## This is an extract from the Department's Examination Guidelines

## MODERATION AND SCALING

On advice from external examiners, Continuously Assessed (CA) modules are not 'scaled' in the way described below, but are marked, and remarked if necessary, by reference to the relevant Marking Descriptors. Examined modules, however, should where necessary be scaled by the piecewise linear scaling procedure (hereafter referred to as **scaling**) so that the outcome of the exam is in accord with those described in the setting guidelines above while remaining broadly in accord with the exam Marking Descriptors reproduced below. This is to ensure a degree of uniformity across different modules, and to ensure fairness and objectivity for all students.

When the exam marks have been entered on the spreadsheet the examiner should:

- 1. Check that the results comply with the first setting guideline (see end of this document). In consultation with the Head of Division, or other person nominated by the Head of Department, the examiner should look carefully at the average marks (in the light of the setting guidelines) and at the **pass/fail borderlines**.
- 2. For modules contributing to degree classification the examiner must also look carefully at **3/2.2**, **2.2/2.1 and 2.1/1 borderlines** i.e. examiners should satisfy themselves that scripts leading to final marks within +/ -1 of these borderlines (as described below) are correctly assessed.
- 3. The total average mark for a module will, in general, be the sum of the final exam mark (scaled if appropriate) and the CA mark. Where, following (1) and (2) above, some overall adjustment is required, the pass/fail, 3/2.2, 2.2/2.1 and 2.1/1 borderlines should be rescaled to 40, 50, 60 and 70 respectively. The other marks are then given by linear interpolation. (The spreadsheets have built-in formulae to allow one to do this.) If any scaling is implemented, the spreadsheet will display both the raw and scaled marks. Since the scaling procedure is intended to ensure that unexpected outcomes in the examination are taken into account and that there is consistency with the marking descriptors for the examination scripts, it is not expected that scaling be used to compensate for systematic under- or over-achievement in associated CA.
- 4. The examiner should give a short written report on the Examination Paper Report Form commenting on the scaling procedures, whether or not scaling was implemented. The form prompts the examiner with a number of considerations which will affect scaling decisions including the sample size used to determine averages.
- 5. Level 4 modules (M4\*\* contributing to the MMath and MPhys degrees and M5\*\* contributing to MSc degrees) are subject to scaling so as to achieve broad comparability and correct class boundaries satisfying Marking descriptors but are not required to necessarily meet the average class mark criteria. This is because the students on the modules are likely to be an above-average subset and also because the class sizes are likely to provide an unsatisfactorily small statistical sample.
- 6. The spreadsheet together with the completed Examination Paper Report Form should be returned to the Departmental Administrator as soon as possible. Note, however, that the Departmental Administrator will only accept the spreadsheet if the Form is signed by **the Examiner**, **the Checker and the Head of Division or his nominee** and the report on scaling referred to above is included.
- 7. Upon receipt of this, the Departmental Administrator will then transmit final marks to the Spider database and arrange for cross-checking.
- 8. All final marks should be on Spider by the deadline given in the document 'Meetings of Examiners'.

## The "first setting guideline" referred to above

When setting an examination other than for an MMath MATH4<sup>\*\*</sup> or MSc MATH5<sup>\*\*</sup> module, the setter should aim for the amount of work and the standard to be such that the mean mark of the paper is expected to be between 57% and 63%, and also that a student who has completed, to an acceptable standard, a majority of the work associated with the module should get  $\geq 35\%$ .