Assessment Moderation Policy and Procedure

Purpose

1. The purpose of this Policy is to establish the minimum requirements for moderation of assessment conducted at the Australian International Institute of Higher Education ('the Institute').

Scope

2. This Policy applies to:

    a) all staff involved in the delivery of course(s) offered by the Institute;

    b) all subjects in all courses;

    c) all written assessment tasks with a weighted percentage of more than 20 per cent of a subject's assessment and all examinations, apart from multiple choice examinations.

Definitions

3. For the purposes of this Policy:

    a) ***Certification of Grades*** is the process by which all grades are confirmed by the Examinations Sub-Committee of the Teaching and Learning Committee following review and moderation;

    b) ***Moderation*** is the process of ensuring that assessment validly and reliably measures achievement of expected learning outcomes in a subject of study;

    c) ***Moderator*** is the person who is responsible for ensuring the quality of setting/marking of student assessment, who is not the person who originally set or marked the task;

    d) ***Post-assessment moderation*** ensures the accuracy of assessment decisions and consistency with published criteria through the review of a designated sample of marked student work;

    e) ***Pre-assessment moderation*** validates the appropriateness, fairness, clarity, accuracy and standard of assessment tasks and materials before they are used for assessment;

Policy

Principles

4. The Institute establishes guidelines and requirements for the moderation of formal assessment of student learning through this Policy. This Policy is reviewed and approved by the Academic Board.

5. Moderation of assessment at the Institute is conducted to promote quality assurance in learning and teaching through ensuring 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 Subject Outline;

Page 1 of 6 | Assessment Moderation Policy and Procedure V1.0
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b) appropriate to the level of the subject within the course, taking into consideration assumed learning;

c) consistent with other (external) curriculum in the subject discipline (achieved through a process of expert consultation and benchmarking);

d) appropriately and fairly weighted and graded consistently regardless of different student cohorts and teaching staff.

6. Moderation of assessment is conducted through a three-phase cycle of internal or external analysis conducted prior to, during and after delivery of a subject.

7. Moderation applies to written assignments with a weighted percentage above twenty (20) per cent of that subject's overall assessment as well as to any written examination, excluding multiple-choice examinations. Moderation is also conducted on the provisional grades collated for each subject prior to certification of grades.

8. To broaden the scope and reliability of the moderation process, in the first year of the Institute's operation, fifty (50) per cent of the subjects offered in each course will be externally moderated. After the first year of operation, at least one third of the subjects offered will be moderated externally each year. The Academic Board may nominate additional subject(s) for external moderation as and when required.

9. Subject moderators, internal or external, are nominated by Course Coordinators and ratified by the Academic Dean.

Procedure

Pre-assessment moderation

10. Pre-assessment moderation certifies the relevance of assessment tasks against course learning outcomes and graduate attributes and occurs prior to a subject being delivered and whenever a subject of study is modified.

11. The nominated subject 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 subject (or modified subject) is to be first delivered.

12. The subject moderator will ensure that:

a) tasks are appropriately aligned to the learning outcomes and assessment requirements listed in the Subject Outline;

b) assessment is valid, reliable, and fair;

c) task content and instructions are clearly, comprehensibly, and accurately presented;

d) the academic challenge presented for the student is consistent with the level of the subject;

e) where appropriate and feasible, assessment tasks within and between subjects are integrated; and

f) the assessment aligns with the Institute's *Assessment Policy and Procedure*;

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.

Page 2 of 6 | Assessment Moderation Policy and Procedure V1.0
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13. The subject moderator also reviews the Subject Learning Guide 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 subject;

    d) the submission dates and presentation requirements of each task;

    e) the subject 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

14. The marking of all assessment tasks is subject to post-assessment moderation for each subject 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 Subject Outlines. The Course Coordinator will appoint a subject moderator for this task.

15. 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 subjects 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.

16. The subject moderator will consider samples from students at all locations studying a subject in each teaching period to determine the 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 subject of study.

17. The subject moderator will ensure that:

    a) the standard of achievement is consistent, particularly for subjects being delivered to different groups of students by different staff;

    b) assessment is consistent through 'double-marking' a sample of submitted tasks.

18. Where the same subject is offered across different courses, post-assessment moderation will be common across all courses to ensure consistency of standards.

19. The subject moderator will compile a post-assessment moderation report in the prescribed form setting out their findings and recommendations and present it to the Course Coordinator within one week 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.

20. Course Coordinators will compile a report on assessment results for all subjects 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 subjects' external to the Institute.

21. The Academic Dean will review the Course Coordinators' assessment reports to ensure that the standard of achievement is internally and externally consistent, particularly for subjects being

Page 3 of 6 | Assessment Moderation Policy and Procedure V1.0
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delivered to different groups of students by different staff.

22. 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.

23. 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.

24. 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 *External Referencing and Benchmarking Policy and Procedur*e.

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 subjects 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 subject 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 trimestral report 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 Institution 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.

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

Page 4 of 6 | Assessment Moderation Policy and Procedure V1.0
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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 subject 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 subject moderator for each subject 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 subject are informed prior to the start of semester about assessment tasks, assessment criteria, marking and moderation procedures;

37. The subject 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.

Page 5 of 6 | Assessment Moderation Policy and Procedure V1.0
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Associated information

Approving body	Academic Board
Date approved	17 September 2020
Date of effect	Commencement of operation
Next scheduled review	Two years from when policy commence
Policy owner	Academic Dean
Policy contact	Academic Dean
Related QIHE Documents	*Assessment Policy and Procedure* *Quality Assurance Framework* *Student Code of Conduct* *Student Appeals Policy and Procedure* *Subject Outline and Subject Learning Guide Policy and Procedure*
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015 (Cth)	Standard 1.3, ss 2-3 Standard 1.4, ss 3 Standard 5.3, ss 4 Standard 7.2, ss 2
Other related external instruments/documents	**Related Legislation** • *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (Cth)* • *Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)* **Good Practice Documents** • *TEQSA Guidance Note: Academic Quality Assurance, Version 2.2* • *TEQSA Guidance Note: Course Design, Version 1.3*

Document history

Version	Author	Changes	Approval Date
1.0	Not applicable	Original version	17 September 2020

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Page 6 of 6 | Assessment Moderation Policy and Procedure V1.0
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