Assessment for Learning - Moderation and Validation Procedure (HE)

Section 1 - Summary

(1) The purpose of this Procedure is to ensure that assessment quality assurance processes provide clear guidance for the formal review of assessment design and practice in Higher Education course-work courses.

Section 2 - HESF/ASQA/ESOS Alignment

(2) HESF: Standard 1.4 Learning Outcomes and Assessment; 3 Teaching Design; 5.2 Academic and Research Integrity; 5.3 Monitoring, Review and Improvement; 7.2 Information for Prospective and Current Students.

Section 3 - Scope

(3) This Procedure applies to courses offered within all Higher Education coursework courses. It does not apply to the research component of higher degree by research courses, VET/TAFE courses, or non-award courses.

Section 4 - Definitions

(4) Assessment: Victoria University defines assessment as the methods and procedures by which a student's academic progress and standard, at a given time, are measured. Within this single definition, the University recognises three broad types of assessment:

a. diagnostic — assessment that identifies the level of competency/performance/ knowledge before commencing learning in a course/ program/ learning experience but does not contribute to the student's final grade;
b. formative — assessment that provides feedback to the student during the learning experience;
c. summative — assessment that is focussed on the outcomes of the learning experience.

(5) Course: The overall program of study in which the student is enrolled - referred to by the name of the expected terminal qualification arising from it (eg Bachelor of Business course, Graduate Diploma of Marketing course).

(6) 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.

(7) Modified Assessment: An adjustment or alteration to the standard conditions or format of assessment following the development of an Access Plan. It can apply to any formal assessment task or examination. Modifications can include the time allowed to complete the assessment; the conditions under which the assessment is completed; or any aids or assistance required by the student.

(8) Unit: An individual subject within a course.

(9) Validation: Validation is a process of peer review, which occurs prior to the setting of assessment tools. It is used to

This policy document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to always refer to Victoria University's Policy Library for the latest version.

check that assessment is aligned with and reflects unit learning outcomes, and that the format, content and criteria for assessment are set at an appropriate level.

Section 5 - Policy/Regulation

(10) Assessment for Learning Policy

Section 6 - Procedures

Part A - Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
Unit Convenor	Validation: Ensure that assessment items have been validated and documented according to the guidelines (see Form AV1 - Assessment Validation) for all assessment items and examinations. Confirm that the assessment structures, strategies and tasks, and that the requirements to complete the unit, are consistent with the unit guide and appropriate. Moderation: Coordinating the moderation procedures in the unit, including: Ensuring that all staff involved in assessment in the unit are fully informed of moderation standards, procedures and outcomes. Preparing a moderation report. (Form AM1 - Peer Moderation of Assessment) Storing samples of student work and the related assessment items in the unit and passing these to any subsequent Unit Convenor.
The Course Chair	Validation: Validate the assessment strategies at least annually and retain documentation of this process, including any action taken to improve the quality and consistency of assessment. Moderation: Ensuring the appropriate moderation of assessment items across a course, including those delivered by partner institutions.
College Assessment and Student Progress Boards	Provide final oversight of moderation of grades at course and unit level for offshore teaching.
Executive Dean (or nominee)	Provide final oversight of moderation of grades at course and unit level for onshore teaching.

Part B - Overview

(11) Assessment quality assurance is a process that occurs in addition to the day-to-day continuous improvement activities expected in unit and course design and delivery. This includes:

a. the validation of assessment tools and processes prior to use;
b. moderation of assessment outcomes, for appropriate and consistent marking of student work, and;
c. periodic benchmarking of assessment to ensure calibration of standards at discipline, national and international level.

This policy document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to always refer to Victoria University's Policy Library for the latest version.

Part C - Validation of Assessment

Validation Approach

(12) Validation of assessment is an ongoing process that must be integrated into the course and assessment design, delivery and review of the overall assessment strategy and activities.

(13) Validation activities typically involve a review of the assessment or examination paper and marking scheme or rubric prior to distribution to students. The process will be documented and analysed to facilitate future improvement to assessment.

(14) Validation involves checking that the assessment tool is likely to produce valid, reliable, efficient, fair and authentic evidence for assessment.

(15) Validation requires peer review of the marking scheme or assessment rubric for alignment with learning outcomes and to ensure that the descriptors of the levels of performance adequately differentiate between each grade level

(16) Validation of summative assessment/s for a unit that are administered online and automatically marked ensures that test questions are randomly generated from a pool of at least three times the number of questions.

(17) Validation of summative assessment/s that are administered online and automatically marked verifies tests are not provided by a publishing company unless an exemption is recommended by the Course Chair, endorsed by the Director of Learning and Teaching and approved by the Executive Dean.

(18) Validation involves checking that the time limits set for unsupervised on line tests that are automatically marked take into account the time it would take a well-prepared students to answer the questions.

Requirements for Validation

(19) The validation of assessment tools is generally undertaken by the Unit Convenor as part of the unit development and review process and/or prior to first delivery of an assessment item.

(20) Validation of examination papers must additionally occur for examinations at the time of each delivery of the examination and be documented via Form AV1 - Assessment Validation.

(21) In the case of examination validation, the Unit Convenor should provide the completed form to the Course Chair.

(22) The Unit Convenor should store a digital copy of validation forms with unit files. Validation documents will be required for accreditation and review purposes.

(23) For partner course delivery only: Form AV1 - Assessment Validation must be attached to the Claim for Payment form.

Part D - Moderation of Assessment

(24) Moderation is a process whereby academic staff responsible for assessment in a course or unit reach consensus about levels of student performance in relation to a set of agreed standards. Moderation enables judgments made by different staff involved in assessing student performance to be compared and either confirmed or adjusted.

(25) Where multiple staff teach a single unit, the Unit Convenor will moderate for appropriate and consistent marking of assessment items.

(26) Where the Unit Convenor is the only assessor, the Course Chair will ensure that moderation occurs through the

peer review of assessment by another staff member.

(27) All VU course assessment tasks marked by teaching staff in partner institutions will be co-moderated by VU teaching staff.

(28) Colleges may adopt a process whereby a group of staff jointly moderate assessments for several units.

(29) The Course Chair will annually carry out a cross-course moderation process, or oversee such a process, to ensure that assessment across the course is appropriate and consistent.

Moderation process

(30) Moderation activities typically involve the Unit Convenor undertaking a review of a sample of assessed work after final unit assessment, as provided by each of the unit teaching staff. Where the unit is delivered in more than one location or mode of delivery, samples from each of these must be represented.

(31) Moderation of assessment items should occur promptly following final assessment, and should not significantly delay the provision of results or feedback to students.

(32) Moderation must cover assessment tasks that make up at least 60% of the total unit marks. Tasks such as standardised multiple-choice tests do not require moderation. Where tasks such as presentations preclude post-task moderation, panel assessment and other peer review processes are encouraged.

(33) At least one sample of assessed work at each grade level must be moderated. For class sizes of 30 or above, three samples at each grade level are preferred.

(34) Marks or grades must not be altered as a result of independent assessment of only a sample of assessment items.

(35) Where significant discrepancies in grading between original and moderation are found, the Course Chair will put in place a third review. A re-marking process may also be instigated where appropriate.

(36) The Unit Convenor will confirm that moderation has been undertaken by ensuring completion of Form AM1 — Peer Moderation of Assessment.

(37) The Unit Convenor should store a digital copy of the Peer Moderation of Assessment Form with unit files, including samples of student work and related assessment items wherever possible. These documents may be required for accreditation and course review purposes.

(38) The Unit Convenor should provide a copy of the completed form to the Course Chair.

(39) For partner course delivery only: Form AM1 — Peer Moderation of Assessment must be attached to the Claim for Payment form. All assessment tasks marked by partner teaching staff must be co-moderated by VU teaching staff. The responsibility for marking of examinations is specified in the relevant partnership schedule.

Part E - Benchmarking

(40) Executive Deans, in conjunction with Course Chair (or equivalent) will ensure assessment standards in all courses are periodically benchmarked against similar courses in other universities and/or with relevant stakeholders (for example, industry partners or employers). This process may replicate the validation and moderation processes, or take the form of a broader review of unit and course activities and outcomes.

This policy document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to always refer to Victoria University's Policy Library for the latest version.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	17th November 2021
Review Date	17th November 2027
Approval Authority	Interim Deputy Provost (Students & Academic Services)
Approval Date	17th November 2021
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Accountable Officer	John Germov Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer +613 9919 5077
Responsible Officer	Deborah Tyler Director, Academic Quality and Standards +613 9919 4310
Enquiries Contact	Deborah Tyler Director, Academic Quality and Standards +613 9919 4310

This policy document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to always refer to Victoria University's Policy Library for the latest version.