



UNIVERSAL CONVENTIONS AND PROCEDURES

Academic Year 2023/24

Students who Query Marks

1 Status of the Conventions

The Conventions are reviewed annually and apply for the academic year 2023/24.

2 Background

- 2.1** UK Quality Code 2018 entitled Advice and Guidance Concerns, Complaints and Appeals contains the following:
“Providers are encouraged to consider concerns, complaints and appeals as an open opportunity to address and enhance their provision, learning opportunities, public information and management of the information held within their institution”.
Furthermore, “The provider [should] have fair and transparent procedures for handling complaints and appeals which are accessible to all students”.
- 2.2** The formal academic appeals procedures satisfy these guidelines, but this paper suggests a set of principles to ensure that the procedures are also enshrined in informal practices within Schools/ Departments.

3 Principles

- 3.1** No provisional mark should be made available to students until internal moderation has been completed for the assessment.
- 3.2** Students should receive feedback on each assessment [including exam scripts where possible], indicating the rationale for the provisional mark, within the standard 4 working weeks after the submission deadline.
- 3.3** Schools/Departments should make it clear to students that
- if, having read feedback, they do not understand why a mark/grade has been recommended, they should consult their tutor;
 - disagreeing with the academic judgement of the internal examiners is not grounds for asking for a mark to be changed;
 - it is not possible to appeal formally against a result until that result has been confirmed by the Board of Examiners following external moderation;

- it is possible to ask their lecturer to reconsider a provisional mark on the basis of an error [e.g. the wrong mark being entered to SITS, or the feedback being inconsistent with the published assessment criteria].
- 3.4** Schools/Departments should make it clear to students that
- if a student believes that they have been treated unfairly by the internal markers, they are entitled to complain, but this should be done via the Complaints procedure, which stresses that informal resolution of issues is preferable, and should be attempted in the first instance;
 - no student is expected to complain about an allegedly unfair mark unless and until they have either received feedback and discussed it with a member of staff, or attempted without success to obtain such feedback/advice; no complaint will lead to a change to a provisional mark change unless it can be demonstrated that there has been an error or irregularity.
- 3.5** If, after discussing an assessment with a student, a marker judges that the mark might not have been appropriate, any changes should be made to other students affected by the same problem, not just the student concerned.
- 3.6** If a student remains dissatisfied after obtaining feedback, it may be prudent to include the student's work in the sample sent to the External Examiner. This is not for the External Examiner to act as third marker, but to ensure that the External's judgment about the appropriateness of standards is based on a sample including work about which marks have been queried.