ASSESSMENT MODERATION PROCEDURE

Approving Authority	Executive Management Team
Purpose	This procedure outlines the process for moderating assessment tasks and the assessment of students' work.
Responsible Officer	Academic Dean
Next Scheduled Review	August 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 Policy

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 procedure 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 procedure 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 procedure 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.
Marking Scheme

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. The ***Assessment Procedure*** has an example.

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.   PROCEDURE

4.1   All academic staff are required to participate in relevant moderation activities.

Pre-Assessment Moderation

4.2   The Academic Dean will ensure that all assessment, supplementary assessment and deferred assessment tasks for a Unit are internally moderated prior to the administration of the assessment task.

4.3   The internal moderator will normally be a suitably qualified academic who is not the current term Unit Co-ordinator.

4.4   The internal moderator's role is to ensure assessment tasks are:
- aligned to the learning outcomes and published assessment requirements of the unit;
- valid, fair, reliable, feasible and without factual errors or ambiguous information;
- clearly and accurately expressed and presented ie. free from ambiguities;
- marking schemes are clear.
- timeframes set for all assessments are reasonable;
- promotes academic integrity; and
- pitched at a level consistent with the AQF level for the subject.

4.5   The moderator will prepare a written report of the outcomes for the Academic Dean including recommendations for improvement to:
- the assessments;
- assessor judgments including advice on specific adjustment of the results of a specific cohort of candidates;
- the context and conditions for the assessment;
- the advice to students about assessments; and
- the criteria used for judging the quality of performance (e.g. the decision making rules, evidence requirements etc.).

4.6   The Academic Dean will consider the moderation feedback and arrange for any changes as set out in the **Assessment Policy and Procedure** and **the Course and Unit Development, Approval and Review Policy and Procedure**.

Post-Assessment Moderation

4.7   Post-assessment moderation will be conducted by:
- An internal moderator; and/or
- An external moderator

4.8 The Academic Dean or delegate will arrange for post-assessment moderation of marks or grades awarded to students every third time a unit is offered. The moderator(s) will provide feedback to the Unit Co-ordinator and Academic Dean on the standards that are being achieved by students.

4.9 The Academic Dean will nominate a sample of at least three units from each year to be moderated by an external moderator.

4.10 The internal moderator will be a suitably qualified academic who is the not the Unit Convenor in the current term.

4.11 The external moderator will be a suitably qualified academic or subject expert who is not currently employed or otherwise engaged with the Institute and who has the experience to assess that appropriate standards are being achieved.

4.12 The moderators will be provided with a copy of the assessment task, Unit Outline, marking scheme and suggested or model answers.

4.13 A representative sample of students' submitted assessment tasks or exam scripts will be moderated. The sample will include at least 20% of the submitted assessment tasks/exam scripts. A range of grades is to be included in the sample.

4.14 The moderation method to be used should be appropriate to the assessment task. Moderation methods may include, but not limited to:
- The use of a marking guide or scheme to provide guidance for assessment;
- The use of external assessors as moderators;
- Online marking which will require the inputted solutions or answers to be moderated;
- The use of suggested or model answers to provide an exemplar for assessment;
- The use of blind marking (where assessment submissions or exam scripts are identified by student number only, and not student name;
- The use of double marking based on a sample of at least 20% of student assessment submission or exam scripts.

4.15 The following table provides a guide to appropriate moderation methods for different assessment tasks:

Assessment Task	Post-Assessment Moderation Method
Class test	- Internal moderator - Marking Guide - Suggested/model answers
On-line test (or quiz)	- Internal moderator - Suggested/model answers matched to inputted data
Written assignment (group and individual), including Case Study	- Marking Guide - Suggested/model answers - External moderators - Blind marking - Double marking

Assessment Task	Post-Assessment Moderation Method
Oral class presentation (group and individual)	• Internal moderator • Sample of audio/video recording of presentations.
Written formal examination	• Marking Guide • Suggested/model answers • External moderators • Blind marking • Double marking

4.16 While post-assessment moderation is not intended to override the original mark or grade awarded to a student, if the moderators detect an obvious mistakes, assessment marking which unduly disadvantaged a student or academic misconduct., the assessment will be referred to the Academic Dean for review.

4.17 The moderator(s) will prepare a written report of the outcomes for the Academic Dean including recommendations for improvement to:
   • the assessments;
   • assessor judgments including advice on specific adjustment of the results of a specific cohort of candidates;
   • the context and conditions for the assessment;
   • the advice to students about assessments; and
   • the criteria used for judging the quality of performance (e.g. the decision making rules, evidence requirements etc.).

4.18 The Academic Dean will consider the moderation feedback and may take the following actions:
   • arrange for changes to assessment task(s) as set out in the **Assessment Policy and Procedure**.
   • include feedback about units in the next unit or accredited course review process as set out in the **Course and Unit Development, Approval and Review Policy and Procedure.**
   • review any feedback in respect to staff assessment or marking capabilities and consider actions to be taken ie staff training or performance management.
   • if the moderators detect any obvious mistakes, assessment marking which unduly disadvantaged a student or academic misconduct, take action as set out in the **Assessment Policy and Procedure** or the **Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure**

Quality assurance

4.19 As set out in the **Assessment Procedure**, the Academic Dean will convene the School Assessment Committee every trimester to provide oversight on the quality of assessment processes. The School Assessment Committee will collate and analyse assessment data and collect information for use in the Institute's reporting, moderation, unit and course review processes including:
   • reviewing survey and feedback data collected from students and peers.
   • monitoring processes during the trimester to confirm effective and efficient security of assessment submission, exam questions, exam papers and the safe return of assessment items;

- identifying units in which the assessment outcomes are unsatisfactory and providing advice on actions to improve outcomes.

Moderation records

4.20   Academic staff are responsible for ensuring records of moderation are maintained as set out in the **Records Management Policy and Procedure**.

Reporting and Monitoring

4.21   The Academic Dean will report on the outcomes from moderation processes to the Education Committee and Academic Board including:
- the outcomes from the moderation processes conducted each trimester
- the moderation information used in the reviews of accredited courses and units as set out **in the Course and Unit Development, Approval and Review Policy and Procedure.**
- any marks or grades for students that were changed as a result of moderation.

5.   QUALITY ASSURANCE

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

5.1   internally approved by the Executive Management Team on development or review

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 procedure is welcomed by the listed responsible officer of the Institute.

7.   ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This procedure 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
2.0	June 2018	Initial issue	EMT
3.0	November 2021	Internal review	EMT
4.0	August 2023	Internal review	EMT
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. EMT = Executive Management Team.