London Academy For Applied Technology (LAAT)

Marking and Moderation Policy

Policy Title: Marking and Moderation Policy
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Regulatory Alignment with Office for Students (OfS) Conditions

This Marking and Moderation Policy forms part of LAAT's academic governance and quality assurance framework for higher education provision delivered in partnership with Plymouth Marjon University. It supports compliance with the Office for Students (OfS) Conditions of Registration by ensuring that assessment practices are fair, valid, reliable, transparent, and subject to appropriate academic oversight, thereby safeguarding academic standards and credible student outcomes.

Under Condition B (Quality and Standards), the Policy ensures consistent and transparent marking and feedback (B1), defines clear staffing and oversight arrangements for marking and moderation (B2), establishes controlled processes for marking, moderation, and Module Assessment Board confirmation of marks (B4), and aligns assessment practices with Plymouth Marjon University's Student Regulations Framework and external examining requirements to meet sector-recognised academic standards (B5).

Under Condition C (Consumer Protection), the Policy ensures students receive clear information on assessment criteria, marking and moderation processes, and confirmed marks, and operates alongside LAAT's Academic Appeals and Complaints Policies to provide fair routes for redress Under Condition E (Management and Governance), the Policy assigns oversight of assessment standards to Academic Board and the Academic Quality Panel, with defined responsibilities, escalation routes, and secure record-keeping to ensure accountability and effective risk control. Under Condition F (Provision of Information), the Policy ensures accurate, timely, and secure provision of assessment outcomes, feedback, and academic records. The Policy is fully aligned with Plymouth Marjon University's Assessment Regulations and governance expectations for franchised provision and will be updated in response to regulatory or partner requirement changes.

This policy is informed by relevant sector reference points, including the **UK Quality Code** for Higher Education and the **OIA Good Practice Framework**, and is implemented through LAAT's academic governance and quality assurance arrangements to ensure consistency, fairness, and effective oversight.

Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

This Policy sets out the London Academy for Applied Technology's (LAAT) approach to the marking and moderation of assessments for franchised higher education programmes delivered in partnership with Plymouth Marjon University. It ensures that assessment marking is fair, consistent, transparent, and aligned with approved academic standards, thereby safeguarding the credibility of student outcomes and the integrity of LAAT's awards. The Policy supports LAAT's compliance with Plymouth Marjon University's Student Regulations Framework (SRF) and the Office for Students (OfS) Conditions of Registration, particularly those relating to academic quality, academic standards, and effective governance.

Purpose Statement:

The purpose of this Policy is to provide a clear, controlled, and auditable framework for marking and moderation that ensures valid and reliable assessment decisions, protects students from inconsistent academic practice, supports continuous enhancement of assessment quality, and provides assurance to LAAT's governing bodies and validating partner that sector-recognised academic standards are consistently maintained.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to all academic staff involved in assessment design, marking, moderation, and feedback; Programme Leads, Module Leaders, and Assessment Officers; and External Examiners appointed through Plymouth Marjon University. It covers all summative assessments contributing to academic credit, including first marking, second marking, internal moderation, and confirmation of marks prior to Module Assessment Boards. The Policy applies across all LAAT campuses and approved delivery locations. Where any conflict arises between this Policy and Plymouth Marjon University regulations, the University's regulations shall take precedence.

3. Definitions

Marking – The process of evaluating student work against approved learning outcomes and assessment criteria.
Moderation – The process of checking marking standards to ensure fairness, consistency, and alignment with agreed criteria.

Module Assessment Board (MAB) – The formal body responsible for confirming module marks and credit, in accordance with Plymouth Marjon University regulations.
External Examiner – An independent academic appointed by Plymouth Marjon University to provide assurance on academic standards.

4. Principles

Marking and moderation at LAAT are guided by the following principles:

1. **Fairness and consistency** – All students are assessed against the same criteria and standards.
2. **Transparency** – Assessment criteria, marking schemes, and feedback are clear and accessible.
3. **Academic integrity** – Marking and moderation uphold academic standards and integrity.
4. **Alignment with partner regulations** – Processes align fully with Plymouth Marjon University requirements.
5. **Accountability** – Roles, decisions, and outcomes are documented and auditable.

5. Governance, Committees and Oversight

5.1 Governance and Oversight

Overall oversight of marking and moderation is provided by the **Academic Board**, with delegated monitoring through the **Academic Quality Panel**.

5.2 Committee Responsibilities

The Academic Quality Panel will:

- Monitor the effectiveness of marking and moderation processes
- Review trends, risks, and issues arising from assessment cycles
- Ensure compliance with partner university regulations
- Escalate material concerns to the Academic Board

6. Policy Statement

6.1 First Marking of Assessment

- All summative assessments are marked by an appropriately appointed marker.
- Marking is carried out in line with approved module learning outcomes, assessment criteria, and the marking scheme.
- The first marker applies academic judgement consistently across all submissions.
- Marks are recorded accurately using the approved University marksheet.
- Clear and constructive feedback is provided to support student learning.

6.2 Second Marking of Assessment

- Second marking provides assurance of consistency and accuracy in marking decisions.

- It is conducted in line with Plymouth Marjon University requirements.
- Second marking may be undertaken as:
    - blind second marking, or
    - sample second marking, depending on the programme and assessment type.
- Any significant discrepancies between first and second marks must be reviewed and resolved before submission to the Module Assessment Board.

6.3 Moderation of Assessment

- Moderation ensures fairness, consistency, and alignment with academic standards across cohorts and markers.
- Moderation decisions are made collectively and in accordance with Plymouth Marjon University regulations.
- All moderation outcomes and their rationale are formally recorded in the Module Assessment Board minutes.
- Marks are not released to students until they have been confirmed through the approved assessment board process.

6.4 Module Assessment Boards

- Final confirmation of marks rests with the **Module Assessment Board (MAB)**.
- Marks may not be released to students until formally approved through the MAB process.

6.5 External Examiner Involvement

- External Examiners must have appropriate access to assessment materials.
- Their recommendations must be formally considered and responded to.

7. Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) – Overview

The detailed Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for marking and moderation is provided in **Appendix A**. t sets out the end-to-end operational process through which LAAT ensures that assessment marking and moderation are conducted fairly, consistently, transparently, and in alignment with Plymouth Marjon University's Student Regulations Framework.

The SOP covers:

- Assessment preparation and briefing of markers
- First marking and provision of feedback
- Second marking and internal moderation checks
- Resolution of marking discrepancies
- Escalation of issues where academic risk is identified
- Confirmation of marks through Module Assessment Boards
- Secure record-keeping and audit trails

The SOP ensures that marking and moderation activities are **controlled, evidence-based, auditable**, and subject to **academic governance oversight**, thereby supporting OfS Conditions relating to quality, standards, and governance.

8. Monitoring, Compliance and Review

Monitoring:

- Annual review of assessment outcomes and moderation reports
- Oversight by the Academic Quality Panel

Non-compliance:

- Managed through academic governance procedures and HR processes where applicable

Review:

- This policy will be reviewed every **two years**, or sooner if required by changes to partner regulations

9. Responsible People / Roles

The following roles hold responsibility for implementation, oversight, and assurance of this Policy:

- **Academic Dean (Policy Owner):** Dr Manoj Ponugubati
  Overall accountability for policy implementation
- **Academic Quality**: Dr Vishwanath Kokkonda
  administration, guidance, and procedural oversight
- **Programme Lead:** Mr Amarjeet Singh
  Implementation, compliance and coordination
- **Assessment Officer**: Ms Moluk All-Nakash

  Assessment oversight, consistency, compliance

- **External Examiners: Dr. Dieu Hack-Polay**

  Providing independent assurance, marking standards and moderation outcomes.

List of people and contacts

Role	Name	Contact email
Academic Dean (Policy Owner)	Dr Manoj Ponugubati	manoj@laat.ac.uk
Academic Quality Lead	Dr Vishwanath Kokkonda	vishwanath.kokkonda@laat.ac.uk
Programme lead	Mr Amarjeet Singh	amarjeet.singh@laat.ac.uk
Assessment officer	Ms Moluk All-Nakash	moluk@laat.ac.uk
External examiner	Dr Dieu Hack-Polay	dhack-polay@marjon.ac.uk

10. List of Documents (LoD)

This policy should be read in conjunction with

- LAAT assessment and feedback Policy
- LAAT academic integrity and misconduct policy
- LAAT academic appeal
- PMU assessment regulations and academic frameworks.

11. Evidence

- LAAT assessment and feedback Policy
- LAAT academic integrity and misconduct policy
- LAAT academic appeal policy
- PMU assessment regulations and academic frameworks.

Evidence Item	Purpose / What it Demonstrates	***Relevant OfS Condition(s)***
LAAT assessment and feedback Policy	Demonstrates that LAAT has clear, fair, and reliable assessment and feedback practices, including marking, moderation, and timely feedback, supporting consistent academic standards and a high-quality student experience.	***B1*** *(Academic experience),* ***B4*** *(Assessment and awards),* ***C1*** *(Consumer protection law*
LAAT academic integrity and misconduct policy	Sets out expectations for academic integrity, defines academic misconduct and plagiarism, and establishes fair investigation and decision-making processes to protect the integrity of assessment and awards.	***B4*** *(Assessment and awards),* ***B5*** *(Sector-recognised standards),* ***C1*** *(Consumer protection law),* ***C5*** *(Treating students fairly).*
LAAT academic appeal policy	Provides students with a transparent, accessible, and fair mechanism to challenge academic decisions, including defined grounds, timescales, and escalation routes.	***C1*** *(Consumer protection law),* ***C2*** *(Student complaints scheme),* ***C5*** *(Treating students fairly),* ***E3*** *(Accountability*
PMU assessment regulations and academic frameworks.	Demonstrates alignment with the validating partner's approved academic regulations and frameworks, ensuring sector-recognised academic standards for assessment, progression, and awards	***B4*** *(Assessment and awards),* ***B5*** *(Sector-recognised standards),* ***E1*** *(Public interest governance)*

Appendix A – Assessment Marking and Moderation Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Policy: LAAT Marking & Moderation Policy
Regulatory Alignment: OfS Conditions B (Quality & Standards) and E (Governance)

SoP Overview Flow

Assessment Set → Marking → Moderation → Board Confirmation → Release of Marks → Audit & Review

Step 1: Assessment Preparation
Actions:

- Module Leader prepares assessment brief, marking criteria, and feedback guidance in line with validated module specifications.
- Assessment brief and marking rubric are approved through Academic Quality Panel.
- Markers and moderators are briefed on assessment requirements and marking standards.

Records:

- Approved assessment brief
- Marking rubric
- Marker briefing record

Purpose: Ensures clarity, consistency, and transparency of assessment expectations.

Step 2: First Marking
Actions:

- First marker evaluates student submissions against approved learning outcomes and marking criteria.
- Marks and qualitative feedback are recorded on approved marksheets.
- Academic judgement is applied consistently across all submissions.

Records:

- Completed marking sheets
- Student feedback records

Purpose: Ensures fair and criterion-referenced assessment.

Step 3: Second Marking
Actions:

- Second marking is undertaken in accordance with PMU regulations.
- Either blind second marking or sample second marking is applied as required.
- Any significant discrepancies between first and second marks are reviewed.

Records:

- Second marking reports
- Discrepancy resolution notes

Purpose: Ensures reliability and consistency of marking decisions.

Step 4: Internal Moderation

Actions:

- Moderation checks consistency across markers and cohorts.
- Borderline, fail, and distinction samples are reviewed.
- Moderation outcomes and agreed mark adjustments are documented.

Records:

- Moderation report
- Adjusted marks record (if applicable)

Purpose: Provides assurance of fairness and standardisation.

Step 5: Escalation of Issues

Triggers:

- Significant marking inconsistencies
- Assessment design concerns
- External examiner queries
- Academic integrity issues

Actions:

- Issues escalated to Programme Lead and Academic Quality Panel.
- Corrective actions agreed and documented.

Records:

- Issue escalation log
- Action tracking record

Purpose: Ensures academic risks are managed through governance routes.

Step 6: Module Assessment Board (MAB)

Actions:

- Moderated marks presented to the Module Assessment Board.
- External Examiner input considered where applicable.
- Board formally confirms marks and credits.

Records:

- Module Assessment Board minutes
- Confirmed marksheet

Purpose: Provides formal academic authority for final marks.

Step 7: Release of Marks

Actions:

- Marks released to students only after Board confirmation.
- Feedback issued through approved student systems.
- Appeals window communicated to students.

Records:

- Student marks release record
- Feedback distribution log

Purpose: Ensures controlled and transparent information release.

Step 8: Record-Keeping and Audit

Actions:

- All marking, moderation, and board records stored securely.
- Records retained in line with data protection and PMU requirements.
- Audit checks conducted annually by Academic Quality Panel.

Records:

- Central assessment archive
- Audit report

Purpose: Ensures traceability, accountability, and regulatory readiness.

Step 9: Annual Review and Enhancement

Actions:

- Assessment outcomes and moderation trends reviewed annually.
- External Examiner reports analysed.
- Improvement actions agreed through Academic Board.

Records:

- Annual assessment review report
- Action plan

Purpose: Supports continuous enhancement of assessment quality.