



## ASSESSMENT MODERATION

### Policy

#### DEFINITIONS

Terms in this document, for which definitions are not provided in the text or may not be self-evident or for which usage at the College may differ to that in other higher education institutions are as follows:

**Consensus Moderation:** Is broadly defined as a peer review process used to reach a general agreement about what quality assessment and its outcomes “looks like”; it ensures that the judgments of students' performance are consistent and have the same “meaning” irrespective of time, place, institution or examiner.

**Marking Rubric:** In the higher education context, a rubric is typically an evaluation tool or set of guidelines used to promote the consistent application of learning expectations, learning objectives or learning standards or to measure their attainment against a consistent set of criteria. Marking Rubrics clearly define academic expectations for students (in terms of learning outcomes – i.e. knowledge, skills and understanding) and help to ensure consistency in the evaluation of academic work from student to student, assignment to assignment, or course to course. In this way they ensure adherence to standards in terms of definite levels of achievement and/or performance. They are also used as scoring instruments to determine grades, which reflect the degree to which learning standards have been demonstrated or attained by students.

**Reliability of assessment tasks:** Assessment tasks are designed to be implemented consistently. This means even if the task itself addresses the learning outcomes (i.e. it is valid), if it is too complex in its nature and/or has its scope beyond what is expected to address the learning outcomes, the task may become unreliable as a means of assessment.

**Reliability of marking/grading:** Assessment tasks are marked consistently, correctly and fairly across different submissions/examinations being assessed by the single marker, as well as across different markers, cohorts and locations. Many assessment tasks require the markers to apply their expert discretion to generate a mark/grade and an effort needs to be made to make sure this subjective variation is eliminated as much as possible.

**Semester:** either of the two periods of study into which an academic year is divided, constituting half of the regular academic year.

**Stream:** A scientific or professional discipline or body of knowledge which forms an essential part of the degree program curriculum. Subjects at the College comprise one or more units of study.

**Stream Coordinator:** The academic staff member who is responsible for the overall management of a stream of the program curriculum. This includes scaffolding of the units within the Stream.

**Unit (or Unit of Study):** An element of a subject (as defined above), that has specified student learning outcomes and requires satisfactory performance in assessments that measure student performance regarding learning outcomes.

**Validity of assessment tasks:** Assessment tasks are designed to assess what they are supposed to assess, which are the learning outcomes of the tasks, unit and course. This means even if students find a particular assessment task engaging and performed well, if the task does not address the learning outcomes, it is not valid in the given context.

**Validity of marking/grading:** Assessment tasks are marked in response to what the assessment tasks are supposed to assess. This means even if the criterion-based marking is conducted by a single trained assessor/marker using a rubric to maintain the consistency of the marking, if the marking was undertaken against the criteria inconsistent with the learning outcomes, the marking is said to be invalid as assessment. This inconsistency includes the disproportionate allocation of marks for only specific aspects of the learning outcomes.

## PURPOSE

Effective moderation of assessment is fundamental to the ongoing development, maintenance and continuous improvement of academic quality.

The purpose of the *College Assessment Moderation Policy* is to provide assurance that assessment activities have been designed and implemented appropriately so that students and staff can be confident that the assessment tasks, marking and therefore the results obtained are valid and reliable.

## SCOPE

This policy is applicable to academic staff, external reviewers and students of the College.

## POLICY

To ensure effective assessment, moderation is conducted both internally and through external moderators. This enables valid and consistent assessment of subject learning outcomes and student performance whilst maintaining comparable standards against other tertiary education providers.

Moderation endeavours to ensure that all aspects of ACC award programs meet AQF standards.

Collaborative moderation occurs at two (2) points during the assessment process: pre-assessment and post-assessment. Pre-assessment moderation certifies the relevance of assessment tasks against course learning outcomes and graduate attributes. Post-assessment moderation aims to achieve a comparability of results between students, ensuring marks/grades awarded to students are valid and defensible.

Collaboration between academic staff and external reviewers aims to maintain a high level of academic rigor whilst ensuring a comparable standard in relation to other relevant tertiary institutions.

Assessments within a unit are externally moderated prior to the commencement of delivery of the unit and then once every 5 years.

External moderators are appointed by the Academic Board in accordance with procedures established by the Board in relation to program development and review.

## IMPLEMENTATION and MONITORING

The Academic Dean is ultimately responsible for effective implementation and monitoring of the *Assessment Moderation Policy*.

The College Program Development Committee and Academic Board are each responsible for various elements of quality assurance of Assessment at the College. Their respective roles are clearly indicated in the College Governance Framework and are monitored by the Board of Directors for their discharge of governance and management accountabilities.

## REVIEW

The College's *Assessment Moderation Policy* is normally reviewed every three years.

It is a policy of the College that any Policy or Procedure may be reviewed earlier as indicated by internal or external factors (including but not limited to such factors as changes in the guidelines of regulatory authorities, accreditation/registration requirements of the profession, or relevant legislation at state or federal level) as determined the Board of Directors and/or Academic Board.

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Graduate Capabilities – Diploma of Health Science
- Graduate Capabilities – Bachelor of Chiropractic
- Program Development, Review and Approval Policy and associated procedures
- Assessment of Coursework Policy and associated procedures.

## VERSION CONTROL

<b>Document:</b> T002 Assessment Moderation Policy s		
<b>Responsible Officer:</b> Academic Dean		
<b>Initially Approved by:</b> Academic Board		<b>Date:</b> 15 January 2018
<b>Reviewed and approved by:</b> Academic Board		<b>Date:</b> 10 March 2021
<b>Reviewed and approved by:</b> Academic Board		<b>Date:</b> 13 December 2023
<b>HESF</b>	1.4 Learning Outcomes and Assessment	
<b>Version:</b> V4.0	<b>Replaces Version(s):</b> V3.0	<b>Next Review:</b> December 2026
<b>Nature of Change</b>	February 2021 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Title changed from <i>Academic Moderation Policy and Procedures</i> to <i>Assessment Moderation Policy and Procedures</i></li><li>• Minor spelling, other text and formatting edits</li><li>• Addition of definitions</li><li>• Addition of elements that clarify the College's commitment to quality assurance of Assessment at all levels.</li></ul> December 2023 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Separate the policy and the procedures</li><li>• Update to the standard format</li><li>• Include the agreed 5 year external moderation cycle</li><li>• Amend to present tense</li><li>• Transfer Responsibility from the Learning and Teaching Committee to the Program Development Committee</li><li>• Include the Review and Related Documents sections</li><li>• Remove Unit Coordinator and replace with Stream Coordinator</li><li>• Include the HESF reference in the Version Control table.</li></ul>	