# MODERATION PROCEDURE

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| Policy Lead | Academic Dean |
| Approving Authority | Board of Directors |
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| Relevant legislation or external requirements | National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code) Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (HESFs: 1.3.2, 1.3.3, 1.4.1, 1.4.3, 5.3.7)<br><br>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (TEQSA Act) Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) |
| Related ASA Documents | Benchmarking Policy Quality Assurance Framework Student Assessment Policy Student Assessment Procedure Diversity and Equity Policy and Procedure Records and Information Management Policy and Procedure |

## 1. Purpose

ASA Institute of Higher Education (**ASA**) employs a systems-based method of moderation to assure the quality of the education experience for students and to facilitate continuous improvement in all aspects of unit design and content delivery. Review and moderation of unit content, unit outlines, assessment tasks, marking and grading generates consistency over time and helps ensure that the delivery of education remains aligned with the course and unit learning outcomes. The purpose of this Procedure is to outline the processes and practices involved with the *Moderation Policy*, the intent of which is to establish the requirements for moderation of ASA's course and units for continuous improvement and to meet best practices.

## 2. Scope

This Procedure applies to all academic staff involved in moderation activities relating to ASA courses and units.

## 3. Procedure

The following procedure outlines the processes involved in moderation.

### 3.1 Pre-delivery Moderation

#### 3.1.1 Unit Pre-delivery moderation

Moderation of unit learning materials including learning resources and infrastructure available to students are analysed to ensure they are appropriate, current, suitable, and meet the unit and intended course learning outcomes. Appraisal of the unit learning materials should also incorporate previous moderation reviews, feedback, and comments to ensure continuous improvement. The unit learning materials moderation process should be conducted prior to the commencement of the delivery of the unit in the next study period, by one or more academic peers to ensure all learning materials meet the appropriate Australian Qualification Framework

(**AQF**) level. The following steps should be included in the unit learning materials moderation process:

a. a preliminary step in moderation is a review of all the teaching and learning resources that are available to staff and students in a unit. An essential element of this moderation process is:

    i. the evaluation of unit outlines to check if the level and suitability of the content, learning activities and resources and the information contained in outlines are appropriate for the Australian Qualifications Framework (**AQF**) level, are aligned with the course learning outcomes and are consistent with all units' outlines,

    ii. the evaluation of all learning materials including PowerPoint slides, textbooks, websites, online resources, and other relevant resources that impact on teaching and learning are all current, engaging, and relevant to the unit and course learning outcomes, and

    iii. Previous unit moderation reviews, feedback and comments must be reviewed to ensure that any suggestions, recommendations, and changes are required prior to the next delivery of the unit commences.

### 3.1.2 Assessment Pre-delivery moderation

In line with the unit pre-delivery moderation, the assessment pre-delivery moderation follows the following steps:

a. Designated assessment tasks in all units will be subject to pre-assessment moderation, including the end of study period examinations and the major within study period assessment tasks.

b. The Academic Dean or delegate/s will appoint pre-assessment moderators and provide the moderator with the unit description.

c. The moderator completes the pre-assessment moderation in accordance with the *Pre-Assessment Moderation of Assessable Tasks* template.

d. The moderator will provide the Unit Coordinator with relevant feedback and advice.

e. Completed Pre-Assessment forms are to be provided to the Academic Dean.

Records of all moderated units together with the moderators' evaluation will be retained.

## 3.2 Moderation during Delivery

The Academic Dean is responsible for the academic leadership and oversight of all aspects of courses. This involves the management of marking/grading, including the collation, moderation and submission of results and finalisation of grades. Moderation of marks/grades will be undertaken as below:

a. The marking of all assessment tasks is subject to post-assessment moderation for each unit offered in a study period to ensure consistent and valid assessment decisions in accordance with ASA's *Student Assessment Policy* and associated procedure and published assessment criteria in the unit outlines, assessment briefings and rubrics.

b. The moderation of grades in a unit of study seeks to ensure that standards are applied consistently. The Unit Coordinator considers samples from students from each grade level for moderation to determine the fairness of application of the assessment criteria, the appropriateness of the assessment rubric and all summative assessment tasks for students in a unit of study.

c. Assessment marking is reviewed by the moderator.

If the marking is found to be reliable (+/- 10%): no changes are required.

If the marking is found to be unreliable:

- Consensus is required on the moderated mark between the marker and the moderator.

- If consensus cannot be achieved, refer to the Unit Coordinator or Course Coordinator for arbitration.

- If the Unit Coordinator or Course Coordinator is unable to arbitrate, escalate to the Academic Dean for a final decision.

d. The Unit Coordinator ensures that the standard of achievement is consistent, particularly for units being delivered to different groups of students by different teaching staff within the same study period.

e. At the end of the study period, the unit results template is to be sent to the Course Coordinator.

f. Final marks are to be entered into the LMS and reviewed with the Unit Coordinator and the Course Coordinator.

g. A summary report is prepared on the results and the moderation process and presented to the Board of Examiners.

## 3.3 Post-delivery Moderation

In the post-delivery stage, the following should be undertaken:

- The Course Coordinator is to present the moderation and results report to the Board of Examiners. The moderation report will cover the distribution of marks, highlighting any adjustments to marks, making recommendations for changes to assessment tasks and/ or relevant feedback on teaching staff and markers.

- The Board of Examiners will:

  a. oversee the final moderation of unit marks and grades.

  b. review reports from the Unit Coordinators and feedback from academic staff and students to inform discussion and recommendations for continuous improvement.

  c. analyse grade distribution for courses and units at the conclusion of each study period to evaluate the results against institutional and external benchmarks.

  d. convene to approve the release of final unit marks and grades.

  e. Make recommendations to the Academic Board regarding items that require further investigation or monitoring.

  f. Prepare regular reports to the Academic Board on all academic matters.

## 3.4 External Benchmarking for Moderation

External moderation involves benchmarking learning outcomes, assessment practices and outcomes, and grade distributions across institutions with accredited award courses equivalent to those offered by ASA. As specified by TEQSA's course accreditation standards:

*"The academic standards intended to be achieved by students and the standards actually achieved by students in the course of study are benchmarked against similar accredited courses of study offered by other higher education providers."*

### 3.4.1 Procedures for External Benchmarking for Moderation

The Academic Dean or delegate will nominate a sample of comparable units each year which are to be submitted for independent external review by two or more external benchmarking partners or nominated external reviewers on a confidential basis for an independent review of assessment practices and procedures.

The selected sample units should involve all key assessment details:

1. If assessments are aligned with the learning outcomes as specified in the unit outlines.

2. If the scope, length, and difficulty of the assessment questions are suitable in addressing the learning outcomes and the graduate attributes.

3. If assessments are marked in line with the marking rubrics without significant variations.

4. If assessment requirements are clearly articulated.

For further information regarding External Benchmarking, refer to the Benchmarking Policy and related procedure.

## 4. Responsibilities

### 4.1 Academic Staff

Academic staff are responsible for:

- Participating in moderation activities, providing qualitative and quantitative data to support assessment decisions as required,

- Familiarise themselves and complying with the moderation process and the *Student Assessment Policy* and associated procedure.

### 4.2 Unit Coordinators

Unit Coordinators are responsible for:

- Leading and managing moderation activities,

- Cultivating an appreciation amongst staff and students of moderation as a way of enhancing assessment practices and outcomes,

- Resolving any disputed moderation or escalate to the Course Coordinator or Academic Dean if the dispute cannot be resolved,

- Prepare moderation reports and present to the Board of Examiners, and

- Report to the required Governing Committees on the moderation process, findings and any actions taken.

### 4.3 Course Coordinators and Academic Dean

The Course Coordinators and Academic Dean are responsible for:

- Monitoring moderation activities,

- Ensuring that moderation activities are adequately resourced,

- Take final responsibility as part of the Board of Examiners for the adjustment, allocation, ratification and reporting of grades, and

- Report findings from the Board of Examiners to the Academic Board.

### 4.4 Governing Committees

The Governing Committees' responsibilities can be found in the Governance Charter

## 5. Version Control

This Procedure has been reviewed and approved by the ASA Board of Directors as at December 2023 and is reviewed every three years.

This Procedure, with the associated policy, is published and available on the ASA website https://www.asahe.edu.au/policies-and-forms/.

| Change and Version Control | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Version** | **Authored** | **Brief Description of the changes** | **Date Approved:** | **Effective Date:** |
| 2024.1 | Quality and Policy Officer | Document formatting updated to reflect change of Trading Name to ASA Institute of Higher Education. | 28/06/2024 by CEO | 01/07/2024 |
| 2023.1 | Director Learning and Innovation | New procedure to supplement the associated policy. | 12/12/2023 | 18/12/2023 |
| Previous version archived. New Policy code and numbering system implemented. | | | | |
| 3.0 | | Annual review – Academic Board approval | 14/07/2021 | |
| 2.0 | | New course accreditation | | |
| 1.0 | | Council approval | | |