POLICY A2.3

ASSESSMENT MODERATION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

The moderation of assessment is an important quality assurance mechanism employed by the AIM Business School (ABS). ABS conducts a prescribed cycle of validation and post moderation of assessment tasks to ensure that unit and course outcomes align with the AQF, and student results are calibrated so that the student achievement of learning outcomes are commensurate with similar higher education providers in the sector.

1.2 Purpose

This policy outlines the expectations and responsibilities of all ABS staff engaged in the conduct of assessment moderation activities. The policy describes the requirements to demonstrate compliance with the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) 2021, standards 1.4, 3.1, 5.2, 5.3 and underpins external referencing activities thereby safeguarding student certification and quality with external partners.

1.3 Scope

The Assessment Moderation Policy applies to all ABS programs, irrespective of their location, including the conduct of assessment activities by a third-party partner, and irrespective of the student's mode of study. It applies to on-site, off-site and online activity.

1.4 Scope Exceptions

None.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

1. **Marker** - A marker is a unit matter expert who has set and/ or marked the assessment task under review. Typically, the marker is the facilitator of the unit under moderation. Depending on the availability of the marker and the student numbers, there may be more than one marker for a specific unit under moderation. The key responsibilities of a marker include:

   - Being fully conversant with the assessment task, the instructions relating to that task, and the evidence required to be submitted by a student to meet the requirements of that task in accordance with the marking rubric;

   - ensuring that all assessment tasks and marking rubrics are current and have been validated prior to being issued to a student;

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- following the assessment tasks instructions and marking rubrics to mark student work; and

- completing marking within the designated marking time as set by the Executive Director, ABS or nominee.

2. **Moderator** - A moderator is a unit matter expert who may be a peer from the ABS academic team or an academic external to ABS. The moderator must be independent to the person who has marked the assessment task and is responsible for ensuring the standard of marking is in accordance with the unit's marking rubric. The key responsibilities of a moderator include:

- being fully conversant with the assessment task, the instructions relating to that task, and the evidence required to be submitted by a student to meet the requirements of that task in accordance with the marking rubric;

- verifying that all assessment tasks and marking rubrics are current and have been validated prior to being moderated;

- following the assessment tasks instructions and marking rubrics to mark the selected student work under moderation;

- ensuring that they undertake the moderation process with consistency, accuracy and fairness in accordance with the guidelines issued for the moderation exercise;

- ensuring that markers receive clear and unambiguous feedback on the calibre of their marking;

- ensuring that all assessment moderation materials are available for review by the Executive Director, ABS, or nominee; and

- completing moderation within the designated timeframe as outlined in the Assessment Moderation Plan (AMP).

3. **Mediator** – The mediator is the Executive Director, ABS (or delegated nominee) who arbitrates difference of opinion between the marker and the moderator.

4. **Academic Manager** – A member of ABS staff who is responsible for managing the assessment validation and moderation process. The key responsibilities of the Academic Manager include:

- developing an annual Assessment Moderation Plan (AMP);

- managing the schedule of validation and moderation activities in accordance with the AMP;

- ensuring the timely communication of assessment validation and moderation outcomes is maintained between the marker and moderator;

- ensuring that all markers and moderators are appropriately qualified, trained and have the necessary competence to fulfil their relevant roles;

- ensuring that all documents and data relating to validation and moderation are maintained for each moderation cycle and preserved for future reference; and

- preparing moderation reports for the Executive Director, ABS to review and presents the reports to the relevant ABS Academic Governance committees.

3.0 POLICY

3.1 Principles

1. ABS develops and continually reviews assessment tasks to ensure they are explicit, valid, fair, reliable, assess learning outcomes at the requisite AQF level and, wherever possible, are criterion referenced.

2. A comprehensive Assessment Moderation Plan (AMP) ensures that all assessment tasks are validated and reviewed on a cyclical basis. The plan includes both internal and external moderation of assessment.

3. A Study Period Assessment Plan is developed at the beginning of each study period, which outlines the due dates and weightings of each assessment item.

4. ABS externally references assessment outcomes with similar courses in the higher education sector to ensure calibration of standards and results.

5. Assessment rubrics are pre-validated to ensure consistent and comparable grading is achieved across all ABS modes and locations of delivery.

6. Academic integrity is maximised for all assessments by ensuring that assessment tasks are authentic prior to the release to students (Refer to ABS Academic Integrity Policy).

7. In accordance with the Assessment Moderation Plan, a sample of internally moderated assessments will be periodically externally moderated.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

- **Assessment Moderation** – A quality assurance process whereby a moderator confirms that assessment is being marked with accuracy, consistency and fairness in accordance with the prescribed marking rubric.

- **Assessment Validation** – Assessment validation is a quality assurance process by which peer academics verify that an assessment rubric has been developed so as to ensure:

  o correct weighting of the assessment in accordance with specifications in the unit outline;

- the learning outcome(s) of the unit are being assessed;

- the assessment is valid, clear, unambiguous, and authentic;

- the assessment task is collecting enough evidence so the student may demonstrate achievement of the learning outcome(s);

- graduate qualities (where available) are mapped correctly; and

- the scheduling of the assessment is in accordance with the Study Period Assessment Plan.

- **Assessment Moderation Plan (AMP)** – A work plan which specifies the date and timeframes within which ABS courses are subject to periodic validation and moderation. This plan must be approved and monitored by the ABS Teaching and Learning Committee.

- **Assessment Task** - An assessment task is a specific learning activity or exercise designed for the purposes of determining a student's knowledge and achievements in relation to the published learning outcome of a unit.

- **Learning outcomes** - The learning outcomes (course learning outcomes and unit learning outcomes) are provided in writing to students in the unit guide prior to the commencement of each unit. Learning outcomes serve as a reference point for the pre-assessment moderation of assessment tasks and final achievement of grades.

- **Marking rubric** – The criteria and associated grade available (e.g., HD to F) for the relevant assessment item.

- **Peer Review Portal –** An independent, nationally recognised online portal where student assessments tasks and marking rubrics may be externally moderated to enable national and international comparators – http://www.peerreviewportal.com.

- **Student** – Refers to domestic and international ABS students.

- **Study Period** - A scheduled period of time (e.g., semester, trimester, term) within a course of study.

- **Study Period Assessment Plan** – A calendar of assessment scheduled to be conducted in a study period, outlining assessment tasks for each unit of study and due dates for the assessment. Used to monitor workloads and ensure equitable spacing of assessment tasks.

- **Unit Outline** - This document sets out the overview of the Unit Guide (academic content). It is a document that lists the learning outcomes and objectives of the unit of study.

- **Unit Guide** - The document contains all unit content including the student learning outcomes, the assessment briefs and the assessment weightings. It sets out the details of a unit of study. Typically, a Unit Guide consists of essential academic and administrative information required for the successful completion of a unit of study.

- **Unit of Study** - The course or program which a student may undertake and, on successful completion of the unit requirements, gain credit towards completion of the course or program. Units of study are sometimes referred to as "units".

5.0   REFERENCES AND ASSOCIATED INFORMATION

- Academic Integrity and Honesty Policy

- Assessment and Reassessment Policy

- Assessment Moderation Plan

- Study Period Assessment Plan

6.0   POLICY OWNERSHIP

Policy Owner	Executive Director, ABS
Status	Reviewed on May 2024
Approval Authority	ABS Academic Board
Date of Approval	25 June 2024
Effective Date	2 July 2024
Implementation Owner	Academic Manager
Maintenance Owner	Head of Compliance
Review Due	May 2027
Content Enquiries	Professor Sabina Cerimagic - Executive Director, ABS Email: sabina.cerimagic@aimbusinessschool.edu.au

7.0   AMENDMENTS

Version	Amendment Approval (Date)	Amendment Made By (Position)	Amendment Details
A2.0	10 March 2020	Academic Board	New Policy
A2.1	22 June 2021	Academic Board	Revised context and purpose Revised scope Revised definitions Added assessment rubrics to principles
A2.2	10 March 2023	Head of Compliance	Minor administrative update to staffing titles.
A2.3	25 June 2024	Executive Director	Benchmarking indicates Policy continues to align with sector.