



# UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

## 1. Policy Name

Moderation of Assessment: Duties of Internal Assessors and External Moderators

### **Adjustments to current moderation policy as approved**

SEC 93/20 9 Nov.1993 , 17 September 1997, Council on 30 November 2005 and Council on 29 November 2012

## 2. Policy No

## 3. Officer responsible for Implementation

The Registrar

## 4. Implementation Date

First semester 2013

## 5. Purpose of this Policy

The moderation policy is applied in accordance with the university's assessment policy as approved by Senate. The purpose of the moderation policy is to professionalize assessment practices within the institution and to ensure that the university's assessment principles, methods, and procedures are transparent and robust. Assessment should be recognized as an essential and integral part of the teaching and learning process. Reports on the moderation of the university's assessment must encourage careful reflection on teaching strategies with a view to helping students to attain the desired learning outcomes.

## 6. Limitations and exclusions of the Policy

This policy on the duties of internal assessors and external moderators is applicable to the assessment of all undergraduate, Honours, Postgraduate Diploma and Certificate programmes and papers in structured Masters programmes. Quality assurance of reports on Masters and Doctoral thesis is covered by a separate moderation policy.

## 7. Other related internal & external policies and operational guidelines

The policy on Assessment. Policy No.xxx

The policy on Moderation of Postgraduate studies. Policy No.xxx

The Student Administration operational manual.

The General Calendar of the University.

The Higher Education Quality Committee: Teaching and Learning Resource Guide. (2004)<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> More information is obtainable at [www.che.ac.za](http://www.che.ac.za):Go to Improving Teaching and Learning, No 5: The Assessment of Student Learning. P.10- 11. The HEQC's New Programme Accreditation Framework (Criteria 5 and 12) as well as Institutional Audit Framework (Criteria 12) can also be consulted.

## **8. Responsibility for Policy Oversight**

Departmental Chairpersons are accountable to a Faculty Assessment Committee. The Faculty Assessment Committee reports to the Senate Assessment Committee, which reports to the Executive Committee of Senate.

## **9. Definition of terms**

Assessor: The academic(s) that designs the formative as well as summative assessments, and makes judgements about the evidence gathered through written or verbal examinations, assignments or practical demonstrations. Their judgements are based on whether the student is competent against a set of assessment criteria for a particular module.

Assessment: The process of collecting and interpreting evidence of students' academic achievements in a module so that judgments can be made and decisions arrived at as to the student's competence.

Moderator: An internal or external academic who checks the reliability and validity of the work of an assessor. It could also be a practitioner, researcher. In professional programmes it is sometimes difficult to find lecturers who can act as moderators as clinical assessments require moderators to be present on campus for a week during times when academics are often also involved with final assessments in their own HEI's.

### Alternate external moderator

An internal or external academic appointed if the moderator is not available, who checks the reliability and validity of the work of an assessor.

### Re-marking examiner

Re-marking examiner is defined as the marking of an assessment by an examiner other than the person originally designated to mark the work presented for assessment.

Module-coordinator: A person appointed by a departmental chairperson to co-ordinate and monitor the summative assessment process in a module where more than one person is involved in the offering of a module.

Moderation: The process of professional engagement (internal or external) by a party other than the assessor that ensures the assessment of learning outcomes is fair, reliable, and valid at a level commensurate with the level of a module or qualification. Moderation of exit-level modules refers to external moderation of those modules that have been defined as exit-level modules for a programme whether core or elective.

An exist level module is defined as an

Undergraduate Exit level modules: For the purpose of final assessment an exit level module is defined as a module taught in the last year of a qualification provided that the module is a year module, first or second semester module. In professional programmes, if the module forms part of the distinction rule, it is recommended that 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year modules within a specific subject group for distinction, should also be moderated.

Structured Postgraduate exit level modules: All modules are considered exit modules.

Exit level modules in Single Year qualifications: All modules are regarded as exit level modules.

#### **10. Time cycle for moderating modules.**

At least 60% of the exit level modules must be presented for moderation on an annual basis and will include the core and elective modules. The remaining 40% of the elective modules may be moderated on a cyclical basis together with the core modules every year. It is recommended that it should be two- year cycle in order to implement comments of the moderator

Modules that are not presented in a particular year for external moderation should be presented for thorough internal moderation.

Where there is continuous assessment in exit level modules, it can be externally moderated in a cycle of two years. In such cases, the sample that needs to be moderated should be broader and it should include information of both the current and previous years to enable the moderators to validate previous assessment events.

This process should be administered with the required focus w.r.t the outcomes of the module so that we do not compromise the validation of exit level outcomes of the modules.

#### **11 Appointment of Assessors**

All summative assessments are conducted under supervision of the Senate or a sub-committee of Senate designated for this purpose. The Senate shall, on the recommendation of the Executive Committee of Senate, appoint at least one **internal** assessor, one external moderator, **an alternate moderator and a re-marking examiner** for each assessment of a module.

Departmental Chairpersons are responsible for nominating the internal assessor(s) for every module offered by the Department. Internal assessors **should preferably be** appointed from the ranks of the lecturing staff of the University that were involved with the presentation of the particular module.

Where persons from outside the University are recommended as assessors, the chairperson of the relevant department must present a motivation for such appointment. The appointment of such persons will be subject to the special permission from Senate.

Internal Assessors *must* be in possession of an applicable qualification at least one level higher than the level of the summative assessment that will be conducted.

Assessments done by internal assessors with less than two years experience are subject to external moderation. In the case of professional programmes all assessors and moderators must be registered with the relevant Professional Boards.

## **12. Appointment of Moderators**

Departmental Chairpersons must compile a list of proposed module coordinators, internal assessors, as well as internal and external moderators and their alternates for the summative assessment of departmental offerings with due regard to paragraph 11 above. Alternative external moderators are appointed in advance to deal with situations where appointed external moderators are unable to perform their duties. Where it is difficult to identify suitably qualified external moderators, a case can be made to appoint only one external moderator and no alternate moderator. In such instances, Senate may also approve the appointment of the same person as an alternate external moderator and re-marking examiner.

### ***12.1 Appointment of External Moderators***

The list of these persons (including contact details) must be submitted to the relevant Faculty Assessment Committee for consideration with due regard to this policy, and thereafter to the Executive Committee of Senate for approval on the stipulated dates as announced in the General Calendar.

For the final summative assessment in any exit level module(s) leading to a degree, diploma or certificate, an external moderator must be appointed.

Unless Senate decides otherwise this is a person who;

- has not been a full - time employee or student for at least three years
- has not been involved with the instruction of the course concerned, and

- is preferably a lecturer/*academic/practitioner/researcher* in the same discipline at another institution or a scholar who has specialist knowledge of the subject matter covered in the module. Recommendation: In disciplines where it difficult to appoint experienced moderators, inexperienced moderators could be invited to moderate at UWC under the supervision of the Departmental Chairperson.
- where an external moderator is not attached to a higher education institution, a motivation for the appointment as well as the CV of the nominee must be submitted to the Executive Committee of Senate via the relevant faculty assessment Committee. If a moderator is not from HEI they should be an accredited assessor and moderator.
- Unless Senate decides otherwise, an external moderator may not be appointed consecutively for more than 3 years. Where it is difficult to find suitably qualified external moderators, the appointment period could be extended to five years.

### **12.2 Appointment of Internal Moderator:**

An internal moderator is to be appointed for the final assessment of a module that is not an exit level module. These are all modules prescribed up to the second year for formative three year programmes, while in professional programmes modules prescribed up to the third year of study.

The internal moderator must :

- be in possession of an applicable formal qualification at least one level higher than the level of the summative assessment that needs to be moderated.
- preferably be a lecturer in the same discipline at this university or a scholar who has specialist knowledge of the module outcomes.

## **13 Roles and responsibilities**

### **13.1 Duties of the module coordinator**

The module coordinator is responsible for all general arrangements for the module

- Ensures that summative assessment papers/tasks are set by the assessor(s) in collaboration with the Departmental Chairperson who also ensures that assessments are set for the module;
  - Ensures that changes recommended by moderators are effected;
  - Selects the scripts that need to be internally moderated;
  - Forwards the assessment papers to the external moderator via Student Administration with the required documentation as listed in the reporting form UWC EA 002
- Verifies the final marks for the module(s)

- Ensures that the remainder of the scripts are safely stored;
- Maintains contact with the external moderator, requesting written feedback and monitors progress to avoid delays in finalizing the marks;
- Discusses feedback with the external moderator for clarification should that be necessary.
- Acts as assessor or one of the assessors for the module.

### 13.2. Duties of Internal Moderators

The duties of the internal moderators are the same as those of external moderators as described in paragraph 13.4 below.

### 13.3 Monitoring of internal moderation

The following method will be used to monitor and implement internal moderation. Currently it is required that two copies of the final assessment papers be submitted to student administration. The following will be inserted at the top of one of the final assessment copies as a quality assurance measure that the final assessment has been internally moderated.

<i>Role</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Sign</i>	<i>Date</i>
Academic			
Internal moderator			
HOD			

### 13.3 Responsibility of the Departmental Chairperson

The Departmental Chairperson must ensure:

- the availability of the external moderator (s) and their contact details before nominations are submitted to Senate for approval.
- that course outlines and marking guides are supplied to the external moderator
- That moderators reports are submitted on time
- that adequate security arrangements are made for the storage of summative assessment materials at departmental level.

### 13.4. Duties of External Moderators

*Unless Senate decides otherwise the duties of external moderator(s) are responsible for:*

- (a) The moderation of summative **assessment** paper(s)<sup>2</sup> moderators should check and make recommendations concerning the quality of the draft

summative assessment papers.

This includes commenting on:

- whether the questions are clear and unambiguous;
- whether the length of the paper in relation to the time allocation for completion is adequate;
- whether the questions are fair in relation to the subject matter covered in the module, and
- whether the draft summative assessment papers are aligned with the stated module outcomes.

**(b) Moderation of the assessment of examination scripts, projects, clinical practice and final assignments**

Moderation of the assessment of the above, includes making recommendations concerning the assessment of individual candidates' work and/or the adjustment of marks allocated to individual students or a general adjustment of the marks allocated for the module. The external moderator is required to examine a sufficient number of the written assessment tasks to establish if the marking of the internal assessor has been fair, consistent and appropriate in terms of the standards set for achievement in terms of module level outcomes. For this purpose a minimum of 10 scripts plus 10% of the balance will be deemed to be sufficient.

Special attention should also be given to borderline pass/ fail cases as well as border line distinction, cum laude and summa cum laude candidates. Only these cases are moderated and not 10 scripts and 10% balance.

*Ensure that students demonstrate the required competence and ability as described in the main outcomes of the various clinical/practical modules.*

- Provide a written report to the module coordinator or departmental chairperson on the quality of questions answered, the extent to which the outcomes of the summative assessment of the module as indicated in the module descriptor have been reached, the standard and consistency of the assessment, the general level of student competency and any other matter which s/he feels needs attention.
- Liaising with the department to clarify matters which arise during the course of moderation.

**(c) Remuneration**

Remuneration of external moderators is reviewed every three years to be competitive with other institutions

**14. Moderation of Continuous Assessment where no final summative assessment is required**

Where the assessment of exit level modules is based solely on continuous evaluation departments must ensure that the moderator (s) is sent a selection of the assessment tasks, guides, module descriptor, and other material deemed relevant.

The tasks must be evaluated by the external moderator and a report must be submitted on

- i) The validity of the assessment instruments in relation to the specified learning outcomes;
- ii) The suitability of the range of assessment methods to ensure that the outcomes are validly assessed;
- iii) The quality of student performance and the standard of student attainment in relation to the learning outcomes;
- iv) The quality of feedback given to students, and
- v) Any concerns with respect to the observation of professional regulations.

**15. Moderation Report (s)**

The external moderator must submit a report to the departmental chairperson:

- (i) Commenting on changes to assessment decisions that may be required ,
- (ii) Confirming the approval of the assessment papers as fair and suitable.
- (iii) Confirming that the marks recorded are correct.
- (iv) For the purposes of the above the attached template EA 002 should be completed, signed and forwarded to the Departmental Chairperson.

Each external moderator is free to comment confidentially on the standard of the module and the appropriateness and adequacy of the summative assessment. This report should in each case be handed to the Dean of the Faculty, who may in turn present the report, with comment to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor responsible for academic matters. Access to the report will normally extend only to these two senior managers and the Vice-Chancellor. Parts or all of it may, however, be shown to and discussed with the Departmental Chairperson and members of the lecturing staff concerned with the teaching of the course, but only after the permission of the external moderator has been obtained. Where the Dean of a Faculty acts as internal assessor, the confidential report must be addressed directly to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor with responsibility for academic matters.



The Departmental Chairperson, in collaboration with the module coordinator, submits a final report on form template EA002: Commenting on the standard of marking and assessment.

- (i) Confirming that the process of external moderation has been followed meticulously.
- (ii) Noting that the external moderator(s) has/have agreed to the marks allocated, and
- (iii) Highlighting concerns expressed by the external moderator and action taken in response

The report must be signed by the Departmental Chairperson. It is of particular importance that the final report is submitted to the Senate Assessment Committee via the Faculty Assessment Committee by the dates stipulated in the Calendar (in March for 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester Assessment of the previous year and August for 1st semester assessment of current year).

**16. Policy review date: 1 January 2016**

**Appendices/forms related to policy implementation**

- (i) Module descriptor(s)
- (ii) Template: Appointment of Assessors Form EA 001
- (iii) External Moderator Feedback Form attached as Form EA002

**UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE**

**REPORT BY THE EXTERNAL MODERATOR**

Name of External Assessor	
University	
Module Name	
Module Code	

I hereby confirm that I have received the following information

Instructions to External Moderators	Yes	No
Module Descriptor	Yes	No
Computation of Final Mark	Yes	No
Assessment Paper + recommended marking guide	Yes	No
Assessment scripts	Yes	No

**A. Moderation report on examination papers**

To help us ensure that our assessment practices are sound and fair, please use the form below to comment on aspects of the examinations you have assessed

Comments should include but are not certainly limited to the following:

**On the summative Assessment Question papers**

- Clarity of instructions and questions
- Standard of questions (appropriate degree of difficulty)
- Possible overlaps and/or ambiguities in the formulation of questions
- Correspond with the assessment plan
- Appropriateness of time-allocation for the assessment task
- Any concerns about insufficient variation of questions from year to year. .

Please comment on the quality of the assessment paper(s).

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**I .....have moderated the examination paper and memorandum**

**Date:** .....

**B Moderation of the summative Scripts, Assignments and Projects**

Comments should include but are not certainly limited to the following:

- Quality of candidates' answers
- Standard and consistency of marking
- Attainment of specific module outcomes.

3. Please comment on the quality of student performance..

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 .....  
 .....

4. Were the grades/marks awarded appropriate?

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 .....

5. Any other comments and suggestions.

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 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

***External Moderator Signature***

**Date:**

***For office use***

Departmental Chairpersons are responsible for commenting and acting on these comments, for bring salient issues to the attention of the Dean of the Faculty, and for forwarding your report with comments to the Senate Assessment Committee.

6. Departmental Improvement Plan (Action to be taken where applicable)

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 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
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**Signature: Departmental Chairperson**

**Date:**