

Validation and Moderation Policy and Procedure

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Modification history

Date	Modification	Person responsible
28/11/11	Addition of section to meet CAP conditions	Dr Ian Whyte

Definitions

Preamble

Moderation is an integral part of assessment procedures, designed to ensure common interpretations of criteria and standards are established as they relate to student performance, contributing to reliability in assessment grades whilst acknowledging that human judgment is a significant element in the process. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that assessment tasks and marking are valid and reliable. Internal and external moderation are critical to assure validity and reliability of assessment practices including the awarding of grades. The validation and moderation process is conducted annually and improvement actions recorded.

Policy

Validating and moderating the relevance and consistency of assessments and assessment judgements is critical to ensuring the assessments meet the accredited program Learning Outcomes. ICHM will validate its assessment strategies by:

- Reviewing, comparing and evaluating the assessment procedures, tools and evidence contributing to judgements made by a range of assessors against assessment pieces, including the information provided in Learner and Lecturer guides, and
- Documenting action taken to improve the quality and consistency of assessment

A minimum of three subjects from each year of the program must undergo assessment validation and moderation in each semester of a year. All ICHM programs must have had all subjects undergo assessment validation and moderation over a two-year period

Validation and moderation methods may include:

- Internal and external moderation activities
- An assessment review panel
- An independent external validator
- Benchmark against evidence from other providers of subjects at same level

Procedure

Implementation

The ICHM Principal in conjunction with Discipline Stream Coordinators will develop a four year Assessment Validation and Moderation Review Plan (AVMRP) to determine subjects under review, the type(s) of validation and moderation methods and frequency of the assessment validation and moderation meetings.

Discipline Stream Coordinators will inform subject lecturers of the AVMRP, the timing of subject reviews and the dates of the Academic Committee (AC) meetings where results of validation and moderations are to be presented for discussion.

Discipline Stream Coordinators will inform lecturers that evidence will be sought on the following:

- Assessment methods and tasks cover all areas of the subject learning outcomes
- Assessment methods and tasks are consistent and gather sufficient evidence
- Assessment tasks have clear instructions for assessor and student
- Assessment methods and tasks meet the requirements of ICHM assessment principles
- Marking criteria meet the subjects learning outcome requirements

In preparing for presentation to Academic Committee subject lecturers should:

- collect examples of assessment processes and tools used
- collect feedback on assessments gained through individual debriefs of assessors and students
- collect suggested changes to assessments to meet industry need
- collect samples of graded assessments to ensure consistency of judgement

Subject lecturers should also consider that moderation essentially operates at two levels:

- at the assessment setting stage
- after marking (and before processing of final results)

The following section looks at these two levels and provides some ideas for Lecturers and Discipline Stream Coordinators. The list should not be seen as exhaustive and moderation processes should be tailored to particular circumstances.

Assessment setting

This is probably the easiest of the two moderation processes. A number of strategies exist:

- Ask an appropriate academic colleague (internal or external to ICHM) to review and provide critical feedback on various assessment tasks at the design stage.
- The Discipline Stream Coordinator to ask all Discipline Stream members to review the assessment, proposed solution guide and marking scheme.

The aim of moderating assessment tasks before students are asked to undertake them, is to address any ambiguities, vagueness, capacities, length, etc., issues which might cause concern to students.

After marking

After an assessment task has been marked there will often be a need to conduct some level of moderation on the results. The variety and degree of tasks can be considerable and will be a function of the objectives a Discipline Stream Coordinator has determined. The following, however, might provide some assistance in framing those tasks:

- Moderate at the margins - that is around the specific mark levels of particular grades (eg. 50%, 55%, 65% and so on). Here you would select a sufficient number of scripts around these marks and review them for the appropriateness of the given mark and, therefore, the grade. This process gives confidence about the grading of assessment.
- If you have multiple markers, examine a distribution of the marks awarded by the various markers (and if there are multiple questions, then for each question) to ascertain if there are markers who might lie outside of the average or a general trend.
- Conduct all marking at the same time and the same place. This does allow for a concerted effort to address any issues that might be raised by markers in a consistent manner. However, Discipline Stream Coordinators can also conduct a moderation (or audit) process of marked papers during the marking. This gives a high level of confidence about the marking and results but is resource intensive and relies on getting all the markers together (which can obviously be difficult).
- Random sampling by the Discipline Stream Coordinator of the whole population of papers and selecting a sufficient number to meet the particular confidence level. This process will address all marks and not just grades. This is a relatively straight-forward exercise if all papers are readily available and in the control of the course coordinator.

Outcomes of validation and moderation processes

A summary of the assessment validation and moderation actions is to be recorded in the Assessment Validation and Moderation Record by the Discipline Stream Coordinator. Agreed improvement activities are to be documented along with the assigned activities to specific people or groups of people and indicates required completion dates.