ASSESSMENT MODERATION POLICY

Approving Authority	Academic Board
Purpose	This policy outlines the process for moderating assessment tasks and the assessment of students' work.
Responsible Officer	Academic Dean
Next Scheduled Review	September 2026
Document Location	http://www.ozford.edu.au/higher-education/policies-and-procedures/
Associated Documents	Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure Assessment Policy and Procedure Course and Unit Development, Approval and Review Policy and Procedure Work Integrated Learning (WIL) Policy and Procedure Records Management Policy and Procedure Assessment Moderation Procedure

1. PRINCIPLES

The process of moderation is integral to the academic standards and academic integrity of the Ozford Institute of Higher Education (hereafter referred to as the "Institute") and its courses and the moderation process is an integral part of the assessment processes and should also be understood and implemented in the context of the Institute's Academic Integrity Policy.

This policy sets out standards for pre-assessment moderation in respect of all assessment tasks and post-assessment moderation standards in respect of grading students' performance against assessment tasks.

This policy ensures that assessment tasks have been appropriately designed and that marking standards are consistently applied across all Institute courses. It ensures that student performance is assessed fairly and consistently across all courses and units delivered by the Institute.

External moderation assists in ensuring that appropriate academic standards are monitored and maintained.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to staff involved in assessment of accredited courses, internal and external moderation of students' assessment items for each unit before and after the assessments are administered.

3. DEFINITIONS

Assessment:
The process of forming a judgement on the quality and extent of student achievement or performance and, therefore, by inference, is a judgement about the learning itself.

Assessment system:
A coordinated set of documented policies and procedures (including assessment materials and tools) that ensure assessments are consistent and are based on the Principles of Assessment.

Assessors:
Persons who assess a learner's performance in accordance with AQF and unit requirements. Assessors have one AQF qualification level above the level of the unit they are assessing or equivalent professional experience in accordance with the *Equivalence of Professional Experience and Academic Qualifications Policy*.

Assessment Task
An assessment task is one that has been prescribed to be completed by students and is assessed as part of the final grade for a unit of study.

External Moderator
An external moderator is a suitably qualified academic or subject expert, not employed by the Institute, who has been appointed to moderate a unit of study.

Internal Moderator
An internal moderator is a suitably qualified academic who is engaged full-time, part-time or as a sessional and has been appointed to moderate a unit of study.

Graduate Attributes
"Graduate attributes are the qualities, skills and understandings a university community agrees its students should develop during their time with the institution. These attributes include, but go beyond, the disciplinary expertise or technical knowledge that has traditionally formed the core of most university courses. They are qualities that also prepare graduates as agents for social good in an unknown future."
Bowden, J., Hart, G., King, B., Trigwell, K., and Watts, O. 2000. Generic Capabilities of ATN University Graduates, Australian Technology Network Teaching and Learning Committee, Final Report for DETYA

Learning Outcomes
Learning outcomes are clear and specific statements that describe what students are expected to know, understand or be able to do on the completion of the unit of study (Macquarie University, 2013). They are published in the Unit Outline.

Marking Scheme
A marking scheme is a structure that provides a clear statement of the assessment task criteria and the standards of student work required to attain different levels of achievement in assessment tasks.

Moderation
The quality review of the assessment process. Moderation involves checking that the assessment task/s produce/s are valid, reliable, sufficient, current and authentic evidence to enable reasonable judgements to be made about whether the course and learning outcomes of the unit are met. It includes reviewing a statistically valid sample of the assessments and making recommendations for future improvements to the assessment tasks, processes and/or outcomes and acting upon such recommendations.

Pre-assessment Moderation
Pre-assessment moderation refers to the moderation of assessment tasks before the assessment is handed to students.

Post-assessment Moderation

Post-assessment moderation refers to the moderation of students' submitted assessment tasks and is specifically aimed at ensuring that the standards being achieved by students in the course are comparable with those achieved in similar institutions and hence can benchmark satisfactorily against sector wide academic standards.

4.   POLICY

4.1   The Institute's moderation process ensures that assessment meets the following principles of assessment:
- Assessment is authentic, transparent and equitable
- Assessment is reliable and assures learning
- Assessment design promotes academic integrity
- Assessment is standards-based
- Assessment is designed to enable a course-based approach

4.2   The Institute's moderation approach:
- takes a holistic approach, based on the best available data and using a range of appropriate techniques and benchmarking
- is built into the Institute's assessment quality control processes
- is an input to unit and accredited course development and review processes
- encourages open communication of areas strength or improvement.
- assists Academic staff to work towards judgements that are valid, reliable and consistent, fair and equitable, and actively improve learning and teaching

4.3   All assessment tasks for units are to be internally moderated prior to use of each assessment task to ensure the assessment tasks are:
- aligned to the learning outcomes and published assessment requirements of the subject;
- valid, fair, reliable, feasible and without factual errors or ambiguous information;
- clearly and accurately expressed and presented;
- promotes academic integrity; and
- pitched at a level consistent with the Australian Qualifications Framework level for the unit.

4.4   Post-assessment moderation of marks or grades awarded to students will be performed for all units, every third time the unit is offered. Where panel marking has occurred, further moderation is not required.

4.5   The intent of post-assessment moderation is to obtain feedback on the standards that are being achieved by students. Post-assessment moderation is not intended to override the original mark or grade awarded to a student, unless in the case of obvious mistakes, assessment marking which unduly disadvantages a student or reflects academic misconduct.

4.6   The Academic Dean is responsible for ensuring that Unit Co-coordinators are appointed for each unit and that moderation is carried out.

Quality assurance

4.7 The Academic Dean convenes the School Assessment Committee as set out in the **Assessment Policy and Procedure**. The School Assessment Committee has responsibility for assuring the quality of unit assessment items and the moderation processes undertaken within units.

Moderation records

4.8 Moderation records will be maintained as set out in the **Records Management Policy and Procedure**.

Reporting and Monitoring

4.9 The Education Committee and the Academic Board will receive reports from the Academic Dean
- setting out outcomes from the moderation processes conducted each trimester
- as part of review of accredited courses and units as set out **in the Course and Unit Development, Approval and Review Policy and Procedure.**
- providing information about any marks or grades for students that were changed as a result of moderation.

5. QUALITY ASSURANCE

To ensure that this policy is fit for purpose and meets the requirements of the HESF Threshold Standards, the policy will be:

5.1 internally endorsed by the Executive Management Team on development or review, prior to approval by Governing Board, or the Academic Board or other delegated authority;

5.2 externally reviewed as part of any independent review of the HESF Threshold Standards approved by the Governing Board;

5.3 internally reviewed by the Responsible Officer every three years from the date of approval (if not earlier); and

5.4 referenced to the applicable HESF threshold standard and/or other legislation/regulation.

6. FEEDBACK

Feedback or comments on this policy is welcomed by the listed responsible officer of the Institute.

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This policy was developed with reference to the following :
- Charles Darwin University, Academic Assessment and Moderation Policy, 2022 (Academic Assessment and Moderation Policy (cdu.edu.au))
- Federation University Australia, Higher Education Assessment Procedure, 2023, Higher Education Examinations Procedure, 2023,

(Higher Education Assessment (inclusive of FedTASKs) Procedure (federation.edu.au), and https://policy.federation.edu.au/academic_governance/procedures/assessment/ch04.php

- La Trobe University, Assessment Procedure - Validation and Moderation, 2021 (Assessment Procedure - Validation and Moderation / Document / La Trobe Policy Library)
- Macquarie University, Assessment Policy, 2021, Assessment Procedure, 2021 (https://policies.mq.edu.au/document/view.php?id=17 and https://policies.mq.edu.au/document/view.php?id=277)
- Southern Cross University, Assessment Moderation Guidelines, 2022 (Assessment Moderation Guidelines (scu.edu.au))

8. VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date approved	Description	Approved by
1.0	5 December 2013	Initial issue	AB
2.0 (Revised)	5 June 2018	Reflecting the requirements of the HESF standards and changes in academic leadership structure	AB
3.0	November 2021	Internal review	AB
4.0	September 2023	Internal review	AB
Related legislation/ regulation/standard	Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Act 2011 (Cth) Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (Cth) 1.4 (Learning Outcomes and Assessment)		

Note. AB = Academic Board.