



# Assessment Moderation Policy

Academic Board Approved Document

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<b>Related Legislation</b>	Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (Cth)
<b>Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (Cth)</b>	BI.1 "Higher Education Provider" Category Standard 1.2, ss 1 Standard 1.3, ss 2, 3 Standard 1.4, ss 3, 6 Standard 1.5, ss 6 Standard 3.1, ss 1 Standard 4.2, ss 1 Standard 5.1, ss 3 Standard 5.3, ss 2, 3 Standard 7.2, ss 2
<b>Benchmarking Institutes</b>	Australian Institute of Higher Education King's Own Institute Macquarie University Southern Cross University University of Newcastle Western Sydney University

## Version History

v2.1 5 December 2018 Academic Board approved

v2.2 19 November 2022 Minor amendments as a result of scheduled policy review

## **1. Preamble**

### *1.1 Purpose*

The purpose of the Assessment Moderation Policy is to outline the Churchill Institute of Higher Education's ('the Institute') Policy on moderation of the assessments on its offered course(s).

### *1.2 Background*

Assessment Moderation is an integral part of the assessment process at the Institute. It is designed to facilitate on-going quality assurance and ensure that the original assessments are authentic and aligned to the Course and Unit Learning Outcomes.

This Policy is designed to meet the requirements of the Academic Board's approved policies, quality assurance standards, accreditation requirements and relevant administrative standards and to ensure that the Assessment Policy is fully applied.

### *1.3 Definition*

For definitions, please refer to *Dictionary of Terms*.

## **2. Scope**

This policy provides information about the Institute's policies and procedures for the moderation of all assessments of the courses offered. Furthermore, this policy applies to:

- a. the moderation of all assessments, including examination of coursework by students undertaking undergraduate award degrees at the institute
- b. academic and administrative staff and people contracted by the Institute with responsibility for designing, administering, and making decisions relating to the assessment moderation on behalf of the Institute.

## **3. Policy Statement**

The Institute will ensure that students' performances are assessed by fair, timely and transparent procedures, based on clearly defined, consistent and equitable criteria. For this purpose, moderation of the assessment will be conducted to ensure the standards are consistently met.

## **4. Assessment Moderation**

To ensure the validity and reliability of assessments, two assessment moderation stages are employed:

- a. *At the assessment design stage (Pre-Assessment Moderation):* the main objective of the moderation process at this stage is to ensure the validity and reliability of the assessments. That is, that assessment criteria are validly aligned with the unit learning outcomes and the assessment design can validly measure student performance against the assessment criteria.
- b. *At the marking stage (Post-Assessment Moderation):* the main objective of the moderation process at this stage is to ensure that marking is consistent with assessment criteria and assessment standards are applied in a consistent manner.

The moderation process should be carried out for all types of assessment items, including mid-semester and final examinations.

#### 4.1 *Pre-Assessment Moderation*

- a. A pre-assessment moderation should be carried out for assessment items of several sample units (25% of overall units) within each major.
- b. The moderation is conducted by an appointed external moderator who may be a qualified academic in his or her respective field, or a member of a professional body, or a professional representative of an industry, who is appointed by the Institute.
- c. To ensure the objectivity of the outcome, external moderator(s) should be appointed to moderate assessment items for each unit. The external moderator(s) should consist of a moderator from another higher education institute and/or a moderator from a professional body or an industry professional.
- d. The process should be undertaken and completed before the commencement of the semester to ensure the unit outline is ready for the students to access at the commencement of the semester.
- e. The moderation process should be carried out whenever there is a substantial revision of the assessment items and/or substantial revision of the unit outline.
- f. It is the responsibility of the Unit Coordinator to make sure the documents are ready for moderation and to notify the Dean and/or the Course Coordinator once they are ready.
- g. The documents should consist of assessment item description (instruction, requirement and criteria as well as the rubric) for all assessment items (including mid-semester and final examination) of the nominated units from each major.
- h. The process should be completed within ten (10) calendar days after the submission of the moderation documents.
- i. Moderation feedback should include comments on the validity and reliability of the assessment items as well as the recommendation.
- j. The Course Coordinator will approve the type and weightage of the assessment items.

#### 4.2 *Post Assessment Moderation*

- a. A post-assessment moderation should be carried out for each assessment with more than twenty (20) percent of the total assessment of the unit, excluding an assessment which consists of full Multiple-Choice Questions. The moderation is conducted by a unit coordinator or an appointed internal moderator.
- b. A random sample of papers (from low, medium and high marks) should be submitted for moderation, along with the assessment description and assessment rubrics. In the case of a small class size (less than ten students), three (3) samples, (one from each level) should be submitted for moderation.
- c. In the case of parallel classes running for the same units, six (6) moderation samples (two from each level) should be taken from each class.
- d. The process should be completed within fourteen (14) calendar days after the due date of each assessment item.
- e. It is the responsibility of the lecturer to contact the unit coordinator to arrange for a moderation process. In the case where only unit coordinator teaches the unit, an internal moderator from within the Institute will be appointed by the Dean to carry out the moderation process.
- f. Moderation feedback should include comments on the marking consistency as well as the recommendation.

## **5. Marking**

In the marking of assessments, one of the main objectives is to ensure reliability and consistency between different markers. The Unit Coordinator would be able to ensure marking reliability and consistency by:

- i* Ensuring a marking key and/or or solutions guide is available for all markers in all units;
  - ii* Ensuring that markers understand the marking criteria, rubric, marking key or solutions guide. A pre-marking meeting/training will be conducted before the marking exercise commences for any semester;
  - iii* allocating all assignments to one marker where feasible. Alternatively, allocate one section of an assessment of all students to one marker for marking. This will require a system of rotating submitted assessment work across the marking team;
  - iv* Checking marks of very high and very low scoring assessments in each unit.
- 5.2 Second marking of some assessments may be undertaken. In larger courses, this might involve a random sample being subjected to second (double) marking or blind marking, where markers do not see each other's comments or grades until after marking is completed. Discrepancy in the grading needs to be considered carefully and resolved. Where markers agree closely, small differences can be resolved by averaging.
- 5.3 The scheduling of an intra-marking moderation meeting or opportunities for a marker to discuss issues with the Unit Coordinator and other markers early in the marking process allows for the detection of any problems/issues in applying the marking criteria and the type and way feedback is provided. It is extremely helpful if the Course Coordinator can identify issues as they arise during marking and resolve them before markers have completed marking to avoid unnecessary workload if marking needs to be readdressed.

## **6. Examinations Moderation:**

- 6.1 Receive and moderate copies of at least five (5) exam papers, ranging from fail, pass, credit, distinction and high distinction from each assessor, within five (5) working days of the date of receipt. If enrolments in a unit are over 50, up to 20% of exams may be moderated, as deemed appropriate by the Course Coordinator. The Course Coordinators should liaise with other assessors to agree on the best means of providing copies of marked exam papers.
- 6.2 Moderate grades and provide feedback to assessors within five (5) working days of the date of receipt of exam papers. The Course Coordinator will provide feedback and advise the assessor directly of any required adjustments to their exam marking. This may necessitate the assessor adjusting previous exam marks awarded to conform to the moderated sample (no marks must be released to students during this period).
- 6.3 Receive a list of all assignment marks from the assessor on completion of marking and within ten (10) working days of the assignment due date.

## **7. Assessment-moderation related Roles and Responsibilities**

### *7.1 Dean and/or Course Coordinator*

The Dean and/or Course coordinator are responsible for the overall assessment moderation process, including appointing external moderators for pre-assessment moderation and, if necessary, internal moderators for post-assessment moderation, as well as monitoring the process.

## 7.2 Unit Coordinator

The Unit Coordinator is a qualified academic in the relevant field who is appointed by the Dean/Relevant Course Coordinator and approved by the Academic Board. The Unit Coordinator is responsible for both pre-assessment and post-assessment moderation.

In the pre-assessment moderation process, the unit coordinator is responsible for:

- a. designing the assessment items and preparing all the documents as described in section 4.1 for pre-assessment moderation process;
- b. notifying the Dean/Course Coordinator when the documents are ready and monitoring the progress of the moderation process once the external moderators have been appointed;
- c. responding to the feedback given by the external moderators and, if necessary, revising the assessment items;
- d. finalising the items and obtaining the Dean/Course Coordinator's approval before officially publishing the unit outline.

In the post-assessment moderation process, the unit coordinator is responsible for:

- a. informing the lecturers about the moderation process which include the type of moderation samples to be submitted as well as the timeframe of the process;
- b. providing constructive feedback and recommendations regarding the consistency of the marking;
- c. publishing the results once the lecturers have addressed the feedback.

*Note:* In the case where no other lecturer, apart from the unit coordinator, teaches the unit, the moderation process should be carried out by an internal moderator appointed by the Dean/Course Coordinator.

## 7.3 Lecturer

A Lecturer is an academic staff on a full-time, part-time, or sessional basis arrangement with responsibility for unit content and assessment item delivery. If a Lecturer is not a unit coordinator, he or she is responsible to ensure that the following items (but not limited to) are undertaken:

- a. finalise the marking process within two weeks after the due date of each assessment item
- b. contact the unit coordinator (or the internal moderator, if the class is only taught by a unit coordinator) and send six (6) moderation sample documents – as described in section 4.2 of this policy
- c. respond to the feedback given by the unit coordinator or internal moderator and, if necessary, adjust the marks
- d. notify the unit coordinator once the recommendation is addressed, so the marks can be officially published
- e. if the class is only taught by the unit coordinator, the marks can be published once the recommendation is addressed without having to notify the internal moderator.

## 7.4 External Moderator

An external moderator is appointed to carry out the pre-assessment moderation process, to ensure the validity and reliability of the assessment items. An external moderator is responsible for:

- i. providing constructive feedback and recommendations on each assessment item in the unit, per the unit learning outcomes as well as the expected standard of knowledge in their respective fields;



- ii. completing the moderation process within fourteen (14) calendar days of the submission of the assessment item papers.

### *7.5 Internal Moderator*

An internal moderator is appointed to carry out a post-assessment moderation where the unit coordinator is the only one teaching the unit. An internal moderator is responsible for:

- i. providing constructive feedback and recommendations per the assessment requirement and criteria;
- ii. completing the moderation process within one week of the submission of the sample papers.

## **8. Quality Assurances**

- 8.1 To ensure the quality of the assessment, the moderation process will apply to all units listed in the course structure.
- 8.2 The moderation process should be carried out for all new unit outlines as well as when there is a substantial revision to the existing unit outlines/assessment items.
- 8.3 In the case where there is no substantial revision to the unit outline and/or the assessment item, a regular two (2) year review should be implemented to ensure the content of the unit outline and/or the assessment item is relevant to current industry trends.
- 8.4 At least one fifth of the unit assessment items are externally reviewed. The Dean will ensure that all unit outlines/assessment items are externally reviewed at least every five (5) years.

## **9. Records Management**

- 9.1 All items submitted or completed by a student for the purpose of assessment or evaluation, in the course, will be submitted and stored in electronic format for a period of six (6) months following the end of the students' enrolled period with the Institute, except for final exam papers, which will be retained in their original format as per 9.2. At the end of the retention period, the items will be destroyed.
- 9.2 The Institute will retain final exam papers (physical copy) for all units for one semester after which the items will be destroyed.
- 9.3 The Institute will collect samples of all assessed work in all units and save these to a secure account or arrange for regular moderation feedback reports, to facilitate an annual report summary and review of the assessments by the relevant academic staff. The feedback reports will be reviewed at Academic Board and Course and Industry Advisory Committee meetings and the relevant Course Coordinator(s) will discuss the feedback with the lecturer and ensure appropriate adjustments to marking standards/moderation are undertaken where required. Following this review and feedback by the academic staff such records will be archived.