

Assessment Moderation Policy and Procedure

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Related Documents	External Referencing and Benchmarking Policy and Procedure Academic Board Terms of Reference <u>Assessment Policy and Procedure</u> <u>Quality Assurance Framework</u> <u>Student Code of Conduct</u> <u>Student Appeals Policy and Procedure</u> Assessment Guidelines Course Quality Assurance
Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) 2021 (Cth)	Standard 1.3.2-3 Standard 1.4.3 Standard 5.3.4 Standard 7.2.2



ZENITH INNOVATION INSTITUTE
UNPARALLELED EXCELLENCE

Assessment Moderation Policy and Procedure

Approved by the Academic Board on 10 May 2024

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Purpose

1. The purpose of this Policy is to establish the minimum requirements for moderation of assessment conducted at Zenith Innovation Institute (**Zenith / ZII/ the Institute**).

Scope

2. This Policy applies to:
 - (a) all staff involved in the delivery of course(s) offered by the Institute whether full-time, part-time, casual or contract;
 - (b) all units in all courses;
 - (c) all written assessment tasks with a weighted percentage of more than 20 per cent of a unit's assessment and all examinations, apart from multiple choice examinations.

Policy

Principles

3. The Institute establishes guidelines and requirements for the moderation of units, their course learning outcomes and assessments.
4. Moderation of assessment contributes to how the Institute protects the integrity of assessment and learning outcomes. The moderation of assessments is a quality assurance measure that ensures fairness, validity, currency and consistency in the processes used to assess student learning. Moderation of assessment ensures that assessment tasks and marking criteria are:
 - (a) clearly expressed and aligned with the relevant learning outcomes and experiences as specified in the individual Unit Outline;
 - (b) appropriate to the level of the unit within the course, taking into consideration assumed learning required for participation in the course;
 - (c) consistent with other (external) curriculum in the unit discipline (achieved through a process of expert consultation and benchmarking);
 - (d) appropriately weighted and graded consistently regardless of different student cohorts and teaching staff to ensure fairness, equity and equivalence.
5. Moderation of assessment is conducted at the Institute according to a phased cycle of internal or external analysis conducted prior to, during and after delivery of a unit.
6. Moderation applies to written assignments with a weighted percentage above twenty (20) per cent of the overall unit assessment as well as to written examinations, excluding multiple-choice examinations.
7. In the first year of the Institute's operation, fifty (50) per cent of the units offered in each course will be externally moderated. After the first year of operation, at least one third of the units offered will be moderated externally each year. The Academic Board may nominate additional unit(s) for external moderation as and when required.
8. All unit moderators including whether internal or external, are nominated by Course Coordinators and approved by the Academic Dean.

Procedure

9. An overview of the assessment moderation at Zenith is provided at Schedule 1 - Assessment moderation flow chart.

Pre-assessment moderation

10. All new units will undergo pre-assessment moderation and whenever the assessment within a unit of study is modified. For all other units pre-assessment moderation will occur according to a representative sampling methodology determined by the Academic Dean.
11. Pre-assessment moderation aims to:
 - (a) test the validity and reliability of the assessment method / instruments;
 - (b) certify the relevance of assessment tasks against unit and course learning outcomes and graduate attributes.
12. The nominated unit moderator will prepare a pre-assessment moderation report in the prescribed form and present it to the Course Coordinator at the commencement of the teaching period in which the unit (or modified unit) is to be first delivered.
13. The unit moderator will ensure that:
 - (a) tasks are appropriately aligned to the learning outcomes and assessment requirements listed in the Unit Outline;
 - (b) assessment is valid, reliable, and fair;
 - (c) task content and instructions are clearly, comprehensibly, and accurately presented;
 - (d) the assessment task and learning outcome presented for the student is consistent with the level of the unit;
 - (e) where appropriate and feasible, assessment tasks within and between units are integrated;
 - (f) the assessment aligns with the Institute's *Assessment Policy and Procedure*; and the Assessment Guidelines Course Quality Assurance
 - (g) any prior moderation outcomes have been addressed;
 - (h) all learning materials are current and suitable;
 - (i) all resources required for the assessment task are available.
14. The unit moderator also reviews the Unit Outline to ensure that students are clearly informed about:
 - (a) the expectations and requirements of assessment tasks;
 - (b) the marking criteria and standards for each assessment task, including the levels of performance required to achieve each passing grade in each task;
 - (c) the assessment moderation activities undertaken for the unit;
 - (d) the submission dates and presentation requirements of each task;
 - (e) the unit learning outcomes that are relevant to each assessment task and their relationship to the objectives of the Course(s) and the Institute's Graduate Attributes.

Post-assessment moderation

15. The marking of all assessment tasks is subject to post-assessment moderation for each unit in a teaching period to ensure consistent and valid assessment decisions in accordance with the

Institute's *Assessment Policy and Procedure* and published assessment criteria in the Unit Outlines. The Course Coordinator will appoint a unit moderator for this task.

16. On the completion of all assessment items for a term of study and prior to the communication of final grades to students, the Course Coordinators will review the assessment results for all units in their specific course for:
 - (a) the accuracy of data entry of results;
 - (b) the distribution of marks across assessment tasks and across different student cohorts.
17. The unit moderators will consider samples from students at all locations studying a unit in each teaching period to determine the consistency and fairness of the application of the assessment criteria for all students, the appropriateness of the assessment scheme and all summative assessment items for students in a unit of study.
18. The unit moderators will ensure that:
 - (a) the standard of achievement is consistent, particularly for units being delivered to different groups of students by different staff;
 - (b) assessment is consistent through 'double-marking' a sample of submitted tasks.
19. Where the same unit is offered across different courses, post-assessment moderation will be common across all courses to ensure consistency of standards.
20. The unit moderators will compile a post-assessment moderation for:
 - (a) Internal moderation – A report in the prescribed form setting out their findings and recommendations and present it to the Course Coordinator within two weeks of the end of each teaching period. The Course Coordinator will ensure that any necessary actions (such as re-marking or the amendment of grades) are taken before confirming the provisional results for the teaching period.
 - (b) External Moderation – The Institute engages external experts to moderate sample graded assessments, ensuring fairness and alignment with Australian higher education standards under the provisions of the Academic Benchmarking Policy and Procedure. Moderators review deidentified samples and submit reports informing continuous improvement. Unit Coordinators review these reports, with actions and responses overseen by the Academic Board to enhance teaching and assessment quality. The timeframe allocated is up to four weeks.
21. Course Coordinators will compile a report on assessment results for all units in the relevant course to submit to the Academic Dean. The report will include:
 - (a) an evaluation of the distribution of marks;
 - (b) any adjustments to marks;
 - (c) any recommendations for change to assessment tasks and/or relevant feedback to markers;
 - (d) an assessment of the equivalence of student results with other comparable units' external to the Institute.
22. The Academic Dean will review the Course Coordinators' assessment reports to ensure that the standard of achievement is internally and externally consistent based on the findings, particularly for units being delivered to different groups of students by different staff.
23. Following the Academic Dean's review all assessment reports will be submitted to the Examination Sub-Committee of the Teaching and Learning Committee to certify all grades. No exam marks will be released until after the moderation and Certification of Grades.
24. Final grades will be published on the Certification of Grades date each semester and made available to students through the Institute's Learning Management System.

Reporting on moderation

25. The Course Coordinator will maintain a record of the outcomes of any pre-assessment moderation undertaken. The record will contain information on the assessment tasks moderated and the number and nature of changes to tasks arising from the moderation process.
26. The Course Coordinator will maintain a record of the outcomes of all post-assessment moderation. The record will contain information on the units moderated, the number of instances in which marking discrepancies were identified, follow-up actions, and recommendations for improvement.
27. Based on these records, the Course Coordinator will prepare a Moderation Report for the Teaching and Learning Committee at the end of each semester. The report will summarise the conduct and outcomes of both pre- and post-assessment moderation, including any comments or advice from unit moderators. The report will highlight any improvements or amendments to assessment tasks or practices resulting from moderation activity. The report will form part of the Teaching and Learning Committee's regular reporting to the Academic Board.
28. The Academic Board will review and approve any recommendations for improvement included in the report for implementation.
29. The Academic Dean will ensure that follow-up actions included in the report are completed within a reasonable timeframe and that recommendations for improvement are referred, or allocated, to the relevant roles within the Institute for implementation.
30. The Academic Board will monitor the conduct and outcomes of moderation across the Institute to ensure that the assessment moderation process is effective and is reflective of the Institute's culture of continuous improvement.

Quality assurance and professional development

31. The Institute will assure the quality of its moderation processes through benchmarking processes and professional development of academic staff within the external benchmarking activities.
32. Where possible, external academic expertise will be engaged to contribute to ongoing benchmarking of the Institute's standards of teaching and learning, assessment and processes of moderation.
33. Professional development opportunities for design, implementation and moderation of assessment will be provided to academic staff and included by Course Coordinators as required activities in the development plans of academic staff.
34. The Academic Dean will include required professional development relating to moderation activities in the annual Scholarship Plan.

Responsibilities

35. The Academic Dean is responsible for:
 - (a) overseeing the pre-assessment and post-assessment moderation processes undertaken across courses;
 - (b) confirming the nomination of unit moderators and identifying where necessary external discipline-specific expertise to assist in moderation of assessment as required;
 - (c) submitting final assessment reports to the Examination Sub-Committee;
 - (d) reporting the final outcomes of moderation activity to the Teaching and Learning Committee who will in turn report to Academic Board each semester;

(e) ensuring that the outcomes of moderation activities are used to continuously improve the Institute's processes, including integrating outcomes into course development and review processes.

36. The Course Coordinator is specifically responsible for:

- (a) the nomination of a unit moderators for each unit of study, both for internal and external moderators, having regard to due independence of moderators;
- (b) monitoring the pre-assessment and post-assessment moderation processes for their course;
- (c) providing assurance to the Academic Dean that all moderation activities have been undertaken diligently, competently, and with regard to the integrity of the course;
- (d) ensuring that relevant academic staff associated with a unit are informed prior to the start of semester about assessment tasks, assessment criteria, marking and moderation procedures.

37. The unit moderator is specifically responsible for:

- (a) undertaking moderation of any assessment tasks or exams as instructed by the Course Coordinator in accordance with this Policy;
- (b) ensuring that assessment tasks and exams are marked fairly and consistently when compared with the sample benchmarking documents.

Definitions

38. For the purposes of this Policy:

Term	Definition
Certification of Grades	The process by which all grades are confirmed by the Examinations Sub-Committee of the Teaching and Learning Committee following review and moderation.
Moderation	The process of ensuring that assessment validly and reliably measures achievement of expected learning outcomes in a unit of study.
Moderator	The person who is responsible for ensuring the quality of setting/marketing of student assessment, who is not the person who originally set or marked the task.
Post-assessment moderation	The process that ensures the accuracy of assessment decisions and consistency with published criteria through the review of a designated sample of marked student work.
Pre-assessment moderation	The process that validates the appropriateness, fairness, clarity, accuracy and standard of assessment tasks and materials before they are used for assessment.

Version history

Version	Changes	Approval Body	Approval Date
1.0	Original Policy	Academic Board	10 May 2024
1.1	<p>In Related Documents added “Assessment Guidelines Course Quality Assurance”</p> <p>Point 14 replaced “Unit Learning Guide” to “Unit Outline”</p> <p>Point 17 and 18 changed “unit moderator” to “unit moderators”</p> <p>Point 20 amended to reflect internal and external moderation.</p> <p>Point 22 added “based on findings”</p> <p>Deleted “External benchmarking of assessment tasks and processes is encouraged and supported at the Institute through peer-review processes undertaken with academic staff in relevant disciplines at similar higher education providers, under the provisions of the Academic Benchmarking Policy and Procedure.”</p> <p>Point 36 a) changed “moderator” to “moderators”</p>	Academic Board	20 Jan 2025



Schedule 1 – Assessment moderation flow chart

