**Late Markers: current usage and potential changes?**

Karen:

A late marker can be applied by associate lectures to any tutor marked assignment. For example, if the work has been submitted after the cut

off date, or after an agreed extension date. The late marker enables students to receive feedback but results in the zero score being applied to the student record.

Despite such markers having the potential to impact the student's grade for module, little was known about their usage within the OU, or the perspectives of the AL community on the use of L markers, nor any potential impact of this policy on our students beyond that numerical score.

This poster extends previous work where we reported that although relatively few late markers were applied to TMAS submitted on Life, Health and Chemical Sciences modules, there was a lack of consistency in L marker application.

We find variation in lateness ranging from before the cut-off date to over 28 days after the cut-off date. Although numbers were very small, the project findings also suggested that disabled students may have received a slightly higher proportion of L markers applied, and additionally that students studying at level one were particularly impacted by a late marker, as these students tended to stop studying

after receiving a zero grade for TMA compared to students studying at level two or three.

The focus of this second phase of the project was to collect AL voice. Here we report survey findings from over 100 ALs across the University. From the volume of comments provided, it was clear that respondents had strong thoughts on late work.

A key finding was that the majority of respondents believe that clear guidance and transparency about this policy is urgently required, both for their students and for themselves as practitioners. When asked whether L markers are of educational benefit opinion was very divided. Some ALs consider that late markers to be a fair mechanism, supporting development of skills such as communication, responsibility and accountability, and potentially preventing poor practice of multiple late knock-on submissions. Others believed L markers to be damaging and demotivating with potentially harmful effects on self-esteem, mental health and overall retention and progression.

Our findings suggest that ALs would welcome a fairer model of L marker application such as the sliding scale or capped mark rather than the current all or nothing zero grade policy.