MArch Assessment Moderation Policy

2025-2026

Version:	1.00
Status:	Final
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Date:	30/10/2025

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1. Scope

This policy applies to all summative assessments undertaken within the London School of Architecture's (LSA) MArch programme.

The policy sets out the principles, processes, and responsibilities that ensure assessment moderation is fair, consistent, transparent, and aligned with the London School of Architecture's educational ethos and external regulatory frameworks.

2. Principles and Purpose

The philosophy of assessment in the MArch programme is built around preparing graduates to be change-makers in architecture and society. Assessment is not solely a grading mechanism but a professional and academic judgement of a student's potential to contribute meaningfully to architecture and the wider world.

This Moderation Policy ensures that:

a. Assessment criteria are applied consistently across all student work.

b. Differences in academic judgement are acknowledged and appropriately resolved.

c. Standards of marking and moderation are aligned with professional and regulatory expectations Architecture Registration Board, Royal Institute of British Architects, University of Liverpool Code of Practice on Assessment, and University of the Built Environment regulations.

d. The programme's distinctive ethos practice-embedded learning, propositional thinking, and social/environmental responsibility is reflected in assessment processes.

3. Assessments

All summative assessments are marked and moderated with reference to key principles.

Intentionality – The relevance, ambition, and clarity of the issues and goals addressed.

Synthesis – The integration of complex issues into a coherent architectural proposition.

Impact – The potential of the work to effect meaningful change and innovate within architectural culture.

These principles embed the programme's broader ethos:

- *Learning through the city as campus.*
- *Encouraging innovation, entrepreneurship, and propositional design.*
- *Using assessment to test ambition, integration, and real-world change.*

4. Process

4.1. Verification of Assessments

All assessment briefs are reviewed and approved by Module Leaders prior to release to students, ensuring alignment with validated documentation, [University of Liverpool Code of Practice on Assessment](#) , University of the Built Environment regulations, and Professional Statutory Regulatory Body requirements.

4.2. Post-Issue Moderation

Double Marking

Every piece of student work is assessed by both a first and second marker. Marking normally takes place in person (or synchronously online), enabling real-time discussion and consistency.

Calibration and Sampling

Module Leaders conduct pre-marking calibration meetings.

Post-marking, samples from across grade bands are reviewed to ensure comparability and consistency.

Borderline Cases

Where marks fall close to a pass/fail grade boundary, the Module Leader coordinates additional review with the first and second markers.

Documentation

Moderated marks outcomes are recorded on spreadsheets, uploaded to the University of the Built Environment Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), and retained for accountability and audit.

4.3. Grade Resolution

Where discrepancies between markers occur, these are discussed until agreement is reached.

If consensus cannot be achieved, the Module Leader escalates to the Programme Lead.

In exceptional cases, the Programme Lead exercises final discretion to ensure parity across the programme.

Only the agreed final moderated mark is released to students, subject to ratification by the Board of Examiners.

4.4. External Examiners

External Examiners review samples of student work and the moderation process to ensure national and international comparability of standards.

Their feedback is formally recorded and integrated into programme development.

5. Moderation and the Programme Ethos

Within the MArch programme, moderation reflects and enacts the ethos:

- **Critical Dialogue** – Bringing multiple perspectives to bear on diverse student work.

- **Social and Environmental Responsibility** – Ensuring that these dimensions are recognised as central to design quality.

- **Collaboration and Collegiality** – Reflecting the programme's culture of care and intimacy in decision-making.

- **Practice-Embedded** – Involving both academics and practitioners.

- **Comparability Across Contexts** – Ensuring fairness across diverse London-based and experimental projects.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

- **First Marker** – Undertakes the initial independent assessment.

- **Second Marker** – Independently assesses the same work, confirming or challenging the first marker's judgement.

- **Module Leader** – Oversees calibration, sampling, and borderline cases; escalates unresolved matters.

- **Programme Lead** – Ensures programme wide consistency and resolves escalated disputes.

- **External Examiner** – Reviews samples and provides independent assurance of fairness and comparability.

7. Resubmissions

Where permitted, resubmissions are subject to the same double-marking and moderation process as initial assessments to ensure fairness and parity.

8. Quality Assurance and Enhancement

Moderation outcomes are recorded, providing a transparent audit trail.

Post-marking standardisation meetings review outcomes across the cohort and identify areas for improvement.

Moderation findings feed into the Annual Monitoring Review process, ensuring compliance with Architects Registration Board, Royal Institute British Architects, University of Liverpool Code of Practice on Assessment, and University of the Built Environment standards.

External Examiner feedback and student feedback are systematically reviewed and integrated into future assessment design and moderation practice.