

An introduction to e-marking

Marking from Image

In 2014 most of the National 5 question papers (scripts) will be e-marked. This means that once the candidates have sat their exam, their scripts will be scanned and the electronic images made available to Markers to mark on screen using their home computers.

The scripts you are being invited to mark will be marked in this way, therefore you will need to have access to a home computer or laptop which meets the minimum specification included in your invitation to mark.



We have worked in partnership with RM Education to develop, tailor and implement the scoris assessor e-marking system.



SQA has carried out e-marking for several years and is committed to maximising its use because of the benefits to markers, candidates and SQA.

E-marking Quality Assurance

E-marking: Marking from Image has a robust, front loaded quality assurance process which checks that you understand the Marking Instructions, can apply them accurately and consistently, and therefore can mark to the national standard before you start to mark live candidate responses.

The quality assurance process begins with giving you a number of **Practice** and **Qualification** scripts which have been selected and definitively marked by the Principal Assessor (and confirmed by Team Leaders). You will 'blind' mark these scripts online and when submitted, scoris assessor provides you with targeted feedback to show where your marks are the same, are within an acceptable degree of variance, or are not in line with the definitive marks. There are normally four practice scripts which allow you to self-assess and refine your marking. When you review your feedback this will also include comments from the Principal Assessor and Team Leaders to illustrate where and why a particular mark has been awarded to a response.



Figure 1 Copyright SXC.hu

Qualification scripts are used to test your ability to mark to standard. You need to demonstrate this by marking 5 out of 8 scripts to the standard before you can be approved to mark live candidates' scripts.

A similar approach is used during live marking to gauge if your marking standards are being maintained throughout the marking period. **Seeded** scripts are randomly planted at intervals in the script feeding process. These are definitively marked by the Principal Assessor and once you have marked and submitted these you will get more feedback on the accuracy of your marking.

E-Marker support and training

Your Team Leader

To assist you in the application of standards you will have the support of a dedicated Team Leader.

Scoris assessor has an inbuilt messaging function which aids communication between yourself and your Team Leader. For example, if you are unsure about how to mark a particular candidate response, perhaps because the candidate answered the question in an unusual way, scoris assessor allows both you and your Team Leader to view the same response at the same time, to discuss it and determine the appropriate mark or course of action.

The messaging system can also be used by the Principal Assessor and SQA to communicate key messages to the whole marking team throughout the marking period.

Online training

SQA Academy (SQA's training and development website) hosts a comprehensive online e-marking training course which provides mixed media training and guidance on the use of scoris assessor and the e-marking quality assurance processes. You will be able to practise and apply this training using 'familiarisation' mode within scoris assessor.

Once we have started to scan candidate submissions you will be able to log into scoris to view and mark live responses in 'Simulation Mode'. The marks are not saved, but this gives you an early opportunity to practise marking live candidate scripts in scoris.

We will send you all the details you will need to know about how and when to access these training opportunities.

Marker Briefings

Your invitation will give you details of your Marker Briefing. Briefings are in place this year to aid understanding of the national standard and application of the Marking Instructions.

E-Marker Helpdesk

You can ask for assistance by phone or by e-mail from SQA's experienced e-marking helpdesk staff to resolve any technical issues. The helpdesk operates seven days a week both in the lead up to, and throughout, the marking period.



Figure 2 Copyright SQA

The benefits of e-marking

to you, the Marker

- scoris assessor is an intuitive marking system with rich functionality, it aids direct support from, and communication with, Team Leaders and the Principal Assessor and makes more efficient use of marking time
- it allows you to focus on the marking task at hand without being distracted by the physical handling of paper scripts
- there is no script handling or clerical work needed

to the candidate

- e-marking significantly reduces the likelihood of clerical errors such as marks aggregation
- candidate submissions are marked anonymously and are randomly distributed across the marking team
- the quality assurance model ensures that marking is consistent with the national standard across the cohort of candidates

to SQA

- e-marking has a robust front-loaded quality assurance model that checks that all Markers can apply the national standard prior to marking live scripts
- scoris assessor automatically returns marks, making managing the marking process more efficient
- it provides more quality control and visibility over and throughout the whole marking process
- it provides item level marks to inform grade boundary decisions
- it is environmentally friendly because it reduces the number of script journeys and procedural meetings

You may also be interested in viewing the e-marking case studies which are on SQA's website

www.sqa.org.uk/amcasestudies

Feedback

You may be interested in some of the very positive feedback we have received from our e-Markers using scoris.

“The electronic marking was a more than satisfactory method and worked very well. I had no problems accessing/using scoris and its speed was good whatever time of day I was using it. The marking scheme was easy to apply and covered most things and was easy to use.”

“After marking started scoris was very easy to use, very easy to get feedback from seeded scripts — a good marking system.”

“scoris was a joy to work on.”