
PROCEDURE A2. 3-P2.5

ASSESSMENT MODERATION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Related Policy

Assessment Moderation Policy.

1.2 Purpose

This procedure should be read in conjunction with the Assessment Moderation Policy and outlines the processes whereby ACHW staff will conduct assessment validation and moderation exercises. The procedure describes the requirements to demonstrate compliance with the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) 2021, standards 1.4, 3.1, 5.2 and 5.3 and underpins external referencing activities thereby safeguarding student certification and quality with external partners.

1.3 Scope

The Assessment Moderation Procedure applies to all ACHW programs, irrespective of their location, including the conduct of assessment moderation and validation by a Third-Party Partner (TPP). It applies to on-site, off-site and online activity.

1.4 Scope Exceptions

None.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

1. **Marker** - A marker is a subject/unit matter expert who has set and/or marked the assessment task under review. Typically, the marker is the facilitator of the unit under moderation. Depending on the availability of the marker and the student numbers, there may be more than one marker for a specific unit under moderation. The key responsibilities of a marker include:

- being fully conversant with the assessment task, the instructions relating to that task, and the evidence required to be submitted by a student to meet the requirements of that task in accordance with the marking rubric.
- ensuring that all assessment tasks and marking rubrics are current and have been validated prior to being issued to a student.
- following the assessment tasks instructions and marking rubrics to mark student work.
- completing marking within the designated marking time as set by the Head of School, ACHW.

2. **Moderator** - A moderator is a subject matter expert who may be a peer from the ACHW academic team or an academic external to ACHW. The moderator must be independent to the person who has marked the assessment task and is responsible for ensuring the standard of marking is in accordance with the unit's marking rubric. The key responsibilities of a moderator include:

- being fully conversant with the assessment task, the instructions relating to that task, and the evidence required to be submitted by a student to meet the requirements of that task in accordance with the marking rubric.
- verifying that all assessment tasks and marking rubrics are current and have been validated prior to being moderated.
- following the assessment tasks instructions and marking rubrics to mark the selected student work under moderation.
- ensuring that they undertake the moderation process with consistency, accuracy and fairness in accordance with the guidelines issued for the moderation exercise.
- ensuring that markers receive clear and unambiguous feedback on the calibre of their marking.
- ensuring that all assessment moderation materials are available for review by the Head of School, ACHW; and
- completing moderation within the designated timeframe as outlined in the Assessment Moderation Plan (AMP).

3. **Third-party reviewer** - meets the same criteria as the moderator and will review assignments where significant marking variation between facilitator and moderator occurred.

4. **The Head of School, ACHW** (or delegated nominee) - approves the final assessment moderation outcome.

5. **Academic Services Manager**- A member of ACHW staff who is responsible for managing the assessment validation and moderation process. The key responsibilities of the Academic Services Manager include:

- developing an annual Assessment Moderation Plan (AMP).
- managing the schedule of validation and moderation activities in accordance with the AMP.
- ensuring the timely communication of assessment validation and moderation outcomes is maintained between the marker and moderator.
- ensuring that all markers and moderators are appropriately qualified, trained and have the necessary competence to fulfil their relevant roles.

- ensuring that all documents and data relating to validation and moderation is maintained for each moderation cycle and preserved for future reference.
- arbitrating difference of opinion between moderator and facilitator; and
- preparing moderation reports for the Head of School ACHW for review and for presentation to the relevant academic governance committee meetings.

3.0 PROCEDURE

3.1 Validation of Assessment Materials

- a. The validation of all assessment tasks and marking rubrics occurs prior to the beginning of each study period for each academic year.
- b. At least two weeks prior to the beginning of each study period, Academic Staff are required to upload their assessment tasks and marking rubrics for the new study period to the Learning Management System.
- c. The Academic Services Manager will confirm the upload of all assessment tasks and marking rubrics to the Learning Management System by the due date outlined in the annual Assessment Moderation Plan.
- d. The Academic Services Manager will randomly allocate the assessment tasks and marking rubrics to a peer Facilitator for validation. A Facilitator is not permitted to validate their own assessment task or marking rubric.
- e. Facilitators will use the Assessment Validation Checklist to validate the allocated assessment task(s) and marking rubric(s) within one week of receipt.
- f. At the completion of the validation period, the Academic Services Manager will review the completed Assessment Validation Checklists and identify any discrepancies; and
- g. The Academic Services Manager will liaise with any Facilitator who is required to revise their assessment tasks and/or marking rubrics and ensure any discrepancies are finalised prior to the assessment tasks and marking rubrics being issued to the students.

3.2 Moderation of Assessment - Frequency and Sampling

- a. All units being delivered in a year are sampled at least once over a two-year period. However, 'high risk' units are moderated more frequently. High risk units may include:
 - new units being delivered for the first time.
 - units being delivered by a Facilitator for the first time; and
 - units with which there have been marking inconsistencies in the past.

- b. Sampling units for each study period takes place at the beginning of the academic year. An annual Assessment Moderation Plan (AMP) is prepared by the Academic Services Manager based on the annual timetable of study periods. The annual Assessment Moderation Plan is reviewed at the beginning of each study period to confirm the final list of units for moderation in each study period.
- c. For each unit being moderated within a specific study period, a minimum of 10% of total student submissions will be moderated. Where the number of students enrolled for a unit is less than twelve, the entire cohort will be moderated.
- d. The moderation sample must include a range of student marks which includes High Distinction, Distinction, Credit, Pass and Fail.

3.3 Moderation of Assessment - Procedure

- a. At the beginning of each academic year the Academic Services Manager identifies the moderators and prepares the annual Assessment Moderation Plan. The Head of School sends the plan to the Chief Education Officer Higher Education, ACHW for approval. It will then also be listed at the Teaching and Learning Committee for noting.
- b. Once reviewed and approved, the Academic Services Manager circulates the Assessment Moderation Plan to all the Markers and Moderators in the forthcoming study period and confirms participation. Detailed information on the moderation process is sent to the Moderators to ensure clarity around the process.
- c. The Academic Services Manager confirms the participation of the Moderators for each unit and provides access to the Learning management System to the moderators where required. In accordance with dates outlined in the Assessment Moderation Plan, the Academic Services Manager advises the Moderators to commence the moderation process.
- d. The Academic Services Manager sends the moderator all student submissions for blind marking 10% of all student submissions (at least twelve student submissions) will be forwarded to the moderator for blind marking. The random sample should consist of a range of grades including fail, pass, credit, distinction, and high distinction. The moderators are advised to download the Moderation Report Template and upload the completed form in the unit moderation placeholder in the Learning Management System after the moderation process is completed.
- e. If there is a plus/minus variance of ten points or more between the Markers results and Moderators results, the Academic Services Manager will liaise with the Marker and the Moderator to mediate an appropriate mark. If mediation is unsuccessful and an agreement cannot be reached in relation to the mark, assignments in question will be sent to a third-party reviewer for another round of blind marking. The difference of opinion will be referred to the Chief Education Officer Higher Education (the Mediator) for resolution. On agreement

of the adjusted mark (where applicable), the revised marks will be entered into the Learning Management System.

- f. Once the results from the third-party reviewer are received, the Academic Services Manager will approve the assessment moderation outcome, which may include adjusted marks. The facilitator will then be asked to enter the revised into the Learning Management System.
- g. In accordance with the Assessment Moderation Plan, a pre-defined sample of internally moderated assessment tasks and marking rubrics will be externally moderated using the Peer Review Portal as a post moderation exercise. A similar process of verification including variance assessment will be followed as outlined in this procedure.
- h. At the end of each study period the Academic Services Manager prepares a Moderation Summary Report which is sent to the Chief Education Officer Higher Education, ACHW for review. The report will include results of both the internal and external moderation processes. The Chief Education Officer Higher Education, ACHW reviews the report and the Academic Services Manager presents the Moderation Summary Report at the next ARC, TLC and Academic Board meetings.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

- **Assessment Criteria** - The criteria against which the performance of students will be judged. This is available in the Marking Rubric contained in ACHW unit outlines.
- **Assessment Moderation** - A quality assurance process whereby a moderator confirms that assessment is being marked with accuracy, consistency and fairness in accordance with the prescribed marking rubric.
- **Assessment Moderation Plan** - A work plan which specifies the date and timeframes within which ACHW courses are subject to periodic validation and moderation. This plan must be approved and monitored by the ACHW Academic Board.
- **Assessment Validation** - Assessment validation is a quality assurance process by which peer academics verify that an assessment rubric has been developed so as to ensure:
 - correct weighting of the assessment in accordance with specifications in the unit outline.
 - the learning outcome(s) of the unit are being assessed.
 - the assessment is valid, clear, unambiguous, and authentic.
 - the assessment task is collecting enough evidence so the student may demonstrate achievement of the learning outcome(s).
 - graduate qualities (where available) are mapped correctly; and

- the scheduling of the assessment is in accordance with the Study Period Assessment Plan.
- **Assessment Task** - An assessment task is a specific learning activity or exercise designed for the purposes of determining a student's knowledge and achievements in relation to the published learning outcome of a unit. The task is assessed via the use of a marking rubric.
- **Course of Study** - A qualification which a student may be enrolled in as a full time or part time student.
- **Grade** - The final result for a unit of study is composed of all assessment results for a study period. Students will be awarded the Grade equivalent on their Academic Transcript.
- **Learning outcomes** - The learning outcomes (course learning outcomes and unit learning outcomes) are provided in writing to students in the unit outline prior to the commencement of each unit. Learning outcomes serve as a reference point for the pre-assessment moderation of assessment tasks and final achievement of grades.
- **Marks** - The result of a completed assessment task in a unit of study.
- **Marking rubric** - The criteria and associated grade available (e.g., HD to F) for the relevant assessment task.
- **Peer Review Portal** - An independent, nationally recognised online portal where student assessments tasks and marking rubrics may be externally moderated to enable national and international comparators - <http://www.peerreviewportal.com>.
- **Study Period** - A scheduled period of time (e.g., semester, trimester, term) within a course of study.
- **Study Period Assessment Plan** - A calendar of assessment scheduled to be conducted in a study period, outlining assessment tasks for each unit of study and due dates for the assessment. Used to monitor workloads and ensure equitable spacing of assessment tasks.
- **Unit Outline** - This document sets out the overview of the Unit Guide (academic content). It is a document that lists the learning outcomes and objectives of the unit of study.
- **Unit Guide** - The document contains all unit content including the assessments and the assessment weightings. It sets out the details of a unit of study. Typically, a Unit Guide consists of essential academic and administrative information required for the successful completion of a unit of study.
- **Unit of Study** - The course or program which a student may undertake and, on successful completion of the unit requirements, gain credit towards completion

of the course or program. Units of study are sometimes referred to as "units", or "subjects".

5.0 REFERENCES AND ASSOCIATED INFORMATION

- Assessment Moderation Policy
- Assessment Validation Checklist
- Moderation Report Template
- Moderation Summary Report

6.0 POLICY/PROCEDURE OWNERSHIP

Policy Owner	Chief Education Officer Higher Education
Status	Reviewed on September 2025
Approval Authority	ACHW Academic Board
Date of Approval	11/09/2025
Effective Date	15/09/2025
Implementation Owner	Head of School, ACHW
Maintenance Owner	Senior Compliance Manager Higher Education
Review Due	May 2027

7.0 AMENDMENTS

Version	Amendment Approval (Date)	Amendment Made By (Position)	Amendment Details
A2.0-P2.0	1 June 2021	Academic Manager	Revised context and purpose Revised scope Revised definitions Added assessment rubrics to principles Added validation procedures
A2.0-P2.1	25 November 2021	Head of School, ACHW	Correction to the responsibility of presenting the Moderation Summary Report
A2.0-P2.2	09 June 2023	Head of Compliance	Further clarity added to the assessment moderation procedure based on existing practise to assist staff and students.
A2.1-P2.3	25 June 2024	Executive Director	Minor update to clarify responsibility of the Academic Manager.
A2.2-P2.3	13 January 2025	Executive Director	Changes to staffing

Version	Amendment Approval (Date)	Amendment Made By (Position)	Amendment Details
A2.3-P2.4	11 September 2025	Senior Compliance Manager Higher Education	<p>Minor administrative changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated to staff titles • Template slightly revised following benchmarking