James Watt School of Engineering
Guidance for the use of Marking Teams

With growing numbers of UG and PGT students it has been apparent that some courses have a large number of students enrolled on them. As a result the marking load has become too much of a burden for one or two members of staff teaching the course. In such cases it may be required to create a marking team to help with the exam and coursework marking workload. These teams could be made up of suitably trained staff and/or students. Naturally this training involves familiarising the marking team with the exam and solutions, providing them with an insight into the mind of the examiner and prepare them to replicate the marking process. The following guidelines outline specific considerations that should be made when *preparing the assessment, training provision, team support* and *quality assurance*.

Assessment Preparation

The first stage in the process is during the creation of the assessment. Whether this assessment is a piece of coursework or an exam, every effort should be made to show what is expected in an ideal solution and how marks would be allocated. The following should be considered when preparing the assessment and solutions for a course with a marking team:

- First and foremost, all marking teams should follow and adhere to the assessment policies set out by the University (https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/senateoffice/policies/assessment/).
- Have a clear workflow and standard approach to marking across the marking team.
- It is very important to prepare the assessment solution/marking schedule so that it clearly outlines what is expect for every part of the assessment.
- The mark allocation should be defined in sufficiently fine granularity to show what is being awarded for each part of question or sub-question.
- Identify a protocol if the student's solution is outwith the standard solution

Training of Marking Team

The level of training of the team depends on the experience of the marker. Obviously, academic staff should have more experience than GTAs. However, there should be some assessment specific training so that the team will have an insight into the mind-set of the assessment setter and be prepared to replicate with reasonable accuracy. The following should be considered when training the marking team.

- The initial stage of training involves going over the assessment with the marking team. This should involve going through each part of the assessment, e.g. questions in the exam, and describing the underlying theory/knowledge that is being tested and the associated ILOs.
- After the form and intention of the questions has been discussed, some consideration should be made of the marking schedule or detailed solutions. This could be a detailed discussion of the worked solution content and the marks allocated to each section. Alternatively, the team could be given time to go over the solution in their own time and ask for clarification if required.
- Whether the solutions are discussed in person or remotely, careful consideration should be made of any part of the assessment that could prove difficult to mark e.g. system block diagrams, essay style questions. These problems usually arise when the allocation of marks cannot be broken down easily. In such cases, detailed guidance on the approach to marking must be given during training and the marking process. A marked example may be useful.

- Another key aspect of the marking process is monitoring the submissions for any signs of plagiarism. Enforcing the University's plagiarism policy is a key duty of the entire marking team, including the assessment setter. Training on how to deal with suspected plagiarism cases should be provided. Naturally it is more difficult to identify cases when submissions are being marked by the team.
- Feedback is an essential element of the learning process for the students taking courses within the James Watt School of Engineering. Instruction on the expected format and delivery mechanisms for feedback must be included in the marking team training. Also, the mechanism for returning the assessment marks should be discussed during training. This discussion should ensure that no marks are released before they have been considered by the assessment setter and course lead.
- As part of the training, the assessment setter should outline how the submissions will be assigned to each marker, where the submissions can be found, how the marks/feedback will be stored/returned and where the marked assessment submissions will be stored.

Marking Support & Guidance

Once the marking process has commenced, it is crucial that marking teams are supported and guided by the assessment setter. This requires the assessment setter to monitor the progress of the team, answer any queries and mark some of the assessment submissions for quality assurance purposes. The following should be considered when supporting a marking team:

- The main support that the assessment setter should provide is to answer queries from the marking team regarding marking issues and providing clarification on specific submissions.
- In addition, the assessment setter should deal with any anomalies that may present themselves during the marking process, which the marking team members are unable to handle. In order to deal with these anomalies, the setter may require administrative or IT support to solve the associated problems, e.g. incorrect student information provided with submission, submission file corrupted or in an unsuitable format.
- Any suspected plagiarism cases should be raised with the assessment setter in the first instance. It is then the responsibility of the setter to determine if plagiarism has occurred or if this is an anomaly of the type of assessment. If plagiarism is determined then the case should be referred to the plagiarism officer in the School. In such cases the setter may wish to brief the entire marking team about the suspected case, to ascertain if other markers have come across similar submissions and thus try to identify the full extent of each case of plagiarism.
- The assessment setter may have to redistribute or take on the marking of team members who are unable to complete their assigned marking duties. This may be due to illness or personal circumstances. Whatever the reason, the entire marking team should be made aware from the outset that they may be required to do additional marking in such circumstances.

Marking & Feedback Quality Assurance

In order to ensure that the marking of the team is consistent, within reasonable bounds, the assessment setter should be involved in and oversees the entire marking process. Although this aspect of running a marking team can be quite time consuming, it is necessary so that the submissions of the cohort being assessed are marked similarly and fairly. The following should be considered when monitoring the outputs from a marking team:

- Some of the assessment submissions should be marked by the assessment setter. Primarily this is for the assessment setter to make sure the marking schedule/solutions are correct and

fit for purpose. The assessment setter should mark a reasonable number of the submissions so that a statistical comparison of marks can be made. These marks can be used to compare the marking distribution obtained from the individual markers in the team and the overall distribution across the team. This will help ascertain if there are any issues that have arisen during the marking process or within the marking team.

- In addition to marking some of the submissions themselves, the assessment setter should moderate a selection of submissions from each marker within the team. This will allow the marking of each member of the team to be reviewed and any inconsistencies to be identified. Following University guidelines (https://www.gla.ac.uk/media/Media_216411_smxx.pdf), moderation of this kind involves 10% of the marked assessment (subject to a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 25). The submissions selected for moderation should be distributed across the range of marks allocated. In addition, all of those assessments which have been graded at E1 should be moderated. If any issues arise during the moderation process then suitable corrective action should be taken by the assessment setter.

- Once all first marking has been completed and moderated, the assessment setter should allocate check marking duties to the marking team. This is to ensure the accuracy of the marks recorded on the assessment submission and entered in the marks spreadsheets. The allocation of check marking across the team should be random so that each member of the team checks every other member. Obviously team members should not check mark their own first marking.

- At this stage the quality of the feedback that is intended to be provided to the students should be reviewed. Any cases of too little or no feedback should be addressed and rectified so that the level and usefulness of the feedback is consistent across the cohort being assessed.

- The final completion, formatting and checking of the marking spreadsheet should be the responsibility of the assessment setter and the course lead

The above is provided for guidance only. Although every effort has been made to consider all eventualities, there may be some aspects of training, supporting and monitoring a marking team that has not been covered here. Additional guidance can be obtained from Heads of Discipline and the Convener of Learning and Teaching.