Moderation of Assessment Policy

Policy Code: ACA-008  Version: 1.1S  Effective Date: 05 October 2010

Purpose:

Moderation is a quality assurance strategy whose purpose is to ensure the reliability and validity of assessment. It aims to independently evaluate whether there is consistency in the standard of marking being applied across particular assessment components, by different markers or in different campuses and whether significant deviations have occurred from previously defined standards. Moderation also entails ensuring that the assessment design follows best practice models. Endeavour College has processes in place to assure both the quality of the assessment process, and to support the continuous improvement of assessment of subjects in our courses.

Scope:
- All Campuses
- All courses and programs
- All academic staff and academic contractors

Policy Statement:

Background Principles

Moderation is normally applied in situations where there is potential for the validity of assessment results to be compromised or extra reassurance on the validity of assessment outcomes is required.

Effective moderation requires that:

1. the objective of the assessment component and the criteria on which marks will be awarded, are explicit and well justified, and are well explained to both students and markers
2. clear, well-understood marking guides are used; and
3. there is a mutually agreed and timely process of feedback to ensure that corrections to marking strategies or levels of assessment (i.e. “soft” versus “hard” marking) can be appropriately applied. Under these circumstances, it is possible
to analyse how significant inconsistencies or deviations from a standard arise, and to correct errors before students are misled on their performance by inappropriate, inadequate or missing feedback.

Responsibility for Moderation

Ultimate responsibility for ensuring that moderations occurs in subjects where it is required lies with the Head of School who has the primary responsibility for monitoring the quality of student academic performance within the School. Operational responsibility will generally devolve through the Program Leader to the Subject Coordinator, unless the Subject Coordinator is the sole teacher and marker in the subject. Moderators must be teachers or assessors with knowledge of the appropriate field and may be appointed from within the school/department or outside it.

Heads of School/Department will appoint assessment moderator/s for all subjects taught by the school/department. Although it is normal to appoint one moderator, the Head of School may decide to appoint more than one moderator where fields are disparate, such as with clinical subjects or where there are too may subjects to be moderated by one Moderator. Sampling of assessment items is employed in the moderation process, but there may also be subjects where moderation is not required, as in the case of subjects with very low numbers. However, all subjects which have final examinations must be moderated.

The Head of School will ensure that the appointed moderator/s review and report on the results recommended by subject coordinators, review the progress of individual students, identify students and subjects requiring follow-up action, including supplementary assessment, and monitor the assessment performance of subjects.

Moderation may be an individual or a collective process, but the appointed moderator(s) for each subject must sign off the outcome of the moderation process for that subject. It is the responsibility of the Head of School and National Academic Manager (NAM) – Academic Standards to act on assessment moderation results.

Where there is a single assessor for a subject, the Head of School/Program Leader will appoint a moderator for that subject, in consultation with the Subject Coordinator, who will then take the following actions:

- Assessment tasks weighted at 25% or more of the final grade must be checked for consistency by re-assessment by the appointed moderator of the work of a sample of students. This sample must include the full range of grades awarded.
As a guideline, the sample size should be the square root of the number of students.

- Where possible, when student work is likely to be re-assessed, no comments or marks should be written on the work. This is to ensure that re-assessment is fair. This may require the use of a separate marking sheet.
- Where a sample is re-assessed, no change may be made to marks on the basis of this re-assessment.

Where more than one assessor is used, the Subject Coordinator will ensure that the following actions are taken:

- Provide all assessors with assessment guides that include the explicit assessment criteria provided in the subject outline.
- Allocate assessment so that, as far as possible, the same assessor assesses all responses to each question or sub-task.
- Assessment tasks weighted at 25% or more of the final grade must be checked for consistency by re-assessment by another assessor of the work of a sample of students. This sample must include a range of student achievement, from fail to high distinction. As a guideline, the sample size should be the square root of the number of students.
- Where possible, when student work is likely to be re-assessed, no comments or marks should be written on the work. This is to ensure that re-assessment is fair. It may require the use of a separate marking sheet.
- Where a sample is re-assessed, no change may be made to marks on the basis of this re-assessment.

The Scope of moderation

Where moderation is invoked for a subject it must apply to each significant assessment component that falls within the criteria requiring moderation. Examination moderation will be performed for each formal examination for that subject. Subject assessment moderation will be performed once each year or whenever assessment tasks are substantially changed.

The sample size of assessment submissions moderated for each assessment component must be sufficient to establish whether significant issues or deviations have occurred in the marking strategy applied by the original markers. This will generally be ten scripts or 10% of the submissions per assessment component; whichever is the
larger number.

Examination moderation will be based on the examination paper and the Subject Outline, so the moderator must be presented with the complete examination paper, including all instructions and associated materials (including solutions and marking rubrics where applicable), and the Subject Outline.

Subject assessment moderation (that is, all assessment other than final examination) will be based on the information in the Subject Outline, so the moderator must be presented with a complete Subject Outline.

The following diagram summarises the moderation of assessment process:

Related Procedures:
Moderation of Assessment Procedure
Examination Procedures

Definitions: Not Applicable
Further Information:

Related Policies:  
Assessment Policy

Benchmarking:  
Not Applicable

Supporting Research and Analysis:  
Not Applicable

Related Documents:  
Not Applicable

Related Legislation:  
Not Applicable

Guidelines:  
Not Applicable
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<th>National Academic Manager - Curriculum</th>
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<td>National Academic Manager - Curriculum</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Contact:</strong></td>
<td>National Academic Manager – Curriculum <a href="mailto:susan.russell@endeavour.edu.au">susan.russell@endeavour.edu.au</a></td>
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| **Approval Committee:** | Academic Board  
Meeting date: 23 September 2010  
Agenda Item: 4.1 |
| **Endorsement Committee:** | College Council  
Meeting date: 05 October 2010  
Agenda Item: Section D |
| **Policy Status:** | Revised – supersedes the following sections of the 2009 Policies and Procedures Handbook:  
- Section B6: Assessment Moderation |
| **Responsibilities for Implementation:** | Director of Education  
Heads of School  
Program Leaders  
Student Support Coordinators  
Academic Administration Coordinators |
| **Key Stakeholders:** | Teaching and Learning Committee  
Director of Education  
Heads of School  
Program Leaders  
Student Support Coordinators  
Academic Administration Coordinators |
| **Date for Next Review:** | October 2011 |

### Version Summary

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<th>Author</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>25Oct10</td>
<td>N Chaperon</td>
<td>Approved procedures separated out into own document without content change. Final Document</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.1S</td>
<td>03Feb11</td>
<td>N Chaperon</td>
<td>Change ‘sessional’ to ‘academic contractor’</td>
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