DERBY COLLEGE GROUP

POLICY

HE Internal Moderation Policy

Policy Number:	HE001
Executive Owner:	Deputy CEO
Owning Strategy / Department:	Higher Education Department
Approval Board / Committee / Group:	HE Academic Board
User Group:	Higher Education
Relevant To:	Higher Education students
Implementation Date:	October 2019
Approval Date:	February 2021
Next Review Period Start Date:	August 2027
Expiry Date (Next Review Date):	October 2027

Date:	October 2026
Originator:	Director of Higher Education
Area:	Higher Education

POLICY – PROCEDURES – GUIDELINES – RELATED DOCUMENTS

Once printed, this is an uncontrolled document. Refer to Policy Portal for latest version.

Policy Accountability and Implementation

Policy Title:	HE Internal Moderation Policy
Policy Author / Reviewers:	Head of Higher Education
Policy Implementation:	Head of Higher Education
Policy Monitoring and Compliance:	Head of Higher Education
Policy Review Timeline:	Annual

Synopsis:

DCG needs to be assured that robust, effective and consistent internal moderation processes are taking place in all subject areas across all Academies.

The purpose of moderation is to ensure that academic standards are appropriate and consistent across programme teams, and that feedback reflects agreed assessment policies and assessment criteria, and that the assessment outcomes for students are fair and reliable.

Policy Classification and Publication

Classification

Note: Author to delete options as appropriate

- Essential Authority (EA)
- Strongly Recommended (SR)
- Other / College Requirement (other)
- Desirable (D)
- Not Classified (NA)

Publication

Note: Author to delete options as appropriate

- Intranet – Policy portal
- Student VLE (Moodle)
- Website
- Other (specify)

Empowering/related legislative and/or authoritative references:

Periodic Policy Review / Change History

Note: Please make it clear if change/review relates to procedures, guidelines and associated documents only or it is a rational for a new or substantive policy review

Version	**Reviewed / Modified by:**	**Change History**	**Advisory committee / groups or specialists**	**Review / Meeting Date/s**
V1	Director of Quality Director of Higher Education	Agreed policy	HE Academic Board	July 2020
V2	Director of Higher Education	Full review	HE Academic Board HE Academic and Standards Committee	Feb 2021
V3	OfS Compliance and Policy Officer / Head of Higher Education	Review of policy, updated to reflect changes in job roles and dates		Septembe r 2021
V4	OfS Compliance and Policy Officer	Policy Review – no significant changes	Head of HE	Septembe r 2022
V5	Head of HE	Policy Review – no significant changes	Head of HE	Septembe r 2023
V6	Head of HE	Policy Review – no significant changes	Head of HE	August 2024
V7	Head of HE (Qualiy Assurance)	Policy Review- no significant changes	Head of HE	October 2025
V8	Head of HE Quality Assurance	Policy review – no significant changes	Head of HE	October 2026

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Derby College Group (DCG) strives to treat all its members and visitors fairly and aims to eliminate unjustifiable discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, political beliefs or practices, disability, marital status, family circumstances, sexual orientation, spent criminal convictions, age or any other inappropriate grounds.

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1. Policy Statement

1.1 Derby College Group (DCG) needs to be assured that robust, effective and consistent internal moderation processes are taking place in all subject areas across all Academies.

1.2 The purpose of moderation is to ensure that academic standards are appropriate and consistent across programme teams, and that feedback reflects agreed assessment policies and assessment criteria, and that the assessment outcomes for students are fair and reliable.

2. Definitions

2.1 Internal moderation is where an assessor marks the set of student assignments, providing a grade and comments to justify the grade, and a second assessor (the moderator) then reviews a sample of marked assignments from across the grade profile. The moderator's role is to confirm (or not) the grades awarded by the first marker, and the quality of the feedback, in the light of College protocols and expectations.

2.2 External moderation is a process of objective engagement by experienced academic peers (external examiners), independent of DCG, to ensure that the level of achievement of students reflects the required academic standards and is comparable to similar programmes nationally.

3. Scope and Limitations

3.1 This policy is applicable to all Higher Education programmes that are not subject to a moderation policy set by a validating or awarding institution. These processes are designed to ensure that standards are achieved and recognised through the award of appropriate marks and to assure students that their work is assessed objectively and against clearly defined, published, assessment criteria. This applies to:

- Higher National programmes

- Honours degrees
- Degrees (non-honours)
- Foundation degrees
- Short course at HE Levels 4 to 7

3.2 A sample of assessed work submitted for credit in programmes leading to the awards of validating bodies shall be subject to a process of internal moderation. This policy extends to all modes of assessment and all delivery locations.

3.3 All College devised summative assessment materials must be internally and externally moderated before being issued to students.

3.4 For performance-based or skills-based assessment it is recognised that there may be exceptional situations where the procedures outlined below are not practicable e.g. an exhibition. Instances such as this will be kept to a minimum through robust assessment design. However, in exceptional circumstances where the assessment methodology is the most appropriate for the context, curriculum areas and tutors are encouraged to consider a range of possible approaches in order to provide a suitable summative assessment which can be subject to internal and external moderation practices. Where samples of these assessments cannot be recorded or marked simultaneously by other means e.g. the provision of suitable artefacts, every effort should be made to record or capture the assessment outputs.

3.5 Where work-based or placement learning is formally included in a programme these elements should be moderated and externally examined as for all other modules of the same or equivalent level.

3.6 Whilst it is normal practice for assessments to be marked and provided feedback by a single marker, alternative practices might apply (e.g. where large cohorts require multiple markers). All final year projects/dissertations should be blind double marked.

3.7 This policy has been developed to ensure that DCG practices a clear, fair, explicit and consistent assessment procedure and has been guided by the UK

Quality Code, *Assessment* and meets the following Core Practice:

(a) *The provider ensures that students who are awarded qualifications have the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the threshold level that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers.*

(b) *The provider uses external expertise, assessment and classification processes that are reliable, fair and transparent.*

(c) *The provider designs and/or delivers high-quality courses.*

4. Aims

4.1 The aim of this policy is to ensure that:

- the procedures are valid, reliable, fair and open.
- accurate and detailed records are maintained.
- all assessment activities are valid, appropriate and fit for purpose.
- a representative sample is selected.
- internal moderation roles are clearly defined, maintained and supported, including the provision of training where required
- standardised documentation to support internal moderation activity and record-keeping

  are provided.
- feedback and outcomes of internal moderation support future development of good practice.
- the policy and procedures are evaluated and reviewed.

5. Internal Moderation

5.1 Procedures for all modules/programmes:

(i) First mark all completed assessments. Evidence of marking and an indication of how marks have been awarded should be shown on all assessments.

(ii) The moderator (a member of staff, ideally from within the subject area, and with clear HE experience, other than the first marker) should:

(a) Declare any conflicts of interests that may be present and request suitable alternative arrangements to ensure that all scripts are marked fairly and free from bias.

(b) Test mark samples from every mode of study (full time and part time) Each sample should:

- Be drawn from, and reflect, the whole mark range;
- Be of appropriate size related to cohort. The minimum sample size should be work produced by 10 students for cohorts of 50 students or fewer; or, work produced by 20% of students for cohorts greater than 50 students. The sample must include all fails and borderline cases; as well as marks across high, medium and low passes if possible. Where cohorts comprise 10 students or fewer, all pieces of work must be moderated. The first marker must select a sample based on the requirements stated above, but all cohort scripts should be made available to the moderator and External Examiner (EE) should they wish to sample further or alternative student work.
- Encompass all the components of assessment used in the module e.g. assignment; examination.

(c) Form a firm view of the appropriateness of marks allocated to students:

- Where there is agreement between the first marker and internal moderator, this should be evidenced appropriately and form part of the module moderation report.
- Where there is a disagreement between the first marker and moderator which can be resolved by internal agreement, this should be evidenced appropriately and form part of the

moderation report. The final marks that are being allocated to the students must be made clear.

- If there is disagreement between the first marker and the moderator in relation to the marks attributed and it is not possible to resolve internally, the Curriculum Manager or their nominee (e.g. Course or Programme Leader) will determine the final mark. This will be evidenced within the module moderation report, with all actions that have been taken clearly documented. The EE, and Board of Examiners will be made aware of the actions and will have the final marks confirmed, along with any other necessary remedial action that is required for the following academic year.

(c) Prepare a brief module moderation report (which should be retained) using DCG template on:

- The basis of marking including the use, where appropriate, of marking schemes and whether marking utilised schemes well and applied assessment criteria;
- How the moderation process was carried out;
- Marks gained, for example, highlighting questions that have been poorly answered or not attempted, where marks vary between examination and in-course assessment etc.;
- Problems encountered and how they were resolved, including suggestions about any problems relating to form and content of assessment to be addressed in the following year.

(iii) Copies of moderator reports should be sent to the EE along with the samples of internally moderated work. The sample of student work sent to EEs shall be sufficient to show the full range of marks awarded and must include work that evidence internal moderation as appropriate.

(iv) It is the responsibility of the Programme Leader (or designated person e.g. Team Manager) to ensure that all submitted marks to central records following internal moderation are correct after they have

been associated with the individual students record. This should be prior to any Awards Board meetings. Any alternations to marks should be recorded and monitored, with a clear reason recorded for the change, the incorrect mark submitted and the correct (final) mark. Where the programme leader has had responsibility for an individual module, the task of confirming that the marks are correct should be delegated to another module leader from within the programme.

6. External Moderation

6.1 Once assessment tasks have been developed by the programme team these must be sent to the EE for moderation and formal approval. Once approved by the EE, these assessment tasks can be released for use.

6.2 EEs must be sent adequate samples of students' work by the Programme Leader and/or Module Leaders. The samples sent will cover all modules under the EE's remit and must reflect:

- a representative range of work, sufficient to make a judgement. The sample sent should include scripts that have been assessed and second marked / double marked and should cover all fails and borderline passes plus marks across high, medium and low passes;
- all assessments within each module;
- all campuses where students have taken the particular module.

6.3 EEs must be sent samples that have been through the internal moderation process with a minimum sample size of work produced by 10 students for cohorts of 50 students or fewer; or, work produced by 20% of students for cohorts greater than 50 students. Where cohorts comprise 10 students or fewer, all pieces of work must be provided to the EE.

6.4 EEs can request additional or complete cohort samples of student work to assist their deliberations. They are encouraged to have a dialogue with internal assessors and course leader in order to understand assessment strategy and marks/grades awarded. To assist with this process, complete marks lists and copies of the assessments involved should accompany the samples of work together with any evidence associated with the double or second marking

process.

6.5 EEs are not typically empowered to change an individual student's mark unless they have reviewed the entire cohort's work. They can advise module leaders and programme teams on the marks awarded, and, based on the samples of work and in agreement with the module co-ordinator, raise or lower all marks on an assessment or a module by a constant factor (arithmetic). EEs may present any comments they have on the work and marking they have sampled to the Board of Examiners (or equivalent), and in their annual report. Refer back to the validating partner guidelines for EEs for confirmation of the HEI processes and procedures.

7. Timing of Moderation

7.1 Internal moderation of assessment will take place prior to the return of work to students. External Moderation may not take place prior to return of feedback; however it will be clearly indicated to students that marks are always subject to final moderation and approval at the awards board. In all cases the moderation report should be completed in time to inform programme annual monitoring reports. It should be noted that the sample of work that is moderated is the same sample sent to the EE, and this may be archived for use in external audit and review.

8. Responsibility and Oversight of the Policy

8.1 Responsibility for this document rests with the Head of Higher Education

9. Implementation Arrangements

9.1 The arrangements that outlined below build on previous good practice and seek to provide additional impetus and coherence.

9.2 All new members of staff are made aware of the policy and procedures during the programme employee induction phase.

9.3. The policy is published via the staff policy portal, is available to students via the student VLE and is accessible via the Derby College Group website. This policy can be provided in alternative formats on request.

9.4. Any updates or amendments to the policy and procedures are disseminated to the Leadership and Management team and communicated to team members.

10. Monitoring and Review

10.1. The policy and procedure is subject to regular review. It will be reviewed on a three-year cycle with an annual appraisal of procedures and documentation. Review will take into account the views of students and stakeholders. DCG reserves the right to make whatever changes it deems appropriate.

11. Guidelines

N/A

12. Templates / Forms

N/A

13. Related Documents

13.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Academic Appeals Policy (Higher Education)
- Academic Misconduct (Higher Education)
- Assessment and Feedback Policy (Higher Education)
- Board of Examiners Policy (Higher Education)
- Mitigating Circumstances Policy (Higher Education)