ROYAL ACADEMY OF DANCE

Methodology of Moderation

This model seeks to minimise the impact to students of any inconsistency in marking across a very large examiner panel. In any situations where any mark discrepancy is unclear the benefit is always given to the student.

In order to make their decision the Moderator will use the RAD's large dataset of results outcomes accumulated over a significant number of years to set trends and averages. Application is based solely on the spread of examiner marks within each dataset (tour) against comparable datasets of previous years.

Process

The Moderator compares the overall examiner marking data (total percentage split of Standard Not Attained/Pass/Merit/Distinction) for each tour, with the data for all other examiners on tours in that region/territory during the same exam session.

Where no discrepancies are identified, results will be released. In some cases for shorter tours, results may be issued before the session concludes. If discrepancies are identified, the Moderator will proceed to the next stage of the moderation process

The next stage, following identification of a discrepancy, is for the Moderator to look at and compare the overall examiner data from previous years in the same territory and same exam session.

This will tell the Moderator which examiner/tour in the session is the outlier.

Having identified which tour is the potential discrepancy the Moderator then moves to breaking down the spread of candidate marks across each assessment type e.g. Grade 1, Intermediate, Grade 5 Solo Performance Award etc.

Once broken down the Moderator considers the total number of discrepancies in marking between the previous two years' examiner results for all candidates having done that grade (excluding any outlier data such as where candidates jumped from Grade 1 to Grade 5).

For example, there are 80 candidates in a tour who took Grade 5, 4 of which have been excluded as outlier data. 64 of the remaining 76 have significantly lower marks than their previous two grades.

There are only two possible conclusions that can then be drawn from this data:

1) The candidates all happened to do a lot worse in their exams than previously (unlikely with a wide range of schools in a tour)
2) The examiner is marking too hard in comparison to other examiners

The use of two years' worth of data in comparison is to mitigate for the examiner in the previous year potentially being a lenient marker (or vice versa).

Finally, to ensure marks are only changed when we have no reasonable doubt as to the discrepancy, the Moderator will look at the standardisation record of the examiner. The benefits of this model mean that we can review 100% of exams taken at very low cost.