## MARKING IN THREE STAGES

**THINK**

**GIVE STUDENTS**

**BEGINNING**

Before you give the assignment

**After you have received student assignments:**

*To keep your marking efficient and consistent:*

**MIDDLE**

During Marking

**END**

Final considerations before returning student assignments

**Giving back an assignment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>About The Assignment</strong></th>
<th><strong>(What is the purpose of this assignment?)</strong></th>
<th><strong>A copy of the marking scheme and/or rubric</strong></th>
<th><strong>Quickly read through the assignments to get a general sense of the quality of writing</strong></th>
<th><strong>Mark constructively</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What are the assignment’s learning goals?</strong></td>
<td><strong>A description of what kind of work receives an A, B, C or D grade</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sort assignments into stacks according to letter grade before actually assigning any grades.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Take frequent breaks!</strong></td>
<td><strong>Re-read a few assignments from early in the marking process to make sure you remained consistent</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expectations about content (Should students show their work? If yes, how much? Do they need a thesis statement?)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Location of important on-campus/online resources (Writing center)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Work through the assignments one question at a time to remain consistent</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mark with fellow TAs or the course instructor to compare your answers</strong></td>
<td><strong>Talk over your marks (but not your students!) with other TAs and/or the course instructor</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Policies on plagiarism and late assignments/re-grading</strong></td>
<td><strong>Details on formatting and referencing styles</strong></td>
<td><strong>If you get stuck on one paper, put it aside and come back to it later, after you’ve found your ‘marking rhythm’.</strong></td>
<td><strong>What sort of feedback do my students need?</strong></td>
<td><strong>If necessary, give final assignments and grades (or copies) to appropriate individual</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How you want students to identify themselves (By student number for un-biased marking? By group number only?)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Expectations on where the student will be dropping the assignment off (online or offline location) and picking it up</strong></td>
<td><strong>If possible, just broadly comment on weaknesses (e.g., spelling or organization). Leave it to students to fix minor details</strong></td>
<td><strong>Make or obtain a marking scheme/rubric</strong></td>
<td><strong>Implement the 24/7 rules! Students may come to you with questions or concerns about their grade, but must wait 24 hours to do so, and no more than 7 days after they received the assignment back. This gives them time to “cool” off, but also encourages them to act promptly</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use the minimum number of gradations that are consistent with the learning objectives (e.g., 4-point scale vs pass/fail)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Where questions about the assignment are answered (online forum, through email only, office hours etc.)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Comment using a computer in order to copy and paste similar comments into multiple students’ assignments</strong></td>
<td><strong>Back up your marks</strong></td>
<td><strong>Wait until the end of the class to return assignments. If you don’t, students will have trouble concentrating on the new material</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**About the Marking**

**How can I optimize my time?**

**Do I have to give marks that fit a prescribed distribution?**

**What sort of feedback do my students need?**

**Make or obtain a marking scheme/rubric**

**Use the minimum number of gradations that are consistent with the learning objectives (e.g., 4-point scale vs pass/fail)**

**A copy of the marking scheme and/or rubric**

**A description of what kind of work receives an A, B, C or D grade**

**Expectations about content (Should students show their work? If yes, how much? Do they need a thesis statement?)**

**Location of important on-campus/online resources (Writing center)**

**Policies on plagiarism and late assignments/re-grading**

**How you want students to identify themselves (By student number for un-biased marking? By group number only?)**

**Expectations on where the student will be dropping the assignment off (online or offline location) and picking it up**

**Where questions about the assignment are answered (online forum, through email only, office hours etc.)**

**Quickly read through the assignments to get a general sense of the quality of writing**

**Sort assignments into stacks according to letter grade before actually assigning any grades.**

**Work through the assignments one question at a time to remain consistent**

**If you get stuck on one paper, put it aside and come back to it later, after you’ve found your ‘marking rhythm’.**

**If possible, just broadly comment on weaknesses (e.g., spelling or organization). Leave it to students to fix minor details**

**Comment using a computer in order to copy and paste similar comments into multiple students’ assignments**

**Back up your marks**

**Wait until the end of the class to return assignments. If you don’t, students will have trouble concentrating on the new material**

**Take time to discuss overall performance (average mark, distribution, etc.)**

**Take time to go over major misconceptions or problems and make correct answers available (if possible)**

**Implement the 24/7 rules! Students may come to you with questions or concerns about their grade, but must wait 24 hours to do so, and no more than 7 days after they received the assignment back. This gives them time to “cool” off, but also encourages them to act promptly**

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