



MODERATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Purpose

The quality of Lincoln Education Australia's (LEA) academic programs and the academic progress of its students is measured through valid and reliable assessment of the achievement of learning outcomes. Moderation of assessment is integral to the review and improvement of higher education assessment practices at LEA, as it ensures that student assessment is graded consistently and fairly and provides data for course and teaching and learning improvement.

This policy identifies the procedures that guide the assessment moderation process to be implemented by academic staff at LEA. It defines for both academic staff and students their obligations and rights within the process.

Scope

This policy applies to the marking of all student assessment tasks at LEA, and the finalisation of student grades.

Principles

LEA students shall be assured that their assessment tasks shall be marked fairly, consistently and equitably according to the set criteria and standards.

Assessment criteria and standards, including grading rubrics, shall be reviewed and approved prior to the commencement of each teaching period as part of the pre-assessment moderation process.

All assessment tasks shall be moderated.

Academic staff responsible for marking student assessment tasks shall understand and apply moderation throughout the marking process.

Academic staff responsible for marking student assessment tasks shall attend pre-marking moderation meetings and post-marking moderation meetings.

Marks and grades awarded for assessment tasks shall not be released to students until the moderation process is completed.

End of semester final grades shall be reviewed and verified before submission and release to students.

Issues or discrepancies revealed during the moderation process shall be addressed to ensure transparency and fairness for all students.



LEA shall continually improve the quality of assessment tasks and moderation processes, through periodic internal and external review, and benchmarking of all assessment policies and processes.

Students have the right to appeal assessment decisions, including marks awarded for individual assessment tasks and final grades. Students and staff are to refer to the *Student Grievances and Appeals Policy* for the process for appealing assessment decisions.

Course and Subject Design

The development of each subject in a course shall integrate effective assessment strategies that shall allow the moderation process to take place as intended. This includes clear criteria, standards, and grading rubrics for assessment tasks that are aligned with the course and subject learning outcomes.

Staff Responsibilities and Information

The moderation process and staff roles and responsibilities in the process shall be defined and understood by all staff.

Assessment task criteria and standards, and grading rubrics are to be included in the unit outline for each unit of study. Students and academic staff shall have access to the unit outline prior to the commencement of the teaching period each semester.

Staff shall be trained in moderation processes through induction and professional development activities. Additional training and support shall be provided to staff as necessary.

Staff members shall declare any conflict of interest and agree to be removed from the moderation process where the conflict of interest applies.

Prior to moderation meetings, the Course Coordinator is responsible for establishing and communicating to all staff involved:

- Academic staff roles and responsibilities
- Whether additional training is needed for staff involved in assessment
- The assessment task(s) to be moderated
- Any rubrics necessary
- Dispute resolution processes during moderation
- Responsibilities for recordkeeping and reporting
- Moderation meeting schedule.



External Moderation

LEA shall periodically engage in external moderation in order to maintain the highest quality assessment practices.

Pre-assessment external moderation shall involve benchmarking the following against higher education providers with comparable courses and subjects:

- Learning outcomes
- Criteria
- Standards
- Grading rubrics

Post-assessment external moderation shall involve benchmarking the following against higher education providers with comparable courses and subjects:

- Standard of work submitted
- Marks and grades awarded

For information on the benchmarking process, see the *Benchmarking Policy and Procedures*.

Moderation Process

Pre-Assessment Moderation

All assessment tasks are subject to pre-assessment moderation. This includes analysis of the subject content and assessment, including a comparison with other subjects offered at the same level within the course. This includes:

- Provision of syllabus to students that establishes learning outcomes of the course and assessment tasks
- Evaluation of the mapping of subject content and assessment to learning outcomes
- Appropriateness of learning material and assessments for the assumed knowledge level of students
- The level of academic challenge consistent with the level of the course or subject
- Relevance and currency of learning materials
- Fairness, equity, and culturally appropriateness of assessments, with reasonable weightings
- Appropriate and achievable timing of assessment tasks
- Clear instructions for how to complete the assessment and grading rubric provided to students
- Moderation meeting between all markers (see below)

External pre-assessment moderation includes benchmarking the assessment design against industry best practice and level--appropriate standards of teaching and learning.



All academic staff members responsible for marking an assessment task shall attend a pre-assessment moderation meeting prior to each assessment task, in which the marking rubric and expected standards shall be discussed to ensure consistent marking.

The grading rubric shall be discussed and clearly understood in order to be used consistently when marking. Sample assessment tasks and the appropriate mark to award should be identified.

The meeting shall also be used for external moderation, in which academic staff consider assessment strategic, learning outcomes and assessment rubrics against academic objectives of LEA and best practice approaches.

If there is only one academic staff member involved in marking student work, the pre-assessment moderation meeting shall have in attendance that staff member and the Course Coordinator.

Post-Assessment Moderation

All assessment materials will be subject to post-assessment moderation. Post-assessment moderation involves:

- Double marking of student assessment that has achieved a Fail grade or a grade above 85%.
- Review of all grades prior to their approval and communication to students by the relevant Course Coordinator and establishment of an agreed standard.

All academic staff members responsible for marking an assessment task shall attend a post-assessment moderation meeting after administering each assessment task.

A representative sample of assessments will be reviewed to compare criteria and standards and the mark awarded. This should include at least one sample from each grade from each marker.

These will be given to staff who are qualified to teach the same subject but were not involved in the teaching or assessment of the students who submitted the selected assessment tasks. These staff shall review the assessment submissions, providing a mark and rationale for the mark in relation to the grading rubric.

The outcomes of this process will be discussed at the moderation meeting and staff shall collectively decide on a mark for the moderated assessment submission. The Course Coordinator will review all marks and feedback given during moderation.

As outlined below, all assessment given at either above 85/100 or below 50/100 shall be automatically double-marked at this meeting. Any mark or grade discrepancies shall be resolved at this meeting. The Course Coordinator may have to make the final decision if a resolution between markers cannot be achieved.



Following review, verification and consensus amongst markers, marks are finalised and recorded, ready for release to students.

Double Marking

An assessment submission will be automatically double marked in the event that it is awarded:

- A mark below 50% (Fail grade)
- A mark above 85% (High Distinction)

Any discrepancies that arise in double marking shall be resolved by a third marker and the Course Coordinator (see below).

Resolving Discrepancies During Post-Assessment Moderation

In some cases, selected assessment submissions or all assessment submissions in a subject may be marked by a third marker.

If a specific assessment submission is awarded marks by two different markers that vary by more than 5%, the submission shall be marked by a third marker.

If a third or more of the representative sample is awarded marks by two different markers that vary by more than 5%, all assessments submitted for the subject shall be marked by a third marker.

In both cases, the Course Coordinator shall review and verify the final marks.

Appeals

Students have the right to appeal marks awarded for assessment tasks and final grades through the mechanisms specified in the *Student Grievances and Appeals Policy*.

Record-Keeping and Reporting

The Course Coordinator will provide a report on the marking, grading, and moderation processes for the course they are responsible for. This report shall include:

- A final grades report, including:
 - All student marks and grades and student cohort progress through the course
 - A comment on the range of grades and level of student achievement
 - Suggestions for improvements and amendments to any aspect of the course that impacts moderation, student achievement and progress.
 - Identification of students at risk of failing and students in need of additional learning support
- Moderation process report, including:
 - The frequency of double marking



- The occurrence of notable variation in marking and disputes
- Consistency of application of standards and grading rubric in marking
- Staff feedback on the moderation process
- Any student complaints about and appeals of assessment processes.

The full report on moderation activities shall be submitted to the Course Monitoring Committee and the Learning and Teaching Committee at the end of each semester.

Continual Improvement

Based on reports, LEA will make improvements in time for the next teaching period, in particular regarding:

- Clarity and usefulness of grading rubrics and standards for both staff and students
- Accessibility of assessment methods to all students at LEA
- Consistency and fairness of marking and moderation process

Policy Implementation and Monitoring

The Academic Board delegates responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of this policy to the Course Coordinators of each course, and the academic management committees to which the Course Coordinators report.

The Academic Board will review all periodic reports from relevant committees and staff members.

Additionally, the Academic Board will review all relevant student complaints, concerns raised by staff members, and instances of student or staff misconduct on an ongoing basis.

Based on these monitoring activities, the Academic Board shall provide a report to Corporate Governance Board and ensure that findings are taken into account in planning, quality assurance and improvement processes.

Compliance

All relevant staff, and all students at LEA are required to comply with this policy and its procedures, and with related policies and respective procedures. Non-compliance may result in a disciplinary action.

File Number	LEA-GEN-COR-70044-D
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer
Contact Officer	Academic Dean
Legislative Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015</i>● <i>Australian Qualifications Framework (2013)</i>● <i>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011</i>



Supporting Documents	
Related Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Assessment Policy</i>• <i>Academic Standards Policy and Procedures</i>• <i>Benchmarking Policy and Procedures</i>• <i>Conflict of Interest Policy</i>• <i>Course Development and Approval Policy and Procedures</i>• <i>Course Review and Continual Improvement Policy and Procedures</i>
Superseded Documents	
Effective Date	1 January 2022
Next Review	3 years from the effective date

Definitions

Academic Board: Governing body responsible for academic matters, including teaching and learning, course approval, workforce planning, academic staff appointments, research and professional development, academic policies and procedures, overseeing student grievances and appeals processes. The Academic Board reports to the Corporate Governance Board.

Appeals Committee: Committee of the Academic Board responsible for reviewing student complaints, grievances and appeals, and monitoring, collating and reporting data on student performance and courses.

Assessment: Process of grading, marking and reviewing student assessment tasks against the assessment standards and criteria and includes devising and using assessment criteria, standards and grading rubrics; reviewing and comparing the marks and grades awarded to individual student submissions for the same assessment task within a unit of study.

Assessment task: Learning task within a unit of study designed to test the demonstration of course and unit learning outcomes. Examples include assignments, exams, online quizzes, essays, presentations, portfolios, essays, reflective journals. Assessment tasks shall include clear instructions and guidelines on marking criteria and standards, and grading rubrics.

Course Coordinator: Senior academic staff member responsible for the delivery, planning and development of a course, particularly subject curriculum information, and works in conjunction with other senior academic staff.

Double marking: Process by which a student's assessment task is marked by two markers in order to review, verify and endorse a mark and grade for the task.

Moderation: Quality assurance process to ensure the assessment process is consistent and transparent. This includes the review and endorsement of standards, marks for individual assessment tasks and final grades. Moderation occurs pre-assessment and post-assessment.

Teaching and Learning Committee: Committee of the Academic Board responsible for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning at LEA including progress towards achieving objectives of the *Teaching and Learning Plan* and the adequacy of all forms of support for teaching and learning present at LEA.



Review schedule

This policy shall be reviewed by the Academic Board every three years.

Version History			
Version number:	Approved by:	Approval Date:	Revision Notes:
1.0	Academic Board	13/08/2020	New policy