

Moderation and Validation (HE) Procedure

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) The purpose of this procedure is to provide a process for assessment moderation and validation processes. This procedure is a part of the Melbourne Polytechnic Assessment Framework and responds to the [Assessment, Credit and Moderation \(HE\) Policy](#).

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This procedure applies to all staff across Melbourne Polytechnic involved in moderation and validation activities for Higher Education award courses and includes:

- a. All delivery locations (onshore and offshore).
- b. Courses offered through partner institutions.
- c. Academic teaching and administrative staff.
- d. All student cohorts (domestic and international)

Section 3 - Procedure

Subject Assessment Validation of student subject outline (excepting examinations, tests and quizzes)

(3) The Head of Program will identify and appoint appropriately qualified academic staff members, not directly involved in the delivery of the subject (subject assessment validator) to review and validate all subject assessment details provided with student subject outlines before teaching commences.

(4) Subject assessment validators will ensure:

- a. Assessments align with and accurately reflect intended subject learning outcomes.
- b. Format, content and criteria for assessment are set at the appropriate level.
- c. Marking criteria, rubrics and guides are clear and assessment criteria are linked to the grading standards.
- d. Timeframes set for all assessments are reasonable.
- e. Assessments are varied and spread across the semester.
- f. Assessments are written in plain English, professionally presented and free from ambiguities, grammatical errors and spelling mistakes. The subject assessment validator provides constructive feedback to the Subject Coordinator in a collegial manner and completes a [Subject Validation Certificate](#).
- g. The Subject Coordinator reflects on the discussion and suggestions provided by the subject assessment validator and makes amendments to the student subject outline as required.
- h. The approved [Subject Validation Certificate](#) is then embedded into the student subject outline.
- i. The Subject Coordinator will meet with academic teaching staff involved in the subject delivery before the start of teaching to explain assessment criteria and expected performance standards, with a view to reaching a

shared understanding of how the criteria is applied and supports consistent assessment rubric use.

Subject Assessment Validation (examinations, tests and quizzes)

(5) A subject assessment validator will validate examination, tests and quizzes to ensure:

- a. Learning outcomes are being assessed, marking criteria is clear and assessment rubric is linked to the grading standards.
- b. Assessments are free from ambiguities, grammatical errors and spelling mistakes.
- c. All relevant materials have been provided.
- d. Examination, test and quiz answer guides are clear and answers appropriately address posed questions.

(6) Final examinations will be validated at least six (6) weeks prior to the scheduled assessment. Tests and quizzes will be validated at least one (1) week prior to the scheduled assessment.

(7) If irreconcilable differences of opinion occur at any stage of subject assessment validation, the matter must be referred to the Head of Program for resolution.

(8) The subject assessment validator will complete an [Assessment Validation Certificate](#) and submit to the Course Administrator.

(9) [Assessment Validation Certificates](#) are stored by the Course Administrator for each course and may be required for course review and accreditation purposes.

Assessment Grade Moderation (for interim marking)

(10) A routine schedule will be developed by the Head of Program to ensure every course subject is moderated during the time of accreditation.

(11) During the semester progressive assessment grade moderation is undertaken as per the subject moderation schedule, for assessment which cumulatively makes up at least 60% of the subject assessment weighting. Exclusions to the 60% of assessment are: multiple-choice tests or the multiple-choice question section of an exam assessment.

(12) Moderated assessment tasks for the scheduled subject moderation are selected whilst preparing and approving the Student Subject Outline.

(13) Submitted student assessments for each selected assessment task are moderated following:

- a. marking by the academic/s teaching the subject (Assessor) and
- b. within 15 days of the assessment due date.

(14) Where there is more than one academic teaching the subject, moderation may be undertaken by peer subject teachers.

(15) Where there is only one Assessor, Assessment Moderators are appointed by the Head of Program.

(16) Moderation involves:

- a. Random selection of no more than two (2) samples of student assessment graded a fail, two (2) samples of student assessment graded a pass, two (2) samples of student assessment graded a high distinction (a total of 6 pieces of work). Adjacent grade samples may be used where there are fewer than two examples in a given grade level.
- b. Assessment Moderators are provided with the following:

- i. A copy of the sample assessment tasks/examinations.
 - ii. A copy of the initial assessors' assessment marking rubric
 - iii. The student subject outline.
 - iv. Assessment criteria and marking rubric.
- c. The Assessment Moderator reviews the assessment criteria and marking rubric before assessing the student assessment samples.
 - d. Assessor and Assessment Moderator marks are recorded in an assessment moderation spreadsheet and compared.
 - e. Where marking between the Assessor and Assessment Moderator agrees within 5% for a student assessment, mark adjustments are not required to that assessment.
 - f. Where marking between the Assessor and Assessment Moderator differs by more than 5% for a student assessment, marking review is required.

(17) Marking review requires the Assessor and Assessment Moderator to:

- a. Identify and discuss differences in marking decisions based on the assessment criteria and the marking rubric.
- b. Refer disputed marking to the Head of Program for resolution.
- c. Respond to Head of Program requirement to re-assess or re-moderate student assessments. This may be individual assessments or assessment within the same mark range(s).
- d. Determine changes to the student's mark, as appropriate.
- e. Determine changes to the marks of some or all students' work as appropriate. This requires consultation with the Subject Coordinator or Head of Program.
- f. Report the outcome of marking review, reasoning behind outcome decisions and any suggestions for subject improvement using the Subject Assessment Moderation Certificate

(18) The Assessor makes any interim assessment mark adjustments on the Learning Management System.

(19) Assessment grade moderation occurs promptly after assessment marking normally within 15 working days of the assessment due date, to support timely and quality feedback to students. Where student work has been selected for moderation, this may result in later return of work to students (up to 15 days), although assessment feedback can be provided within the normal 10-day requirement.

(20) If deemed appropriate, the Head of Program can require additional subject assessment moderation to be undertaken. The rationale, scope, volume and timing of the additional moderation will be recorded prior to undertaking further moderation.

(21) Assessments in subjects undergoing change such as a new assessment task, changes in legislation, health and safety may require additional moderation in the first few offerings of the subject.

(22) Completed and signed Subject Assessment Moderation templates are stored by the Course Administrator for each course as they may be required for course review and accreditation purposes to demonstrate quality assurance and continuous improvement of assessment.

(23) Periodically benchmarking is undertaken between subjects at the same level within the same course and across courses, as well as similar courses at other institutions.

Assessment Grade Review prior to result release

(24) Assessment marking will be reviewed for all students whose subject result is between 45-49%. The Subject Coordinator identifies any students with a subject result between 45-49% and who have attempted all assessment

tasks and allocates academic teaching team member/s to double mark all of the student's assessment tasks.

(25) Where the second marking differs by 10% or less, the average will be taken as the final mark for the assessment task.

(26) Where the second marking differs by greater than 10%, a third marker will examine the work and the final mark is the average of the three marks.

(27) Changes to a student's assessment marks will result in a recalculation of the student's result for the subject.

(28) All moderated assessments must be documented and a report provided to the Head of Program at the end of each semester.

(29) Assessment moderators must not moderate work they originally marked or double marked.

(30) The membership of the [Results Review Meeting](#) review grade distributions to identify the spread of results and identify differences between grades.

(31) The following is considered by membership of the [Results Review Meeting](#) and reported to the Examinations and Integrity Committee (EIC) with recommendations for adjusted grades or marks (if required).

- a. Large numbers of fails or HDs.
- b. Borderline marks.
- c. Large numbers of students with the same grade.
- d. Differences between grades of individual markers.
- e. Differences between grades of individual students across consecutive assessment tasks.

(32) The Examinations and Integrity Committee (EIC) reviews and decides on recommendations for adjusted grades and marks according to its terms of reference.

(33) The Examinations and Integrity Committee (EIC) may direct requirements for continuous improvement at subject, course or Directorate level according to its terms of reference.

Section 4 - Responsibility and Accountability

(34) The Director Higher Education is responsible for:

- a. Ensuring this procedure and associated procedures are applied across teaching areas.
- b. Supporting the Results Review Meeting and Examinations and Integrity Committee.
- c. Ensuring validation and moderation activities are conducted appropriately.

(35) The Director International Academic Operations is responsible for:

- a. Ensuring all contracts with international partners adhere to this procedure and associated procedures.

(36) Managers are responsible for:

- a. Oversight of all validation and moderation activities to ensure the policy and procedure is followed.

(37) The Head of Program is responsible for:

- a. Overseeing validation and moderation activities at course level, including any collaboration with other courses

where necessary.

- b. Appointing peer reviewers
- c. Identifying and appointing subject assessment validators and assessment moderators.
- d. Resolving any irreconcilable differences of opinion at any stage of subject assessment validation.
- e. Leading continuous improvement review of assessment strategies and benchmarking.
- f. Determine and request re-assessment and/or re-moderation of student assessment where Assessor and Assessment Moderator marking differs by 5% or more.

(38) The Subject Coordinator is responsible for:

- a. Meeting with academic teaching staff involved in subject delivery to explain assessment criteria and expected performance standards to support consistent assessment judgements.
- b. Overseeing validation and moderation of subject where a subject is taught by multiple academics.
- c. Identifying students with a subject result between 40-49% who have attempted all assessment tasks and allocating academic teaching team member/s to double mark the assessment.

(39) Academic teaching staff are responsible for:

- a. Assessment marking and judgements.
- b. Participating in assessment grade moderation (within and across courses).
- c. Reviewing and validating subject assessments in student subject outlines including examinations.
- d. Participating in program peer review for subject assessment validation for continuous improvement.
- e. Act as Assessment Moderators as appointed by the Head of Program.

(40) The Course Administrator is responsible for:

- a. Storing completed Assessment Grade Moderation Certificates for each course
- b. Storing completed Subject Assessment Validation templates for each course

(41) The Standards and Registration Unit is responsible for:

- a. Advising and contributing to continuous quality improvement processes.
- b. Providing advice and guidance on processes related to assessment matters.

(42) The Examinations and Integrity Committee (EIC) is responsible for ensuring academic integrity of student grades, including reviewing grade distributions, recommendations in exception reports, scaling (if required) and ratifying final grades for publication to students.

Section 5 - Supporting Documents and Templates

(43) Related Melbourne Polytechnic policies, procedures, and templates:

- a. [Assessment, Credit and Moderation \(HE\) Policy](#)
- b. [Assessment \(HE\) Guidelines](#)
- c. [Assessment \(HE\) Procedure](#)
- d. [Assessment Moderation Certificate Template](#)
- e. [Benchmarking \(HE\) Guidelines](#)
- f. [Benchmarking \(HE\) Procedure](#)

- g. [Course Review \(HE\) Procedure](#)
- h. [Examinations and Integrity Committee Terms of Reference](#)
- i. [Result Review Meeting \(HE\) Terms of Reference](#)
- j. [Records Management Policy](#)
- k. [Records Management Procedure](#)
- l. [Subject Assessment Validation template](#)
- m. [Subject Moderation Certificate](#)

(44) Related Legislation and Regulation

- a. [Australian Qualifications Framework](#)
- b. [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#)

Section 6 - Definitions

(45) For the purpose of this procedure the following definitions apply:

- a. Assessment: A process to determine a student's achievement of identified learning outcomes and may include a range of written and oral methods and practice or demonstration.
- b. Assessment design: Assessment strategies mapped to learning outcomes that demonstrate a student's learning and achievement. Assessment design may include formative and summative assessment tasks that provide clear expectations for students and allow for practice and feedback.
- c. Assessment grade moderation: Quality assurance processes that ensure comparability of standards of student performance at different grade levels across different markers, locations, subjects, providers and/or courses.
- d. Assessment task: A specific, discrete learning activity, exercise or a series of formative works that address a common skill set designed to obtain evidence about a student's achievement of the published learning outcomes of a course. Tasks can be diagnostic, formative, or summative, including but not limited to, essays, presentations, performance, exhibition or final examinations. (In the previous policy version described as Assessment Item).
- e. Assessor: Academic responsible for marking student assessment.
- f. Borderline marks: Describe a grade or score arrived at in the assessment of a student's work or performance, which falls on the dividing line between two grades.
- g. Course: An accredited qualification made up of a defined set of subjects.
- h. Criterion referenced assessment: The process of judging and grading student achievement by comparing the quality of the work submitted against a set of specified criteria related to the desired learning outcomes of a course.
- i. Double marking: A process where a minimum of two markers marks a piece of work and agree a final mark. The second marker(s) do not see the first mark until initial assessment is complete, and then upon consultation both (all) markers review to support the setting of the final agreed mark.
- j. Formative assessment: An assessment that is used to provide students with feedback on their progress and can be incorporated in subsequent assessment tasks and learning activities as part of the learning experience.
- k. Formative feedback is information communicated to the learner that is intended to modify his or her thinking or behaviour for the purpose of improving learning. Delivered correctly, formative feedback leads to improved learning processes and outcomes.
- l. Learning outcome: The expression of a set of knowledge, skills and the application of the knowledge and skills a person has acquired and is able to demonstrate as a result of learning.
- m. Marking rubric: Sets out the criteria for marking an assessment and describes expected levels of performance

associated with the assessment.

- n. Assessment Moderator: Academic who undertakes assessment moderation.
- o. Peer moderation: A process of peer review to reach consensus on expected standards for student outcomes at different grade levels, relative to the level of the course or unit.
- p. Program: The nested set of courses leading to a qualification.
- q. Results Review Meeting: A meeting conducted at course level responsible for reviewing and consolidating student results and making recommendations to the Examination and Integrity Committee regarding scaling of marks, supplementary assessment and students eligible for a Conceded Pass.
- r. Scaling of marks: Scaling refers to the adjustment of a group of marks of an entire class or a subset of that class or of individual marks or compiled marks.
- s. Subject: A discrete unit of study.
- t. Subject assessment validation: Subject Assessment Validation refers to the review of a subject's learning outcomes, assessments, and educational strategies.
- u. Subject assessment validator: An appropriately qualified academic staff member, not directly involved in the delivery of the subject who reviews assessment tasks to ensure they align and reflect the learning outcomes for the course and subject, and that the content and criteria are set at the appropriate level.
- v. Subject moderation schedule: A schedule that includes the subjects for each course and timeframes for assessment grade moderation to progressively occur as part of quality assurance and continuous improvement. The subject moderation schedule may include external reviewers.
- w. Summative assessment: An assessment that is used to measure the level of student success in achieving learning outcomes and contributes to a student's final grade for the subject.

Status and Details

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