



Moderation Policy

Policy/Document Approval Body:	Academic Board
Date Created:	7 th March 2009
Policy Custodian:	Dean of Engineering
Policy Contact:	Accreditation Manager
File Location:	W:\Data - ALL.Standard\Policies and Procedures\EIT Policies and Procedures
Location on EIT website:	http://www.eit.edu.au/organisation-policies
Review Period:	Three years
Revision No:	4
Date of Revision:	13 th October 2010
Purpose:	The purpose of this policy is to set out the way the EIT will perform moderation to ensure for reliability and validity in marking processes for assessment.
Scope:	This policy is relevant for all EIT academic staff involved with assessment.

Essential Supporting Documents:

Related Documents:	- Assessment Policy - Assessment – A Code of Practice
---------------------------	--

Assessment Competency for Moderators

The skills base of any person assigned by the EIT to perform moderation should be such that they are competent to detect errors, discrepancies or ineptitude in the marking process of a particular unit.

Moderation

Moderation in an EIT context is a quality assurance strategy directed at ensuring the reliability and validity of assessment in units. It tests whether the standard of marking across particular assessment components is appropriate and consistent through the scrutiny or remarking of samples of assignments and the timely initiation of corrective action where deficiencies are discovered.

What is moderation and when should it occur?

Moderation is a quality assurance strategy directed at ensuring the reliability and validity of assessment. It is a process of independently evaluating whether there is consistency in the standard of marking being applied across particular assessment components or whether significant deviations have occurred from some previously defined standard. It 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. These situations can include:

- Where more than one assessor is marking the same assessment components for different groups of students
- Where the Academic Board or the Teaching and Learning Committee or the School Dean identifies issues with a unit that would benefit from moderation
- Where an educational partner organisation teaches EIT students enrolled in EIT units
- Where a student has submitted a master level dissertation
- Where students have completed final master level examinations.

However, the details of the moderation process may vary with each situation and the requirement for moderation is at the discretion of the School Dean and/or the Academic Board and/or the Teaching and Learning Committee.

What are the prerequisites for moderation?

Effective moderation requires:

- That the objectives 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
- That clear, well-understood marking guides are used
- That 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.

What is the scope of moderation?

Where moderation is invoked for a unit it must apply to each significant assessment component that falls within the criteria requiring moderation. 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 is generally ten scripts or 10% of the submissions per assessment component; whichever is the larger number.

Who performs moderation and how do they do it?

The moderation process must involve a person other than the original marker assessing the way marks have been awarded for a representative sample of student submissions. The person selected for this role must have assessment competency in that their skills base should be such that they are competent to detect errors, discrepancies or ineptitude in the marking process of a particular unit. The moderation may involve:



- A simple scrutiny of marks awarded and the criteria used, without an actual re-mark
- A re-mark informed by the marks awarded by and/or the comments of the original marker
- A “double blind” re-mark in which the original marks awarded and comments are not available to the second marker.

In all cases, the assessment must be made using a marking guide. The time taken for these different strategies will differ, and each will be appropriate under different circumstances. Where there is an initial presumption of marking problems, or a student has successfully made a case for a re-mark, the blind re-mark is most appropriate; where there is simply a monitoring requirement, for example in the case of educational partners teaching EIT units scrutiny of marks awarded or an informed re-mark will suffice.

What must be done if moderation reveals a problem?

Where moderation indicates a problem, it is crucial that an investigation is initiated as soon as possible to establish that a discrepancy exists and determine if the issue is one of:

- Marking strategy or process
- Student learning.

Where the moderation affects a unit not run through an educational partnership, the Course coordinator should communicate as soon as possible with the marker or markers affected. Where an educational partnership is involved the Dean, through liaison with the appropriate person in the partner organisation, is to initiate discussion. The Course coordinator must satisfy him/herself, after discussion with the marker or markers, that the cause of the problem has been corrected and the issue will not be repeated. If, in the opinion of the Course Coordinator, the issue will have a substantial effect on student grades, then corrections to the marks must be initiated as soon as possible, either by systematic corrections following the marking guide or by a re-mark. Where an educational partnership is involved and the students are enrolled in an EIT Unit the Course coordinator must consult with the Dean who has the authority to require a total re-mark by an educational partner.

Who has responsibility for moderation?

Ultimate responsibility for ensuring that moderation occurs in units where it is required lies with the Dean who has the primary responsibility for the quality of academic offerings within the School. Operational responsibility will generally devolve to the Course Coordinator, unless the Course Coordinator is the single teacher and marker in the unit. The selection of markers who will moderate within a unit must be approved by the Dean.

Comparability of Marking across Lecturers

Course Coordinators must take steps to ensure that marks awarded by lecturers are equitable and that the need for adjustment of student group means is minimised.

Course Coordinators provide lecturers with marking guides and, where appropriate, solution lists. Where possible, they should also meet with lecturers to consider marking techniques to ensure consistency in the allocation of marks by different lecturers. In particular, the link between numerical marks and final grades, the meaning of those grades, and the broad



distribution anticipated should be discussed carefully with lecturers prior to any marking taking place. The purpose should be to minimise or to remove inconsistencies between lecturers on the same unit, or inconsistencies from offering to offering of the same unit.