

Marking RVC Exams, Coursework & Projects

This document outlines the RVC process on marking exams, coursework and projects. There are shortcuts to some of the specific practical information in the following appendices:

1. Guidance on annotating written scripts
2. Arrangements for team marking
3. Arrangements for sampling marks

Any examiner who is not clear about their duties in any phase of an examination process should contact the Examinations Office or the Year or Module Leader.

1. General Requirements

- 1.1. Each type of assessment in an examination shall be marked according to the appropriate marking criteria and marking scheme stated in the Award and Assessment Regulations approved for the course. RVC marking schemes are public documents and can be found on the appropriate sections of the website.
- 1.2. A candidate answering the wrong question shall be given no marks. A candidate answering too many questions shall be given the marks for the best answers, up to the total number of answers required.
- 1.3. Any part of a script which is considered by the Examiners to be illegible will be awarded no marks
- 1.4. 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.

2. Examiners: Who is required to mark and sample different types of examination?

- 2.1. **Theses:** PhD, and other doctorate levels: These are marked under separate regulations and examiners are informed of their duties directly by the graduate school.
- 2.2. **Projects:** All MSc projects, BSc Final Year projects, BVetMed Final Year projects (RP2) should be blind double marked and come to an agreed mark.
 - 2.2.1. Where marks have been awarded within the same classification, or the marks are adjacent on the College Common Grading Scheme, but span different classifications, the internal examiners should discuss the work and come to an agreed mark.
 - 2.2.2. Where internal examiners disagree across a broader range of marks, spanning classifications, an experienced member of academic staff will be nominated to act as a facilitator, to liaise with the internal examiners in discussion and agreement of the final mark. The facilitator will be responsible for confirming the process was fair and required to write a brief justification for the agreed mark. The facilitator will normally be expected to attend the Examinations Board, should any clarification be required from the external examiners.

2.2.3. In all cases, the internal examiners are responsible for synthesising and submitting a joint feedback statement, which aligns with the agreed mark and which will be released to the student.

2.3. **Summative Assessments other than Major Projects** (written exams, ICAs, etc):

- A variety of examiners should mark the answers to different questions in one examination.
- Answers to individual questions / coursework can either be marked by a single examiner, or in the case of large numbers of candidates by a team of examiners (Appendix 2: Team Marking).
- All marked answers should be sampled by an experienced marker (Appendix 3: Sampling; and below).

3. Marking: What are the examiners required to do?

3.1. **Coursework & Projects:** Examiners should provide feedback for students such that their rationale for awarding a specific mark from the appropriate grading scheme can clearly be linked to the descriptors on that grading scheme. They must also record their mark awarded on the work itself, or marking area.

3.2. **Examination Scripts:** Examiners must annotate the script in relation to the model or sample answer and demonstrate the rationale for the grade they select. They should:

3.2.1. Write the numeric mark on the front of the script.

3.2.2. Mark or annotate the script in accordance with the instructions (Appendix 1: Recording marks).

4. Quality Control: How are we assured that the marking is correct?

4.1. In the case of single response answers such as MCQs and EMQs the marking is totally objective, but response statistics will be compiled on each question so that the examiners have an opportunity to evaluate the reliability and validity of the question.

4.2. Sampling is unnecessary in assessments that are double marked under section 2.

4.3. Where there is a subjective element to marking a written submission; the marking should be sampled. The role of the sample marker is to use the record of marking that the primary marker/s have made to determine if the marking has been carried out correctly and consistently.

4.4. The rate of sampling is 10% for marking batches of 50 plus students and 20% for marking batches of up to 50 students (or 5 pieces of work, whichever is greater).

4.5. Where response statistics or the sampler indicates there is a concern about the marking the Year or Module Leader and the Examination Board Chairman will convene and decide on an appropriate course of action, which they will present for the approval of the External Examiners.

- 4.6. All scripts and other work shall be available to the External Examiners together with the full mark sheet and the mean, and standard deviation of the marks for each question. The External Examiners are invited to scrutinise the marking of:
 - 4.6.1. Any candidate whom they determine is on the borderline between any two classifications.
 - 4.6.2. Any question where the distribution of marks is abnormally skewed.
 - 4.6.3. Any candidate whose mark for a question appears to be out of line with the rest of his or her performance.
- 4.7. Where the sampling has shown that marking is satisfactory and the marking is approved by the External Examiners, all marks awarded will be accepted by the Examination Board.

Marking RVC Examinations – Appendix 1 Guidance on recording marks on Written Scripts (annotation)

Long answer scripts, projects and coursework scripts must be marked in such a way that a second examiner (e.g. a sampler or an external examiner) can understand the rationale for the marks given. The points in an answer that the marker **feels relate to those required in the model or sample answer** should be recorded as the answer is marked. In the case where a question is team marked, all markers must use the same system for consistency. The RVC recommends the use of one of the following systems.

1. Clear legible annotation of the scripts, preferably using specific phrases linked to the model answer and the language in the grading scheme.
2. Simple symbol system: Markers use the simple symbol system below to highlight the points of the answer.

Symbol	Meaning
✓	Correct point Circle or underline text if appropriate
X	Incorrect point Circle or underline text
^	or / Omission Explain what (briefly) in the margin
?	Unclear, or irrelevant Circle or underline text that is unclear.
/	Cross sections through that are irrelevant or inappropriate to the question
©	Ringed number or letter indicating relevance to the equivalent section of model answer or marking grid, or a specific feedback point

3. Use a separate recording sheet based on the model answer to record the points correctly made in the answer. Marks should be made on the script to highlight points placed in the record. (The examinations office has copies of this spreadsheet if you want one to modify)

Record sheet for long answer questions using common grading scheme																				Candidate Number	Common grading scheme Mark	
Record the elements of the candidate's answer for each area of the model.																						
Candidate Number	Model Answer Section A (20% time)				Model Answer Section B (30% time)						Model Answer Section C (50% time)										Candidate Number	Common grading scheme Mark
	Model Answer Point 1	Model Answer Point 2	Model Answer Point 3	Model Answer Point 4	Model Answer Point 5	Model Answer Point 6	Model Answer Point 7	Model Answer Point 8	Model Answer Point 9	Model Answer Point 10	Model Answer Point 11	Model Answer Point 12	Model Answer Point 13	Model Answer Point 14	Model Answer Point 15	Model Answer Point 16	Model Answer Point 17	Model Answer Point 18	Model Answer Point 19	Model Answer Point 20		
1																						
2																						
3																						
4																						
5																						

Please remember:

- All marks made on scripts must be clear and must be differentiated from the script itself.
- Markers should review their record of the script before assigning an overall mark on the grading scheme NOT just simply make a numeric total of the points
- Any ancillary record sheets should be returned to the exams office with the scripts as part of the permanent record
- Any comments written on the scripts can be seen by the student concerned.

Marking RVC Examinations – Appendix 2 Arrangements for Team Marking

The scripts from one question can either be marked by a single marker, or by a marking team.

Team marking is normally used when it is difficult for one marker to finish the scripts in the appropriate time.

All the markers in a team must use the same system to record (Appendix 1) the marks on the script

The team must “team mark” their first 10 scripts together, i.e. in the same room, to allow a dialogue about the interpretation of the model answer and thus ensure that the model is consistently applied.

Teams may consider additional methods of internal control such as double marking an overlap of scripts to check consistency, or statistical comparison of the results of each marker

Scripts from a question that has been team marked should be sampled and an equal number of scripts from each marker should be in the sample population

Marking RVC Examinations – Appendix 3 Arrangements for Sampling

Where there is a subjective element to marking a written submission; the marking should be sampled, apart from those submissions that already attract a double marking protocol.

The rate of sampling is 10% for marking batches of 50 plus students and 20% for marking batches of up to 50 students (or 5 pieces of work, whichever is greater).

Where the answers for any single examination question or an in course summative assignment have been split for marking between a team, the sampler should have an approximately equal number of marked pieces of work from each team member

The exercise for the sampler is to review the marks awarded for the question and the record of marking that the primary markers have made. The sampler needs to decide whether the marks adequately reflect the priorities and facts expected in an assignment or actually demonstrated in the model answer of an examination question.

The sampler is asked to determine *only* whether they *agree or disagree* with the mark for each piece of work. It is considered reasonable for a sampler to agree with the first mark if it is adjacent and in the same classification category.

If a sufficient proportion (typically 10% or more) of the pieces of work give the sampler concern, or the sampler has other concerns about the consistency or standard of marking (e.g. about the marks from a particular marker) s/he will inform the Examinations Officer. The Examinations Officer will alert the Chairman of the Examinations Board and the Year Leader for the course. They will devise and put in place an action plan appropriate to the concerns expressed.

The Chairman and Year Leader will consider the overall likely material effect of the concerns raised and take action to minimise the risk of producing erroneous results. Such action might include a complete re-mark by a new set of examiners, a remark of all pieces of work initially marked by a given examiner, discarding a proportion of each answer and re-calculating the residual marks, and discarding an examination question from the overall marks for a paper.

The choice of action or actions will depend on the proportion of the examination or nature of work that is of concern and the accumulated material impact its marks could have on students' overall results. The chairman and course leader should always prioritise sound results over deadlines and be prepared to delay meetings or the release of results.

It would be expected that the work of students whose overall result is close to a key borderline for progress or classification would be reviewed.

The reasons for the actions chosen and the new results will be presented to the External Examiners.

When making a decision in relation to the concerns of a sampler the staff responsible for the examination in question may consult with other experienced examiners.

It should be noted that in the event of a very time consuming remedial action such as a complete re-mark, the final publication of the results and some parts of the examination board business may have to be delayed.