

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 24 January 2020

**PGT Dissertation Supervision and Marking Practices within ASBS
(ASC/2018/45) – Response**

Dr Greg Stoner and Mrs Fiona Baxter, Adam Smith Business School

At its meeting on 24 May 2019, ASC agreed that:

- The ASBS should report to ASC on the PGT dissertation marking process undertaken in 2019, to include a report on the outcome from the marking/moderation protocols (e.g. number of dissertations/markers identified for review through statistical analysis and through the review carried out by dissertation conveners), the total number of dissertations subject to second marking and the proportion of dissertations where grades were amended, with an indication of the scale of adjustments, through the moderation protocol.
- The ASBS should report to ASC on their conclusions regarding how to improve the debriefing of supervisors/markers at the end of the year.
- The ASBS should continue to consider possible alternatives to the traditional dissertation.

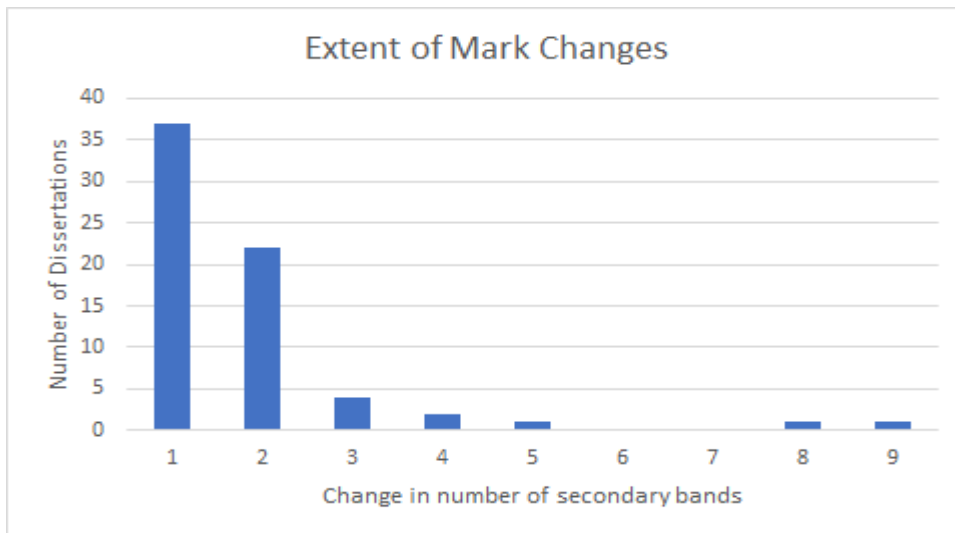
ASBS has taken on board the feedback provided by ASC and can confirm the following has taken place in relation to the issues raised.

1. In academic year 2018-19 a total of 1,832 dissertations were submitted by the taught postgraduate students in Adam Smith Business School. Of these 513 (28%) were second marked.

Of the 513 second marked, differences in grades were identified in 68 cases (13%). Changes were all agreed by markers as per the marking protocol. Most changes were adjustments of up to 5 secondary bands, with only a couple of marks being significant, both in the subject of Management, which were reviewed by a third independent marker.

One of the external supervisor/markers within Management was flagged from analysis to require closer scrutiny. All 14 from this group were second marked by the dissertation convenor. Four of these marks were subsequently changed. (B2 to C1, B2 to B1, B3 to C1 and B2 to B1). The marks were verified by a third member of academic staff.

Dissertation convenors reviewed all marks and feedback.



- At the end of the marking process Dissertation Convenors contacted all external supervisors where feedback was judged to have been insufficient, and these supervisors were asked to make changes with a clear expectation of what was required.

For this academic year 19/20 a revised briefing session will focus on feedback/forward to all external supervisors, examples of problematic issues experienced in previous sessions will be discussed. This will take place before the start of the next dissertation cycle to ensure all external supervisors are briefed fully on what form of feedback is expected by the School and a revision session of the Code of Assessment.

- A short-lived working group was convened to consider alternatives to the traditional dissertation. This group was made up of dissertation convenors from all three subject groups within the School, representation from College, and involved colleagues from Careers and Employability. Two different options were considered, and it was decided that the alternatives will be piloted on a selection of Financial Economic programmes, and the non -specialist programme portfolio of Management programmes. These will be carefully evaluated before ASBS consider rolling out to the other programmes within the School.

Both of the options being piloted are viewed to be appealing to students as they will support employability following graduation.