

## **Moderation of Grades and Peer Review of Assessments Policy**



Current version in effect from: 1 Jan 2026

Approved by Academic Board: 25 Nov 2025

Revised by Academic Board:

Policy Steward: Dean of Academic Programs

### **Related documents**

TEQSA Guidance Note: Academic monitoring, review and improvement, version 1.0, 19 March 2024

TEQSA Guidance Note: Monitoring and analysis of student performance, version 1.0, 6 January 2020

TEQSA Guidance Note: Academic quality assurance, version 2.2, 11 October 2017

Assessment Policy and Procedure

Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure

Unit Development and Review Policy and Procedure

Support for Student Policy and Procedure

Regulation 2 Academic Board

Regulation 11 Awards Courses and Units

### **Related Legislation and Regulatory Standards**

Australian Qualifications Framework

Higher Education Standards Framework 2021

Privacy Act 1988 – relating to collection and handling of student and industry partner data

#### **1. Rationale and Objectives**

- 1.1 This Policy establishes a set of principles and guidelines for the design, development, and implementation of moderation and peer review of assessment activities for the courses delivered at the University of Divinity.
- 1.2 Together with the Assessment Policy, Academic Integrity Policy, Support for Students Policy, Unit Development and Review Policy, and associated Procedures, this Policy forms the Education Framework at the University of Divinity.

#### **2. Scope**

- 2.1 This Policy applies to all units of study used as part of a University of Divinity undergraduate or postgraduate award. This policy also applies to all staff involved in the teaching of these units at the University and Colleges.

### 3. Definitions

- 3.1 **Assurance of Learning:** This refers to both the systems and the processes for demonstrating that students achieve the learning outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills and application set out in the awards from which they graduate.
- 3.2 **Grade Moderation:** The process by which the accuracy, fairness, and consistency of grades assigned to student assessments are reviewed. This process ensures that grading reflects the agreed-upon learning outcomes and that assessments are marked according to established standards and rubrics.
- 3.3 **Peer Review of Assessments:** The process is an assessment review activity conducted by academic staff who are usually either from the University representing the various colleges or from external institutions. This aims to evaluate and provide feedback on each other's assessment tasks, rubrics, or grading to ensure alignment with academic standards, learning outcomes, and course objectives. This is sometimes called "External Referencing".
- 3.4 **Internal Moderation:** The process within the Colleges or Schools whereby academic staff members reviews and validate the marking and grading processes to ensure consistency, fairness, and alignment with learning outcomes.
- 3.5 **Marking/Grading:** The process of assigning a grade or score to a student's work, such as an essay, exam, project, or presentation. Grading should be based on defined assessment criteria that align with course learning outcomes.
- 3.6 **Assessment Criteria:** The specific guidelines or expectations used to evaluate student performance on an assessment task, typically found in the rubric for each assessment.
- 3.7 **Rubric:** A scoring guide used to evaluate student work against set of assessment criteria. Rubrics clearly define what constitutes different levels of performance for each criterion, providing transparency to students and markers in grading and feedback.
- 3.8 **Grade Discrepancy:** Situations where there is a noticeable difference in the grades awarded to same/similar assessments or where a grade appears to be inconsistent with the assessment criteria or learning outcomes.
- 3.9 **Constructive Alignment:** The degree to which assessments, rubrics, and teaching activities are directly related to and support the unit learning outcomes.
- 3.10 **Dialogic Feedback:** In Moderation and Peer Review, feedback is not based on opinions, but provide specific, actionable suggestions for improvement, framed in a way that encourages the recipient to engage in reflective practice and make meaningful revisions and improvements.

#### 4. Principles

- 4.1 **Transparency:** Students should be provided with clear expectations and equitable opportunities for assessment and feedback.
- 4.2 **Consistency:** Moderation helps to ensure that assessments are graded consistently across the University, reducing discrepancies and ensuring that grades are comparable across different units, subjects, and courses, and across Colleges, locations and modalities.
- 4.3 **Fairness:** The moderation process helps to ensure that all students are treated equitably, and that grading reflects the standards set by the unit guides and marking rubrics rather than the subjectivity or biases of individual markers.
- 4.4 **Academic Standards:** The moderation process ensures that the grading aligns with the University's assessment and academic integrity policies and procedures, ensuring a rigorous approach to assessment outcomes that align with the learning outcomes of the units and the course.
- 4.5 **Equity in Peer Review:** Peer review of assessments (colleagues reviewing and providing feedback on the design and fairness of assessments) should be conducted with the understanding that different Colleges might have different teaching and learning contexts. However, the overall expectation is that the assessment process is equitable, ensuring that all students are assessed using rigorous rubrics, benchmarks, and academic expectations as per the University's policies and procedures.
- 4.6 **Peer review and benchmarking:** This provides evidence of assurance of learning and quality assurance of compliance with the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF 2021). This should be performed across the University of Divinity once a year and coordinated by the Academic Programs department. All colleges should be involved in this exercise.
- 4.7 **Confidentiality:** Moderation and Peer Review reports will be shared with the Learning and Teaching Committee or the Academic Board. However, reviewers should not share the work or feedback they give or receive with others without explicit permission from the College initiating the review.
- 4.8 **Constructive Feedback:** Peer reviewers should provide constructive, actionable feedback aimed at improving the quality and effectiveness of the assessment. Feedback should be in line with the agreed criteria of the review and not a matter of personal opinion. Feedback should be focused on both strengths and areas for improvement, considering alignment with learning outcomes and course objectives.
- 4.9 **Continuous Improvement:** Moderation and peer review are opportunities for academics to reflect on and improve their own assessment practices. Through reviewing and discussing others' assessments, and feedback, faculty can learn from one another and refine their own teaching and assessment strategies, thus enabling continuous improvement in assessment quality.

**5. Date of Next Review**

5.1 This policy must be reviewed no later than 31 December 2030.