

OCR's six quality checks on marking

With the vast majority of exam papers now being marked by examiners on their computer screens, OCR analyses data to ensure papers are marked accurately and consistently from the first to the last day of marking.

Here are OCR's six checks to ensure marking quality:

Check no. 1

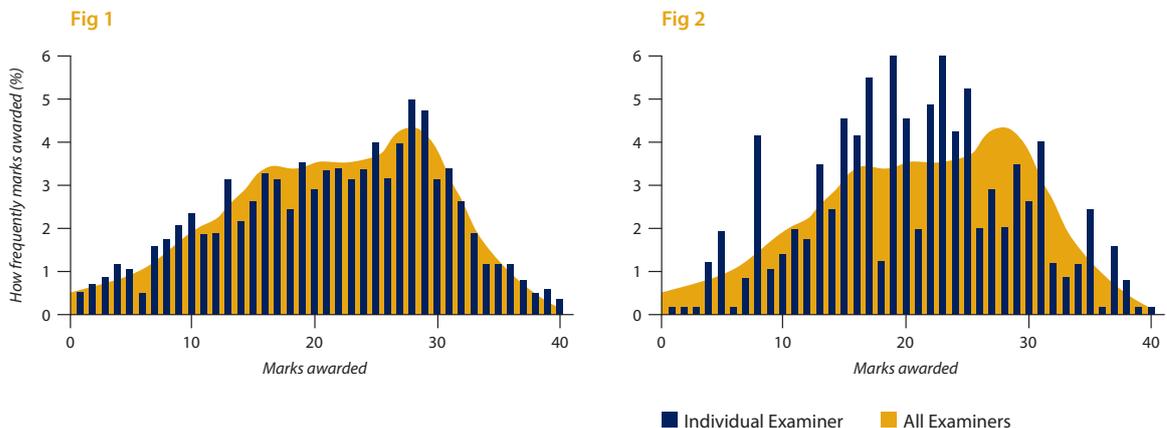


Everyone examining for OCR is tested every year before they can start marking. First they practise on exam papers that have been pre-marked according to the mark scheme, by our senior and most experienced examining team. Following this practice run, every potential examiner is tested on a second set of pre-marked papers to prove they can apply the mark scheme accurately. Every examiner must pass these tests to mark for OCR.

Check no. 2 100 check

OCR ensures every examiner is correctly applying the marking scheme with the '100 check'. After an examiner has marked 100 papers, which are anonymous and drawn from a random mix of schools, we compare their marking against the marking by others for that exam. The marks given by each examiner should follow a similar pattern to that of other examiners. If they do (Fig 1), the examiner continues marking. If they don't (Fig 2), an alert leads to a review of marking by a senior examiner. The examiner may then be stopped from marking and all their papers re-marked.

Marking pattern of one examiner versus marking of all examiners



Check no. 3

1 in 20



OCR monitors marking with the '**1 in 20**' check. Whenever an examiner downloads the next batch of exam papers to mark, 1 in every 20 has already been pre-marked by senior examiners. We monitor that the examiner is correctly applying the mark scheme, time after time. If the marking of an examiner does not follow the standard of the pre-marked papers, an alert is sent to a senior examiner to review marking. The examiner may then be stopped marking and all their papers re-marked.

Check no. 4

40% check



Next is OCR's '**40% check**'. When the team of examiners has completed 40% of the marking, a senior examiner compares the pattern of each examiner's marking against the pattern of marking by the whole team. If marking is in line, the examiner continues. If not, the examiner is stopped from marking and their papers re-marked.

Check no.5

90% check



OCR's '**90% check**' comes into effect when the team of examiners has completed 90% of the marking. Again, a senior examiner compares the pattern of marks given by an individual examiner against the pattern of marking by the whole team. As in Check 4, an examiner whose marking is not in line with the marking of others fails and all their papers will be re-marked.

Check no. 6



For some subjects such as English Literature, with many optional questions, OCR has an **additional essay-based question check**, on top of the checks above. Throughout marking, senior examiners randomly review batches of essay-based exam papers, to make sure the mark scheme is correctly applied across an even wider range of papers. If a problem is identified, the examiner is stopped and their papers re-marked.

Together, these six quality checks help OCR to ensure marking is consistent and accurate, so students' performance in exams is properly recognised and rewarded.