

MODERATION POLICY

Purpose The purpose of this policy is to detail The College of Law Limited's (College) moderation of assessments.

Applicability This policy applies to all College lecturers, other employees and external contractors involved in the moderation of assessment.

Policy There are several aspects to the College's Moderation Policy with the fundamental principles being:

- moderation is a key part of our academic quality control;
- internal moderation is critical to ensure student equity across assessors in all Programs and across streams of the PLT Program;
- external moderation is critical to ensure quality control in accordance with industry standards
- given the large volume of assessments it is not possible to formally moderate every assessment so informal moderation is undertaken by Program Directors and external moderation is achieved by sampling in accordance with a formula;
- the data and information accumulated via the moderation system is used by the Group Course Committee (GCC) and the Academic Board (COLAB) to inform the improvement of Programs and their delivery.

Subordinate to these principles are procedures concerned with:

- moderating exams
 - external moderation
 - establishing grade distributions, and
 - dealing with information obtained via the moderation process.
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Moderation by Program Directors The first phase in the internal moderation system is achieved by Program Directors scrutinising cohort results in single assessment events in order to detect anomalies in the normal grade distribution. Where anomalies are detected, the Program Director should sample mark a couple of exams (or have them marked by a senior lecturer or

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course leader) in order to determine whether a full remark of the entire cohort is warranted. This must be done prior to publication of marks.

External Moderation

External moderation is the process via which we get external input into the integrity of our assessment system. External moderators, working with the College's external Moderation Templates, give input into:

- the fairness of markers against the markers' guides;
- consistent approach of markers;
- appropriateness of what we are assessing;
- the accuracy and clarity of assessment instruments and markers' guides;
- how assessment instruments and markers' guides might be improved; and
- the appropriateness of the curriculum.

The annual completion of the Moderation Templates results in reports which are given to the Program Director to consider and take appropriate action. Such action regularly results in amendments to exams and markers' guides, and sometimes course materials.

PLT

Moderation focuses on recorded oral assessments.

ALP

ALP continues to moderate samples of all assessments rotated biennially.

Selection of External Moderators

External Moderators can be either legal academics or practitioners. One External Moderator should be used per sample per subject. Continuity is desirable and External Moderators moderating more than one subject is permissible.

Each Program Director should maintain a Register of External Moderators for logistical and recording purposes.

Selection of Exam or Written Submission Scripts for

PLT Program and Applied Law subjects are sampled every year. At any time in the calendar year the Program Director (or a delegated Student Services officer) should make a selection of assessments within each moderated subject.

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**External
Moderation**

Each sample should include 12 submissions in NSW and 8 in other Streams (numbers as seem appropriate within ALP subjects).

Selection should be on the following bases:

- Even distribution between grades; ie, an equal number from Fail, Pass, Credit, Distinction and High Distinction;
- Distribution of markers (the sample should include at least 3 different markers in NSW and 2 in other streams);
- Rotation of assessment versions used (no less than 2 in any one sample).

The Program Director (or delegated Student Services officer) makes the selection by creating a Moderator's Report from the template and listing the assessments to be moderated. The recordings are then copied and sent to the external moderator with the incomplete Moderator's Report plus any relevant markers' guides/rubrics.

**Use of
Moderation
Reports**

PLT

Once the moderators have returned the completed reports (with all other materials) to the Program Directors, the Group Course Committee (GCC) will include on a convenient agenda the consideration of issues arising from the reports which may affect the curriculum across the board. Program Directors in concert with Subject Co-ordinators should also review the reports for recommendations which might improve stream materials (including assessment instruments). Moderators should be informed as to how their recommendations have been implemented (and if not, why not).

Where moderators identify issues with particular markers, those markers must be shown the moderator's comments and given an opportunity to respond. Where a marker is demonstrably out of step with other markers and/or the requirements of the marker's guide, they should be advised of the fact and counseled to help them achieve parity with their peers.

ALP

ALP follows the same process as PLT with the exception that there is no need for the GCC's intervention as the entire process is co-ordinated by the Deputy Director.

**Grade
Distribution and**

The analysis of grade distributions is a form of internal moderation, separate from the process of external moderation of marking, but vitally linked with moderation generally.

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ALP Moderation Map

A Grade Distribution Report can be run for single offerings (as defined by prefix and suffix) or as aggregated for all stream offerings within a given period. The single offering report is useful for lecturers and Program Directors.

The College does not mark in accordance with norm referencing, so the single offering Grade Distribution Report is not to be used to amend marks. However, the Program Director can see how well the distribution reflects the traditional patterns and anomalies can be indicative of problems warranting further investigation.

ALP

The Applied Law Program has a much greater reliance on adjunct lecturers than the PLT Program which means that we ought to be subjecting the grading of such lecturers to greater scrutiny for the purposes of academic quality assurance.

To that end, the ALP Moderation Map is generated at least annually to show average grades in every subject and location. Where there appears to be an anomalous result (ie different average grades in different locations – especially where different markers are involved) the Deputy Director will investigate to determine whether the apparent anomaly can be explained, or whether a full remark of the entire subject is warranted. The Deputy Director provides a report to the Academic Board attaching the Moderation Map and indicating which subjects were investigated, what the findings were, and what (if any) action was taken to redress teaching or assessment issues.

The aggregate reports (for both PLT and ALP) are useful as a comparison with other streams/years and are included in the Academic Baseline Report published annually.

Related Documents

- External Moderation Templates
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Note:

If there is a related Procedure that your Policy relates to please insert the name of the procedure within the document as a "[hyperlink](#)".

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