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# Moderation of Assessment Procedure – Higher Education

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<b>Version:</b>	6.0	<b>Effective Date:</b>	7 December 2012
<b>Procedure Code:</b>	PR-026	<b>Related Policy Code:</b>	ACA-008
<b>Related Policy Name:</b>	Moderation of Assessment Policy		

## Purpose:

This Procedure details the processes of moderation in place at the College to assure both the quality of the assessment process, and to support the continuous improvement of assessment of subjects in its courses. This Procedure is to be read in conjunction with the [Moderation of Assessment Policy](#).

**Definition of “College”** – *In the higher education sector, the Australian College of Natural Medicine Pty Ltd (ACNM) trades as Endeavour College of Natural Health, and Wellnation. For the purpose of this Procedure, any reference to ‘College’ or ‘the College’ should be considered a reference to each or any of these respective trading names.*

- Scope:**
- All campuses (including online)
  - All higher education courses
  - All academics and academic contractors

## Procedure:

### Background Principles

Moderation will be applied to nominated assessment in all subjects.

Effective moderation requires that:

- the objective 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;
- all subjects are taught and assessed according to the Subject Outline and there is

consistency in marking across all campuses;

- clear, well-understood marking guides are used; and
- there is a mutually agreed and timely process of feedback to ensure that corrections to marking strategies 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 about their performance through inappropriate, inadequate or missing feedback.

## Responsibility for Moderation

Ultimate responsibility for ensuring that moderation occurs lies with the Director of Education who has the primary responsibility for monitoring the quality of student academic performance within the College.

### Internal Moderation

Heads of Department / Associate Heads of Department / Course Coordinators and the Subject Coordinator have operational responsibility for internal moderation, unless the Subject Coordinator is the sole teacher and marker of the subject, in which case another moderator will be appointed by the relevant Head of Department / Associate Head of Department / Course Coordinator. Moderators must be academics with content knowledge of the appropriate field and may be appointed from within the department or outside it.

Heads of Department / Associate Heads of Department / Course Coordinators will ensure that the Subject Coordinator(s) or appointed moderator(s) review and report on the results, and monitor the assessment performance of subjects.

### External Moderation

The Director of Education will appoint an External Moderator for each academic Department who will moderate a sample of assessment for at least two (2) subjects or two (2) assessments from the same subject from that Department per semester (across all campuses).

The appointment of External Moderators will be reviewed every year by the Director of Education.

### Examiners' Committee

The Examiners' Committee is responsible for moderating all higher education results across all campuses for each study period.

## The Scope of Moderation

Internal moderation must apply to each significant assessment component of a subject (i.e.: more than 25%). Examination moderation will be performed for each formal examination for that subject.

External moderation must apply to a full sample of assessment items from at least two (2) higher education subjects or two (2) assessments in the same subjects per academic Department per year (across all campuses).

A minimum sample size of 10 assessment items or 10% of assessment items (whichever is greater) will be internally moderated during each study period, to include online and on campus cohorts. A sample of all assessment items for at least 10 students or 10% of the students in a subject (whichever is greater) will be externally moderated.

Examination moderation will be based on the examination paper and the Subject Outline. The moderator must be presented with the complete examination paper, including all instructions and associated materials (including solutions and marking rubrics where applicable), and the Subject Outline.

Moderation of all assessments other than examinations will be based on the information in the Subject Outline. The moderator must be provided with a complete Subject Outline, and assessment guide including full assessment criteria and marking rubrics.

## The Process of Moderation

The moderation process must involve a person(s) other than the original marker. The person(s) 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 subject.

### Internal Moderation

Internal moderation of assessment will be undertaken for all subjects. This may take the form of pre and post assessment moderation. Pre-assessment internal moderation occurs before the assessment is undertaken by students and may include moderation of content and assessment design moderation. In addition, pre-assessment internal moderation may consist of moderator marking a small sample of submitted assessments for each marker as a training activity prior to marking commencement. Post-assessment

internal moderation occurs after an assessment is undertaken (but before grades are released – this is done within the 17 days of submission of in-study period assessment and prior to results release for final exams) and includes exchange marking, double marking or blind marking. The selected sample for moderation can focus on grade bands or selected assessment items. The sample for grade band moderation should consist of a selection of top grades, mid-range grades and borderline pass / fail grades and must match the scope of moderation as outlined in this Procedure and associated Policy.

### ***Prior to Assessment***

The Subject Coordinator will supply marking guides / rubrics to Lecturers / Tutors, and will also meet with Lecturers / Tutors / Markers to consider marking techniques to ensure consistency in the allocation of grades by different Lecturers / Tutors. In particular, the link between numerical marks and final grades, the meaning of those grades should be discussed carefully with Lecturers / Tutors / Markers **prior** to any marking taking place. This approach minimises inconsistencies in the allocation of marks between Lecturers / Tutors / Markers, campuses and methods of delivery (online and on campus subjects). *This is an important step in the moderation process and must not be overlooked.*

### ***Post-Assessment Internal Moderation***

The process of post-assessment internal moderation will include exchange marking, double marking or blind marking which can result in the adjustment of student grades if recommended by the Examiners' Committee. As part of the moderation process, adjustments to student marks will occur **before** the marks have been released to students. Internal moderation may be an individual or collective process, but the Subject Coordinator or appointed moderator(s) for each subject must sign off the outcome of the moderation process for that subject on the [Subject Assessment Moderation Recording Tool](#) prior to the Examiners' Committee meeting. Where major differences emerge in moderation, the relevant Head of Department / Associate Head of Department / Course Coordinator will determine strategies to resolve the final grade in consultation with the Director of Education. This may include an external examiner. All irreconcilable moderation matters should be referred to the Director of Education. It is the responsibility of the Heads of Department / Associate Heads of Department / Course Coordinators and the Director of Education to act on assessment moderation results.

Where there is a single assessor for a subject, the relevant Head of Department / Associate Head of Department / Course Coordinator will appoint a moderator for that

subject, in consultation with the Subject Coordinator, who will then take the following actions:

- All assessors are provided with assessment guides that include the explicit assessment criteria provided in the subject outline.
- Assessment tasks weighted at 25% or more of the final grade for any given subject must be checked for consistency by re-assessment by the appointed moderator of the work of a sample of students. This sample must include the full range of grades awarded OR each department may decide on moderation of more appropriate assessment of lower than 25% weighting if higher weighted assessment has shown consistent marking across all markers for the past two (2) study periods within the same subject.
- Where a sample is re-assessed, any suggested changes to marks on the basis of this reassessment should be discussed first with the relevant Head of Department / Associate Head of Department / Course Coordinator, who will make recommendations to the Examiners' Committee.

### **External Moderation**

The Director of Education will appoint an external moderator for each academic Department who will moderate a sample of assessment for at least two (2) subjects or two (2) assessments in the same subject from that Department per year (across all campuses). The subjects chosen for moderation are rotated (different every reporting period) so that all subjects are moderated externally at least once per accreditation cycle.

For each subject undergoing external moderation, the moderator will be provided with:

- A copy of all assessment items submitted by a sample of students. This sample must include the full range of grades awarded across all campuses at which the subject was delivered;
- Subject Outlines for the subjects chosen for moderation; and,
- Assessment guides that include the explicit assessment criteria provided in the Subject Outline OR complete examination paper (including all instructions and associated materials such as solutions and marking rubrics).

External moderation is to be undertaken at the end of the study period after grades are released. Therefore no changes may be made to marks through this process.

External moderators should not be provided with the original assessment items, rather a direct photocopy, to ensure all original records are kept at the College. Prior to appointment, each external moderator must sign an agreement to destroy all copies of

student work once moderation for that subject is complete, and to keep all information confidential.

External moderators will document the moderation process on the [Subject Assessment Moderation Recording Tool](#), to be provided to the Director of Education for inclusion in the Examiners' Report, to include any issues arising out of the process and any suggested changes to assessment tasks, assessment criteria or Subject Outlines arising out of the process.

## The Examiners' Committee

The Examiners' Committee is responsible for moderating all higher education results across all campuses and will be provided with a report of grades from the relevant Heads of Department / Associate Heads of Department / Course Coordinators for every subject offered in any given study period, inclusive of online subjects offered during the reporting period. The Examiners' Committee will then meet again after grade release to moderate grade distributions across campuses, to discuss the External Moderator's report, and to suggest any changes to subjects or assessments based on issues arising out of moderation.

The Examiners' Committee is responsible for:

- Ensuring that assessment, moderation, and release of grades are undertaken in a timely fashion;
- Reviewing the effectiveness of assessment practice within the College;
- Ensuring consistency of marking across the College's campuses;
- Authorising the conversion of incomplete grades;
- Reviewing relevant assessment distribution summaries prepared by the Heads of Department / Associate Heads of Department / Course Coordinators for quality assurance; and,
- Seeking advice and instruction as necessary from such other staff members and external stakeholders of the College as deemed appropriate. Such persons may be invited by the Committee's Chair to be in attendance at meetings where appropriate.

Staff and external stakeholders of the College may request the opportunity to address the Examiners' Committee at any time and this request will be considered and approved by the Committee's Chair.

The outcomes of each meeting of the Examiners' Committee will be reported to the Academic Board. The outcomes report will include all resolutions relating to the above,

including recommendations for improvement of the assessment outcomes of subjects and the External Moderator's report.

- Definitions:**
- Blind Moderation** – moderation process where the second marker does not see the first markers results during moderation.
  - Double Moderation** – moderation process by which two (2) markers mark the same piece of work. Comments made on the original piece of work are seen by the second marker.
  - Exchange Moderation** – moderation process by which two (2) markers exchange certain pieces of work for marking.
  - Student** – is an individual person who is formally enrolled to study at the College. The individual person is that who appears on the College's documents such as enrolment, admission and payment documents, and who is assigned an individual student ID.

## Further Information:

- Related Policies:** [Assessment Policy - Higher Education](#)  
[Moderation of Assessment Policy](#)
- Benchmarking:** James Cook University
- Related Procedures:** Not applicable
- Related Documents:** [Subject Assessment Moderation Record Work Instructions](#)  
(internal use only)
- Guidelines:** [Results Administration Guidelines](#) (internal use only)

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<b>Recommending Body:</b>	Academic Board (retrospective ratification) Meeting date: TBA
<b>Approval Body:</b>	College Council (retrospective ratification) Meeting date: TBA
<b>Procedure Status:</b>	Revised
<b>Responsibilities for Implementation:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Associate Heads of Department</li> <li>• Course Coordinators</li> <li>• Director of Education</li> <li>• Heads of Department</li> <li>• Subject Coordinators</li> </ul>
<b>Key Stakeholders:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Associate Heads of Department</li> <li>• Course Coordinators</li> <li>• Dean and Operations Director</li> <li>• Director of Education</li> <li>• Examiners' Committee</li> <li>• Heads of Department</li> <li>• Subject Coordinators</li> </ul>