays/reports/dissertations should be moderated by an External or Intercollegiate Examiner
- 4.5.3 Coursework which counts towards a student's final classification should be marked in detail by one Examiner, with a second internal marker having at least an overview of the work. If any differences of opinion emerge, the External/Intercollegiate Examiner should be asked to moderate.
- 4.5.4 The Chair of the Board of Examiners should assign Examiners into pairs for the purpose of double marking and should ensure that the performance of pairs of Examiners is monitored by the Board. Assessors and Assistant

	Examiners must always be paired with Examiners. Experienced Examiners should be paired with less experienced Examiners wherever possible.
4.5.5	Members of a Board of Examiners shall have the right to see the scripts, essays, reports, dissertation and/or coursework of any candidate for the purposes of conducting the examination.
4.5.6	No marks are to be put on material which will be returned to the candidate.
4.5.7	The University and all Examiners are required to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 which establishes legal rights for individual with regard to the automatic processing of personal data, including examination marks and results, on computing, word processing, or similar equipment. In order to ensure that these obligations are met, Examiners are not permitted to retain examination data relating to identifiable individuals on departmental or personal computers or similar equipment....

4.5.2 thus allows either open or blind double marking but NOT sampled marking.

4.5.3. is a clarification for coursework but adds nothing of substance.

AT ESAC of May 2008 it was proposed that a change be made to these guidelines, specifically:

Paragraph 4.5.3

- To note a clarification of College policy on blind and double-marking:

<p>4.5.3 <i>The marking of scripts and essays/reports/dissertations shall be both double and blind marked and moderated by an External or Intercollegiate Examiner. Examiners must ensure not to write comments on the scripts.</i></p>

It was objected (Professor Morrison) that this was not a clarification but a radical change to policy. The current guidelines were accepted and any change was made subject to a paper from the Assessment Working Party. At the next ESAC it was orally reported by Professor Morrison (Chair of the Assessment Working Party) that the Working Party had reported that 'blind double marking' was not the practice of the major External programmes (EMFS, Laws, CIS) and that the current wording fitted current practice and should be retained. The Chair ESAC (also the Dean ES) asked Professor Morrison to prepare a paper on the issue 'not bound to current ES practice' or 'based on arguments of expediency', but 'on the practices of the Colleges internally' (Professor Morrison, notes of ESAC request).

5. Methodology of this paper

Regulations and guidelines were accessed and reviewed for a sample of the Colleges of the University of London (i.e. University College London [UCL], Kings College, Queen Mary, School of African and Oriental Studies (SOAS), London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), Royal Veterinary College, Goldsmiths College, as well as the recently independent Imperial College. A range of other Universities were sampled (dependent upon their 'regulations' and 'guidelines' being available by web searches). Discussions - by telephone, email and face to face meetings - were held to ascertain current practice of external programmes and their 'fit' with 'internal' regulations/guidelines. A variety of conversations/interviews were conducted on the reality of examining with individuals at the University and elsewhere.¹

6. Importance of overall coherence to retain confidence in the processes

¹ Thanks, among others, to Ms Rosie Gosling and Ms Nancy Korman (LSE), Dr David Brownrigg (Goldsmiths College), Mr Ian Yeats and Ms Catherine MacMillian (Queen Mary and Laws Consortium), Dr Anne S Hamblin (Royal Veterinary College), Professor Mathew Craven SOAS, Dr Beverley Brown, Laws Consortium.

It is important to see individual issues of quality assurance and the protection of the integrity and fairness of the assessment process as part of a whole. UK HEIs commonly do not return candidates assessed work (and this is reflected in the exemption given in the Data Protection Act 1998). This contrasts, for example, with New Zealand where all students have the right to have their scripts as well as any comments returned to them but their scripts are usually only singularly marked. In a process where the scripts are not returned and there is no right to appeal on academic grounds doubts may be entertained by students as to the fairness and justice of the processes. Marking with no knowledge of the identity of the candidate, double marking, third party moderation internally and sampling by external examiners, the requirement that oral examinations be conducted by no less than two examiners acting together, the application of common marking criteria, the participation of external examiners from paper scrutiny to full examination boards, and the transparency of records/comments all contribute to building and retaining confidence in the system.

Double marking and internal moderation operates to:

- provide a check that an assessment has been marked in line with the expressed aims and learning outcomes of the assignment/examination, and in terms of marking criteria;
- provide assurance for students of fairness of marking and hence the equality of treatment of each student;
- assure internal consistency of assessment within a module;
- provide an approach to the comparability of standards across modules within a subject area;
- provide evidence to External Examiners and Chairs of Boards who review the marking process and marks awarded.

7. Findings on current ES practice

'Open' or 'seen' double marking is the norm and covers c. 90% of external candidates assessed (both EMFS and UG Laws mark c. 40,000 scripts on each programme annually, all of these are 'open' double marked). The larger programme all emphasise the need for 'independence' in the 2nd marking, for both examiners to indicate on the scripts that they have read each page, use different coloured pens for each examiners/assessor, and have clearly defined institutional practices for reaching an agreed mark and for third party moderation in cases where agreement can not be reached. Samples of marked scripts are forwarded onto to external examiners who participate in the process from paper scrutiny to Board meetings. They appear conducted with considerable diligence and oversight by Chairs of Examiners, and (particularly in the case of the sole Category B Board, the EMFS [LSE], specific marshalling by Chief Examiners.

The instructions to examiners stress independence of marking and outline the programme specific procedures to take to achieve an agreed mark; they are detailed and fit for purpose, however, the instructions are labelled Confidential. The availability of these instructions for public scrutiny needs to be addressed (see below). My conclusion is that no material

8. Internal practices

Internal College procedures vary: not all colleges require some form of double marking (Royal Holloway, for example, allows single marking). Double marking, either, 'sampled', 'open' or 'blind', should however be viewed as good practice.

The largest college, UCL, for example, expects either:

- (i) single marking of all answers by the academic(s) who set the question/assignment, followed by moderation of all answers that fall within a borderline category (for example, pass/fail; 2:1/2:2; pass/distinction etc) and a random sample of answers from each of the relevant classification categories to confirm that marks are consistent;

or

- (ii) single marking of all answers by the academic(s) who set the question, followed by moderation of *all* answers by a second academic.

Extracts from regulations/guidelines of nine colleges are presented as Appendix 1.

9. Conclusion and recommendation

4.5.2 Revised as below fits good practice in the ES and internally:

4.5.2 Every script and every essay/report/dissertation which is an examination element in its own right shall be marked by at least **two** Examiners or by **one** Assessor and **one** Examiner, who shall afterwards prepare an agreed list of marks. The marking of scripts and essays/reports/dissertations should be subject to internal moderation and sampled by an External or Intercollegiate Examiner

4.5.3 Should be deleted.

10. Proposals as to good practice

A guide to marking practices:

- Each programme should ensure that it has comprehensive marking scheme in place which reflects the learning aims and objectives of the programme.
- Each programme's policy on double marking and instructions to examiners should be revised in the knowledge that they are not confidential documents and will be open to public scrutiny.
- Each programme should make available such document in a publicly accessible place, either in the printed student handbook, online, or both.
- Such documents should contain a clearly articulated procedure for dealing with differences between examiners: they should emphasise that such differences should be expected to arise naturally from independent judgement. Such differences can be resolved, among other ways, by:
 - discussion (negotiation) between the markers;
 - an average mark (but with institutional procedure to deal with differences across class categories);
 - third party moderation;
 - another defined Institutional procedure to resolve differences or to allow the board of examiners to come to progression and classification decisions that are fair just and reasonable.
- A clear record of marking should be kept on the assessed work or a proforma (report sheet). If blind double marking has occurred this should be recorded on the assessment or proforma after the programme procedure for agreeing the final mark. For 'open' double marking the work of both examiners in marking the assessment should be clearly seen on the assessment or proforma. In cases of 'moderation' by a third party the grounds of moderation should be clearly discernable.
- Examiners (both 1st and 2nd) should annotate each page of the assessed work (particularly scripts) to show that it has been marked. If blind double marking is occurring this may simply be a tick.
- Each programme should provide specific instruction to examiners as to their role under the Data Protection Act and FOI. In particular it is likely that any comments made on a candidates work, wherever stored is covered and may be given to candidates upon request.
- Each external programme should give consideration to preparing a proforma (report sheet) to accompany the assessed work. This report sheet should be designed to show how marks relate to the agreed assessment criteria and learning aims. (Note: this will have financial consequences.)
- Consideration should be given to the return of such proforma to candidates as feedback (Note: feedback of assessment will be the subject of a paper from the AWP within the next nine months).

Immediate recommendation:

4.5.6. and 4.5.7 of the ES Guidelines should be redrafted following further research on good practice concerning Data Protection and FOI.

At present 4.5.7 reflects the situation BEFORE the full coverage of 'manual data', this is covered fully since 24 October 2007.

APPENDIX 1: Extracts from sampled College guidelines/codes/regulations

1. University College London (UCL), *Regulations on Examinations 2007-08 (Appendix 5)*

COMPREHENSIVE MODERATION OF MARKING

Executive Summary

As a result of a recommendation from the UCL Board of Examiners, following a trial in one Faculty, the Academic Committee has approved the adoption of a comprehensive moderation of marking policy, the use of indicative answers and threshold levels at which sampling of scripts should occur.

Departments should develop and apply their own criteria for the moderation of marking and Faculties will want to see that the moderation of marking process has been deployed by Departments in an appropriate and consistent way. For example, some programmes may wish to continue to use a second independent assessor as a moderator who will then act to ensure that the primary assessor's mark is appropriate. Alternatively, others may wish to use a single moderator across the entire assessment exercise (written paper, essay etc). Notwithstanding this variation the precepts outlined below should be paramount.

1. The Production of Indicative Answers or a Series of Detailed Marking Criteria

UCL will adopt the practice of producing *either*:

- (i) indicative (but **not** model) answers that detail the essential facts or arguments are expected within the answer by the question setter(s).

or

- (ii) a series of detailed marking criteria which are relevant to the aims and objectives of the course/programme and level of study.

In the context of project reports and dissertations, a structured assessment relating to key aspects of intellectual input should be developed, modelled on those currently in use across UCL.

2. Comprehensive Moderation of Marks

Comprehensive moderation should take the form of *either*:

- (iii) single marking of all answers by the academic(s) who set the question/assignment, followed by moderation of all answers that fall within a borderline category (for example, pass/fail; 2:1/2:2; pass/distinction etc) and a random sample of answers from each of the relevant classification categories to confirm that marks are consistent.

or

- (iv) single marking of all answers by the academic(s) who set the question, followed by moderation of *all* answers by a second academic.

The decision on which of the above should be adopted will be made by the Board of Examiners for the programme/module. However, for all undergraduate projects or reports (usually worth 1.0 course unit or more) and all Masters dissertations/research projects, option (ii) must be adopted, that is 'be subject to single marking of all answers by the academic(s) who set the question, followed by moderation of all answers by a second academic'.

Informing External Examiners

The marking decisions made by the Board of Examiners will be conveyed to the External Examiner(s) either by the Chair of the Board of Examiners or their nominee(s). It is anticipated that, where small numbers of scripts and/or students are involved, option (ii) will be adopted but the level at which this occurs should be decided by the individual Board of Examiners rather than prescribed by UCL. Equally, in programmes with large numbers of students and in some large Masters programmes the Board of Examiners may decide to adopt option (i) with due reference to the workload implications. This should allow a significant degree of flexibility for individual Boards of Examiners whilst at the same time provide appropriate quality assurance.

Informing Faculty Board of Examiners

The Chair of the Board of Examiners will report to the Faculty Board of Examiners which option will be used, together with the sample size relative to the class size for option (i), within the programme of course unit/module to ensure appropriate deployment.

2. King's College, *Student Hand book 2007-08 (page 11)***Double marking**

Double marking is required by the College for assessment where the primary purpose is summative (Regulation 15.4 Regulations for the conduct of examinations (A3)).

The College does not require blind double marking and some Visiting Examiners find it useful when moderating to see on scripts where double marking has taken place. One of the College's Visiting Examiners has also pointed out that open double marking permits 'a dialogue between the markers which is recorded in writing and thus adds to the transparency of the assessment process.'

3. Queen Mary University of London, *Examination Board Guidelines 2007-08***PART 3 – Marking and Marks
*Marking and Double Marking****General*

15. For all programmes, except for the MBBS, at least 50% of the assessed work for each module must be double marked in accordance with the QMUL Code of Practice on Marking and Double Marking (see appendix 3). This will usually include all examination scripts (which invariably count for at least 50% of the marks), and substantial items of coursework. At least one marker must be a member of the academic staff of the College, although the first marker may be an associate or assistant examiner. It must be clear from the assessed work that it has been double-marked, and the mark awarded by each of the examiners should be identifiable by their initials. For MBBS different arrangements exist whereby only short answer question scripts from resit exams are double marked.

Coursework

16. Where a module is assessed wholly by coursework, the elements selected for double marking must as far as possible be the same for all students. Where assessment is based on a selection of coursework (for example, the best 3 of 4 essays), the elements to be double-marked must be drawn from those that contribute to the assessment.

17. The SEB report to its DEB should briefly summarise the procedures it uses to monitor the standard of marking, and outline the board's conclusions as to the standard of marking for the session.

.....

Appendix 3

Code of Practice on double marking

The primary objective of double marking is to confirm the standard of marking: to ensure that all the assessments have been considered thoroughly, conscientiously and objectively, and that the method of assessment complies with the marking scheme approved by the examination board. This is becoming increasingly important with the pressures upon staff, both in relation to the value of scripts to be considered, and the short timescale for completion of the process. A secondary advantage is a guard against conscious or unconscious discrimination towards an individual student.

The College has adopted the following policy with regard to double marking:

At least 50% of the assessed work for every unit must be double-marked. The following are approved methods of double-marking:

[a] Independent assessment of the piece of work by two examiners, where neither sees the comments or marks of the other until the whole procedure has been completed ('blind' double marking).

[b] Assessment of the work by two examiners, where the second examiner is able to see the comments and marks made by the first examiner ('open' double marking).

[c] In mathematically-based disciplines which have a detailed marking scheme which allows little or no discretion to the examiner, the second examiner checks that all sections of the piece of work have been marked, and that the marks have been correctly totalled.

The examination board must have a procedure whereby the comments and marks of the two examiners can be distinguished (for example, by using different coloured ink), and each examiner must write the total marks allocated, and his/her initials, on the cover sheet to the script.

An outline of the procedure for monitoring coursework marking, together with the outcome of the monitoring for that question, must be included in the report or minutes of the examination board.

4. LSE : ACADEMIC REGISTRAR'S DIVISION, *Instructions for Examiners 2007-2008 for Undergraduate and Taught Masters Programmes*

12. Marking of examination scripts and assessed coursework

12.1 In order to ensure the continuing integrity of the School's assessment process, the current practice of double marking of all work which counts towards a student's final degree award should continue to be the normal expectation. Double blind marking is where the second internal examiner is unaware of how the first internal examiner has marked the script when carrying out his/her marking. However, it should be open to departments to seek an opt-out arrangement for individual courses: for example, it is known that some of the School's more quantitative disciplines are of the view that double blind marking might not be necessary in certain circumstances. This flexibility would be made available on the basis that the departments would need to seek approval for variations from normal School practice from the appropriate central School body, i.e. USSC/GSSC, on a case by case basis.

5. School of African and Oriental Studies (SOAS)

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews/reports/institutional/SOAS07/RG331aSOAS.pdf>

Institutional audit

School of Oriental and African Studies

MARCH 2007

Annex to the report

Assessment policies and regulations

64 Prior to 2003 practices varied from department to department in terms of marking conventions. With a view to securing more consistent standards in the measurement of student achievement the School introduced blind double-marking for all courses in the academic year 2003-04, applying both to examinations and also coursework. Concerns were subsequently raised during discussions between the LTPC and the QAAC about the additional burden this requirement placed on examiners and the potential for inconsistency in marking where the second-marker was not a specialist in the subject, and the policy was reviewed during the academic year 2005-06. Second-markers still are expected to reach an independent judgment, but may see the first-marker's marks and comments.

SOAS

<http://www.soas.ac.uk/committees/former/ltpc/38737.pdf>

These minutes are for information only and are not a formal record of the meeting. A copy of the official record is held by the Secretary to this Committee

SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES

LEARNING & TEACHING POLICY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Wednesday 15 February 2006

38. Blind Double Marking

The Committee considered the papers at Appendix A. [appendix A not available on open access]

1 There appeared to be a consensus for removing the requirement that items be blind double marked in the strictest sense. It would be important to produce clear guidelines on marking which could be consistently applied. Any changes to the procedure would be introduced for examinations at the end of the current session.

The Committee acknowledged that language acquisition papers were a special category. In many cases the second marker could not be expected to be as expert in the language as the first marker. The Committee **noted** that, for these courses, examiners had been given dispensation to write comments on examination scripts.

After discussion, the Committee agreed that blind double marking should be replaced with a form of second marking which did not need to be blind. It was further agreed that the Registry would produce a text setting out the rules of marking both for examinations and coursework which it would circulate to Faculties and other interested parties.

6. Royal Veterinary College, 2007-08 Guidelines

4.5 Marking Requirements

4.5.1 Projects: All MSc projects, BSc 2nd and final year projects, BVetMed elective projects and other major projects should be blind double marked. Where markers have arrived at adjacent marks both within a classification range, the higher mark should become the mark awarded. Where markers disagree over a broader range, the markers should discuss the work and come to an agreed mark.

4.5.2 Final Year BSc Summative Assessments in modules: should be blind double marked. Where markers have arrived at adjacent marks both within a classification range, the higher mark should become the mark awarded. Where markers disagree over a broader range, the markers should discuss the work and come to an agreed mark.

4.5.3 In course summative assessments: BSc First year projects, BSc second year coursework, BVetMed reports, should be sampled by an experienced marker. Where the sample has shown that marking is satisfactory, all marks awarded will be accepted. Where the sampling has given cause for concern about the marks awarded, the whole cohort's work, or the set of work first marked by a particular examiner, will be double marked as appropriate.

4.5.4 Examination scripts: It should be ensured that whilst there is a single marker for each question, each candidate's work will be marked by a range of markers in any given paper. These should be sampled by an experienced marker. Where the sample has shown that marking is satisfactory, all marks awarded will be accepted. Where the sampling has given cause for concern about the marks awarded, the whole cohort's work will be double marked. The mean, median and standard deviation for each question should be viewed well in advance of the Examiners' meeting and where these indicators appear 'unusual' for a given question the scripts should be sampled.

4.5.5 Sample Sizes: The following quantities should be used for the sampling of work.

10% of cohorts of 50 plus students

20% of cohorts of up to 50 students (or 5 pieces of work, whichever is greater)

4.6 The marking of written scripts and, where possible, individual items of coursework, shall be conducted in such a way as to preserve the anonymity of candidates.

4.7 The total mark for an answer shall be recorded on the front of written examination scripts, but appropriate comments may be written alongside the answer. Comments on in-course assessed work which is to be returned to candidates shall normally be written on the work itself.

4.8 All scripts and other work shall be available to the External Examiners who will examine in detail the marking of any candidate whom they determine is on the borderline between any two classifications. The external examiners shall also scrutinise the scripts of a question where the distribution of marks is abnormally skewed. Any candidate whose mark for a question appears to be out of line with the rest of his or her performance may also be reviewed.

7. Imperial College, London (Note: accessed December 2008 but this was undated)

PROTOCOLS FOR DOUBLE MARKING

The Undergraduate Studies Committee and the Graduate Studies Committee have agreed that the guidance given below on protocols for double marking should be issued to departments and divisions.

Background

The reports of Visiting Examiners are closely monitored by the Pro Rector (Educational Quality) and the Registry in respect of comments on the College's examination processes. One issue which regularly appears in the reports is that of double marking. A frequent comment is that it is not always clear from looking at the scripts that double marking has actually taken place.

The College Examination Instructions clearly state the requirements for double marking, as follows:

- Every script and essay/report/dissertation shall be marked by at least two Examiners or by one Assessor/Assistant Examiner and one Examiner who shall afterwards prepare an agreed list of marks. The scripts and essays/reports/dissertations should be moderated by a Visiting Examiner.
- Coursework which counts towards a student's final classification should be marked in detail by one Internal Examiner, with a second internal marker having at least an overview of the work. If any differences of opinion emerge, the Visiting Examiner should be asked to moderate.

The Instructions do not, however, specify a methodology for double marking and there is no requirement that double marking must be made 'blind'.

The University has recommended that Colleges should consider drawing up protocols for double marking. The Quality Assurance Advisory Committee in addressing this issue decided to carry out a survey of departmental practices with regard to double marking and submitted the results to the Undergraduate and Graduate Studies Committees with the aim of identifying and sharing best practice. Although the survey covered practices for the marking of undergraduate examinations, it was felt that the information obtained was equally relevant to the marking of postgraduate examinations.

Protocols

The USC and GSC agreed that the results of the survey should be circulated to departments, with the following examples of good practice being particularly recommended for consideration:

- Annotation of the scripts to indicate that first and second marking has taken place
- The use of an examination paper cover sheet to indicate the first and second markers for each question (see example from the Department of Agricultural Science attached to the survey summary)
- The use of different coloured pens by the first and second marker
- A third party (for example, the course coordinator) to act as moderator where marks cannot be agreed.
- It appears that most departments record marks and comments on the examination booklets. The Humanities Programme, however, has adopted a practice of recording first, second and agreed marks on a summary grid and other departments might wish to consider whether such a practice would be helpful to them.

8. Goldsmiths College, *Internal marking guidelines for Computing - CONFIDENTIAL***First and second marking procedures – May 1st 2008**

xxxxxx, Examinations Officer, Dept of Computing

This document outlines the main responsibilities of examiners (first markers), second markers and checkers. See separate list (to follow) for allocation of first and second markers. Checkers have not yet been allocated for all exams; this will be announced at a later date.

1. The first marker (examiner) should:

- Print off the cover sheet (last page of this document) and fill in the title and course code of the exam, the total number of scripts and your name.
- When marking scripts, indicate in the margin marks for each answer according to the marking scheme as 1/3, 3/5, etc.
- Write a ringed total at the end of each question and write the totals on the front page of the script.
- Write short comments for the second marker and external for answers not explicitly covered by the marking scheme (too many of these suggest your marking scheme should be amended). General comments may be written on the cover sheet rather than the scripts.
- Use the abbreviation `ft' (follow through) for answers where there is an error but subsequent answers would have been correct.
- Write `seen' on any page that has been read and taken into account but on which the examiner has written nothing else.
- Enter exam marks in the department database and print off the page.
- If you are marking one part of a 1cu exam, be sure to use the correct form for entering your mark: forms for second and subsequent parts are labelled #2, etc.
- Attach the marksheet to the cover sheet and pass them to the second marker with the scripts and a copy of the model solutions and marking scheme.

NB: for practical exams where there are no “scripts” as such, first and second markers will have to arrange between themselves for the second marker to view the student outputs.

2. The second marker should:

- Select a sample of **n** scripts (or other outputs) according to the table below and check that they have been properly marked according to the marking scheme.
- Be aware that you are **not** being asked whether you would have given the exact same mark independently, but whether the mark reasonably reflects the candidate's performance according to the marking scheme.
- Confirm that the marker has followed the above guidelines
- Check that adequate marks have been given for partially correct solutions.
- Ensure that the marks on the sampled scripts have been totalled correctly.
- Tick the ringed totals (if correct) and write your initials or some other abbreviation at the top right-hand corner of every correctly marked page
- If you agree with the marks, initial the Comments field on the marksheet against the candidate number of each sampled script.
- If you disagree with the marking or with the general standard of assessment you should enter a negotiation with the examiner which will

hopefully have one of the following outcomes:

- (a) Second marker accepts examiner's marks
- (b) Examiner agrees to re-mark all scripts
- (c) Examiner and second marker agree on a scaling recommendation which should be recorded on the cover sheet. You should be prepared to justify any recommendations at the pre-pre-meet.

- You should *not* scale the marks at this stage; this will be done at the sub-board scaling meeting (pre-pre meet).
- If the total number of scripts is 20 or fewer, the second marker should check that marks have been totalled correctly on the remaining scripts.
- For larger exams with more than 20 scripts, they should be passed to the designated checker.

3. Checkers should

- ensure that marks for each question and the total marks for each script have been added correctly.
- Tick the ringed totals (if correct) and the top right-hand corner of every correctly marked page
- Initial the Comments field against the candidate number of each correctly marked script
- Notify the first marker of any errors and initial the cover sheet once all errors have been corrected. Checkers should *not* make any changes themselves.

4. When checking is complete the examiner(s) should enter any corrected or outstanding marks in the department database and the cover sheet should be returned to the Department Administrator.

5. **NB:** first and second markers should be aware that any comments written on scripts may be disclosed to candidates under Data Protection legislation.

N	No. of scripts (N)
1	1
2	2
3	3-4
4	5-6
5	7-9
6	10-13
7	14-18
8	19-28
9	29-47
10	48-99
11	100-150

Goldsmiths College Department of Computing – Exam Cover Sheet

Title:.....

Course Code:..... Part (A/B/-)

Number of scripts:..... Date of exam.....

Examiner/first marker:

Second marker:

Checker:

1. I have scrutinised a sample of scripts and find that they have been correctly marked according to the provided model solutions and marking scheme.

Initials (second marker) Date

2. I have checked the marks on the remaining scripts and find that all marks have been totalled correctly.

Initials (checker) Date

Scaling

The examiner and second marker jointly recommend that the marks should not be scaled / should be scaled as follows: *(delete as applicable)*

Initials: (examiner) (second marker) Date

Grounds for recommendation:

Further comments

(continue on another sheet if necessary)

9. Royal Holloway regulations on the conduct of assessment***Marking***

54. The identity of candidates will be withheld from those marking summatively-assessed work so far as is practicable until after the marking process is complete. The Faculty Dean may approve exemptions from this requirement, of which students will be informed.

55. Work submitted for assessment shall be marked using one of the following methods:

(a) single marking, where the work is marked by one Internal Examiner;

(b) single marking with sampling, where the work is marked in accordance with (a) above, except a second Internal Examiner also marks a sample of the work, which shall include all pieces of work which are given a mark of Fail by the first marker, in order to ensure consistency with the approved marking scheme;

(c) double marking, where the work is marked by two Internal Examiners, or by an Internal Examiner and an Assessor, who shall together agree a single mark for each piece of work;

(d) blind double marking, where the work is marked in accordance with (c) above, except the second marker shall not have prior sight of the comments of the first marker.

56. Any piece of work which contributes towards a candidate's award classification shall normally be assessed using one of the methods outlined in paragraph 55(b-d), except in the case of in-course assessments the form or timing of which renders this impractical.

57. Save in the case of formal oral examinations, presentations or performances, Visiting Examiners will not normally mark work. In exceptional cases, however, a Visiting Examiner will be asked to adjudicate where a first and second marker are unable to agree a single mark for a piece of work, even after reference to a third internal marker.

58. All final course outcomes shall be moderated by a Visiting Examiner, who shall have regard for matters such as the positioning of candidates at borderlines, the distribution of marks across the cohort and the award of Fail.

APPENDIX 2: Current instructions to examiners on major ES programmes

1. EMFS (LSE as Lead College instruction for the assessment of External Students)

NB: EMFS Examination Boards operate as Category B Examination Boards; these are the only category B Boards in operation in the External System.

BSc degrees and Diplomas for Graduates in Economics, Management, Finance and the Social Sciences, the Diploma in Economics/Social Sciences and Access Route for External Students 2008

Instructions to Markers 2008

1. Instructions on Marking Scripts

Every script is to be marked **independently** by each of two Examiners, following the procedures outlined below. All Examiner Marksheets should be returned to **XXXXX** (Ground Floor, Stewart House) **as soon as possible in the green envelopes provided**. It is the responsibility of the Chief Examiner for a paper to ensure that all marks and scripts reach Stewart House by **xxxxxx** on the following dates:

xxxxxxx 2008 for the Diploma in Economics/Social Sciences² and Access Route. **xxxxxx** 2008 for all other papers.

The Examiner Marksheets should be sent in to **xxxxxx** at Stewart House by the Chief Examiner only, as s/he has responsibility for reviewing all scripts that s/he has not second-marked. The Chief Examiner should ensure that all other examiners on the paper understand this. Individual Examiner Marksheets should be sent as and when ready; do NOT wait for all marking to be completed before sending off those that are ready.

Examiners are **strongly encouraged** to use the whole range of marks, from 0% to 100%. This includes marks in the 70s and 80s for essay-based questions, where appropriate. Chief Examiners are asked to pay particular attention to the marks awarded to students in the 70+ category, reviewing them to see that due reward is given for excellent work.

Marks for parts of an answer should be put in the right-hand margin beside the answer in the script and ringed. To ensure blind-marking, the total mark for a complete answer to a whole question should **only** be entered in the grid on the outside back cover, along with the total mark for the script. In some cases the grid may be absent, so the Examiners should create their own. **Each Examiner must initial his/her total mark for the script on the back cover. No script should be returned to Stewart House without the appropriate marks on the back cover.**

It would be helpful if the first and second markers could use **different coloured pens** for marking; this would help checking the totals later on. It would also be helpful if both examiners **put a mark on each page that has been written on by the candidate** (a ✓ will do) to show that they have read that page. This is important when students write their answers out of order or in different parts of the answer booklet – it is easy to miss part of the answer to a question. It is so easy that it happens every year.

Each Examiner must also sign the pink sheet (Schedule and Payment Claim Form) that is sent in the wallet with the scripts and Examiner Marksheet(s); if you don't sign this you will not be paid for marking those scripts.

Once a script has been marked, the first Examiner should copy his/her total mark from the grid on the back of the script to the first (left-hand) column of the Examiner Marksheet. **The first Examiner should also keep his/her own record of all marks.**

² Henceforth reference to the Diploma in Economics will include the Diploma in Social Sciences as well

When the first Examiner has marked a batch of scripts, the scripts and the related Examiner Marksheets should be delivered to the second Examiner (or as agreed with the Chief Examiner). The second Examiner should follow the same procedures as above, copying his/her total mark from the grid on the back of the script to the second column of the Examiner Marksheet. The scripts and the Examiner Marksheets should then be returned to the Chief Examiner.

The final agreed mark

It may not always be possible, especially for markers of papers that have a large number of scripts, for first and second markers to meet and discuss a difference in the marks they awarded to a script. Each team of markers must decide in advance of marking how they will resolve such differences and it is the **responsibility of the Chief Examiner** to ensure that such procedures are established. **Appendix 3** discusses ways such differences could be handled.

Where it is not possible for first and second markers to meet and discuss any differences in marks, the Second Examiner should follow the procedures agreed with the Chief Examiner for resolving differences. For some papers, the Second Examiner is seen to be the more experienced Examiner and has been asked to resolve the difference by awarding a final agreed mark. Other procedures may also be used, but the important point is that all students taking the same paper are subject to the same processes of agreeing final marks and that **all Examiner Marksheets must go back to the Chief Examiner for review.**

In all cases, the agreed final total mark should be written in the box on the back of the script and signed by the Examiner who has inserted this mark (usually the Chief Examiner where there are only two markers for all scripts). The mark should also be written in the third column of the Examiner Marksheet. **No marks should be written on the front cover of the script.**

Regardless of which method is selected to resolve discrepancies in marks between first and second examiners, it remains the responsibility of the Chief Examiner to ensure that all marks returned to the University are a true and consistent reflection of the quality of the scripts. Where the Chief Examiner second-marks all the scripts, there is no problem. Where s/he does not, there is responsibility for carefully reviewing the marks of all the scripts not personally marked. **The Chief Examiner must review all Examiner Marksheets**, ensure all discrepancies between first and second markers have been reasonably and consistently handled, and adjudicate on any borderline marks. S/he may also choose to randomly check the marks given to some other scripts. The fourth column of the Examiner Marksheet is **only to be used** for any amendments to the agreed mark subsequently made by the Chief Examiner, or confirmation of marks, following his/her review of all Examiner Marksheets. For all scripts reviewed by the Chief Examiner, the amended mark (or confirmed mark after review) **must** be entered in the final column of the Examiner Marksheet. Please also note that if the final mark is amended by the Chief Examiner, s/he **must ALSO** enter the new final mark on the back of the script and sign the back cover. **Should a student appeal their mark, staff retrieve the script first, not the Examiner marksheet.** The Chief Examiner should also sign on the final signature line of the Examiner Marksheet for all pages where there are marks that have been reviewed.

The **Examiner Marksheet** is designed to allow Stewart House to scan in the results of candidates from the marksheets rather than entering each mark individually. This means that Examiners **MUST** write their marks legibly **using a pen (not pencil – right?)**, with each digit of the mark between the two lines of the column on the marksheet. Please do not cross out a mark – if you have made a mistake you must use correction fluid. Lastly, after you photocopy the Examiner Marksheet for your own records, you must ensure the original Examiner marksheet remains with the bag of scripts until it reaches the Chief Examiner. A separate information sheet is being produced by the University of London about using the marksheet. Please do try to meet these requirements. Scanning of marks dramatically speeds up entry of marks, allowing staff at Stewart House to spend more time checking marks before the Board of Examiners' meetings, leading to decisions based on accurate results and quicker release of results to students.

All Chief Examiners must ensure that a representative sample of scripts is sent to their External Examiner, preferably by DHL (or as agreed with the External Examiner). For the small-entry papers with 30 or fewer scripts, all scripts should be sent. For those papers with more than 30 scripts, Chief Examiners should send 5% of the scripts, with a minimum of 30 scripts and a maximum of 60 (taking zones A and B together). Diploma in Economics/Social Sciences scripts are to be treated separately

from all other scripts for this purpose.

Scripts and Examiner Marksheets must be returned to Stewart House separately, as instructed in Schedule and Payment Claim Form (the pink sheet sent with the scripts).

(Note marking scheme deleted.....).....

The borderline marks of 69, 59, 49 and 39 **should be used sparingly** and only where **both** Examiners hold genuine doubt as to the category of mark to be awarded. Such marks must only be used by Examiners to indicate their willingness for the Board of Examiners to rank them in the category above in certain circumstances at the time the candidate is being classified for the degree or graded for the Diploma in Economics or Diploma for Graduates.

.....

10. Data Protection Act

Under current legislation candidates may have **access to comments written on their marked scripts** on request. This does not preclude Examiners from writing on scripts providing this is done in a professional and responsible way.

2. UG Laws

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

LLB EXAMINATIONS FOR EXTERNAL STUDENTS MAY/JUNE 2007
SCHEMES A & B AND GRADUATE ROUTES A & B

1. The maximum mark for each paper is 100.
2. The class marks for each paper for the purposes of honours were agreed by the Board of Examiners as follows:
.....

The four Intermediate level subjects (Criminal Law, Constitutional law, Common Law Reasoning and Institutions, and Contract) are not taken into account in classification for honours under Schemes A or Scheme B, but are taken into account in classification for honours under the Graduate Entry Routes A and B.

3. The University's policy is that all scripts in all subjects should be marked by two examiners. The second examiner is not a moderator, but should mark independently without adjusting to compensate for any perceived leniency or severity on the part of the first marker. The second examiner should however correct any evident slips, e.g. a mistake in transferring a mark from the end of the question to the back cover or an arithmetical error in the addition of the marks.
4. It will be found convenient for each examiner to mark independently to a maximum of 100 marks for each paper and for the two totals to be averaged. **(A resulting half mark must be rounded up.)**
5. **Use of final marks of 39, 44, 49, 59 and 69.**

Where the average of the two marks falls one mark below a critical borderline, the mark must be adapted in accordance with the following principles:

- (a) where both examiners agree that the candidate falls below the borderline (e.g. 39+38, 44+44, etc) the mark is to be recorded as 38, 43, 48, 58 or 68, as the case may be;
- (b) a final mark of 39, 44 etc is to be recorded only where one examiner gave a mark of 40+, 45+, etc; such marks will no longer be "hatted" on the final marksheet and all 39, 44 etc will therefore be raisable at the meeting if critical to the candidate's result.

Where the average of the two markings falls two or more marks below a critical borderline, but one examiner gave a mark of 40+, 45+ etc, the mark will be recorded as a hatted mark (e.g., 51^, 45^, 48^).

6. Marks of 30 and below

Examiners are reminded that a mark below 30 indicates that the script is so poor that it should not even qualify the student for a reference overall in the situation where it was the only paper with a mark below 40. This would normally result in the candidate failing the whole year. In the case of disagreement between the markers across the 30 borderline, this should be indicated by the use of the mark of 29 or a hatted mark, as appropriate.

7. (a) There is no system of referring borderline scripts routinely to a third examiner. In any case where a borderline mark is relevant to the candidate's overall result, this will be drawn to the attention of the meeting and the Board will take account, as it considers appropriate, of any discrepancy between the two marks.
 - (b) Where the two examiners are broadly in agreement as to the marks to be awarded to a particular batch of candidates, but there is a substantial discrepancy on an individual script or scripts, the second examiner should seek to resolve the disagreement in consultation with the first examiner, provided that this can be done without delaying the return of marks to Senate House: if the disagreement cannot be resolved, it should be drawn to the attention of the Chairman.
 - (c) Where there is a substantial divergence between the two examiners over a larger number of candidates, then
 - (i) in subjects where there are only two examiners, they should seek to resolve the difference between themselves and, if necessary, refer it to the Chairman.
 - (ii) in subjects where there are several examiners, the second examiner must notify the Chairman, who will then normally arrange for a sample of the scripts to be read by the chief examiner or some other examiner as appropriate: in this event, if the chief or other nominated examiner so recommends, the chairman may direct that the marks awarded to candidates in the batch involved shall be adjusted to the extent necessary to maintain the standards of the examination and to produce a fair result for the candidates concerned.
 - (d) The Chairs will also identify any cases where the pattern of marks from a particular pair of examiners is significantly different from the other marks in the subject and, after considering the marks obtained by the same candidates in other subjects, take such action as appropriate.
 - (e) An examiner who finds difficulty with a particular question (for instance because it has been similarly misunderstood by a large number of candidates) may seek guidance from the chief examiner. A chief examiner who identifies such a problem may think it right to offer guidance to all the examiners as to how such answers should be dealt with in order to achieve consistency.
8. Scripts for candidates will be divided for first marking between all examiners listed in para.11.