

# M2 - MODERATION OF GRADES AND ASSESSMENT POLICY & PROCEDURES

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## 1 PURPOSE

This policy outlines the framework by which BBI - The Australian Institute of Theological Education (BBI) moderates grades and assessment marking.

## 2 BACKGROUND

BBI is committed to quality learning and teaching, as reflected in its primarily educational mission. Part of this commitment involves ensuring consistent and appropriate assessment both within the Institute and between the Institute and other providers who confer similar awards. In order to achieve such consistency, the following policy has been implemented.

## 3 SCOPE

This policy applies to all faculty and sessional academics.

## 4 DEFINITIONS

N/A

## 5 POLICY

Given the Institute's status as a Higher Education Provider and its working alongside various other higher education partners, this policy is divided into two parts. Part 1 refers to internal evaluation of BBI's Learning and Teaching and part 2 relates to where BBI is delivering units or courses in partnership with another institution.

### **Part 1 – Internal Moderation of Grades**

- a) In order to ensure consistency across BBI units the Academic Standards Subcommittee (ASSC) will undertake a moderation of grades process each semester.
- b) All teaching staff will report their final grades to the ASSC within three weeks of final assessments being due, along with their completed Teaching Staff Review of Units survey (refer Evaluation of Teaching and Learning Policy, 1.A.3).
- c) The ASSC will determine whether the spread of grades aligns with historical data for the current unit as well other units offered within the same teaching period across the Institute and between teaching staff. If such alignment exists, and the reasons for it as outlined in the Teaching Staff Review of Units Survey are sound, the ASSC will confirm the grades and they will be released to students.
- d) If alignment does not exist, the ASSC will analyse the reasons given for this in the Teaching Staff Review of Units survey. If the ASSC is satisfied with this reasoning, the ASSC will confirm the grades and they will be released to students.

Satisfactory reasoning for variances in distribution of grades include:

1. Variance in student cohort, such as student numbers and the composition of the cohort.
  2. Approved variance in assessment requirements.
  3. Approved variance in marking practice based on previous reviews.
- e) If alignment does not exist and no satisfactory reason is given for this in the Teaching Staff Review of Units survey, the ASSC will conduct an internal peer review of assessment in accordance with the guidelines below. Once this review has taken place, the ASSC will determine whether:
1. The grades are to be confirmed and released as they stand.
  2. Particular assessments should be remarked and grades amended on this basis.
  3. An extraordinary external moderation should take place as per the process outlined below.

### ***External Moderation of Grades***

- f) In order to ensure consistency between BBI's grading and the grading of other institutions, the ASSC will coordinate external moderation of grades on a rotational basis. The first rotation is to take place when a given unit is first offered. Following rotations are to take place at least every third time the unit is offered again.
- g) The ASSC will appoint an administrator to invite relevant and qualified academics external to the college to act as External Moderators. An External Moderator will be selected for each unit to be moderated.
- h) The administrator will provide for each subject being moderated:
1. A unit outline, which includes a copy of all assessment task instructions, as well as approved marking criteria and rubrics.
  2. A selection of at least ten assessments worth 30% or more of the final mark of the subject from across the semester. This selection is to include papers across each level of the marking range (e.g. HD, D, CR, PA) and all FF papers.
- i) Moderators are asked to:
1. Review the unit outline, content and structure. They are to evaluate the appropriateness of assessment questions to the relevant course and the capacity of these assessments in determining whether students have reached the relevant unit outcomes.
  2. Review the graded assessments. This specifically refers to the standard, fairness and consistency of marking.
  3. Report on the assessment and assessment processes of the course unit evaluated, including with critical feedback and suggestions for improvement.
  4. Report on the standard, fairness and consistency of marking with respect to that expected in degree studies in an Australian university;
  5. Send their report to the administrator within an agreed timeframe.
- j) The administrator distributes the report to the ASSC, which then decides on appropriate interventions (where relevant) to improve the unit and its assessment. These are communicated to the relevant Unit Coordinator by a delegate of the ASSC, and an agreed action plan is developed in accordance with the Unit Review Policy.

### ***Internal Moderation of Assessment Marking***

- k) Unit coordinators take responsibility for moderating individual assessment grades within their units. Where the Unit Coordinator is the sole assessor for an individual unit, it suffices to utilise the internal moderation of grades procedure

noted above for this process. However, internal moderation of assessments as outlined below is encouraged where possible as best practice for assessment. Where unit coordinators are working with multiple markers within a single unit, internal peer review of assessment must take place according to the following outline.

- l) Internal moderation of assessment refers to the process by which academic staff working for the Institute undertakes peer review of each other's assessment marking for the purposes of achieving consistent and appropriate assessment. When undertaken during a marking period, peer review of assessment should happen concurrently with assessment marking for the whole cohort. Peer review of assessment follows this procedure:
  1. A sample of assessments is selected and is marked independently by one or more markers. Where this occurs within the context of an individual unit with multiple markers, all markers should assess the same sample.
  2. The Unit Coordinator (or relevant member of the ASSC) gathers together marks awarded to analyse for consistency in assessment and grading, as well as quality of feedback.
  3. The Unit Coordinator (or relevant member of the ASSC) works with markers to establish an agreed measure for consistency, and marking proceeds on this basis.

## **Part 2 – Moderation of Grades and Assessment in Partnership with other Higher Education Providers**

- a) Where BBI works in partnership with other Higher Education Providers and acts as a third party in the delivery of their units or courses, the internal moderation structures of the relevant Higher Education Provider are to be used.
- b) The Academic Standards Committee receives review results at the end of each semester, including action plans, and determines whether further follow up is necessary. The Committee's decision is minuted, and action undertaken where relevant.

## **6 RELEVANT LEGISLATION**

N/A

## **7 KEY RELATED DOCUMENTS**

- *Provider Course Accreditation Standard 5.3* requires that: 'course management and coordination, including moderation procedures, ensure consistent and appropriate assessment.'
- Evaluation of Teaching and Learning Policy.

## **8 NOTES**

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|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Contact Officer                  | Academic Dean                                                                        |
| Implementation Officer/s         | Academic Dean                                                                        |
| Approval Authority / Authorities | Academic Standards Sub-Committee / Academic Board / Audit and Risk Committee / Board |
| Date Approved                    | 16/10/15                                                                             |

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|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
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| Key Stakeholders     | Faculty & Sessional Academics / Students / Higher Education Partners |