Moderation

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Major changes/additions since the last version was approved are indicated by a vertical line in the left-hand margin.

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

To provide a broad framework and set of principles to direct moderation practices to ensure that assessment activities are fair, reliable, valid, and consistently applied.

1.2 Scope and Application

This policy applies to assessment administered by the Ara Institute of Canterbury Ltd[1] and/or those delivered in conjunction with Ara, unless otherwise stated.

Requirements for moderation of assessment standards are included in the Consent and Moderation Requirements (CMR) for unit standards, and the NZQA Assessment Rules for TEOs, for Achievement Standards

Note: Not every procedure included in this policy is relevant to every assessment situation, e.g. clinical assessments. Assessment refers to all assessment materials and learner work.

1.3 Formal Delegations

a Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring:

  i Moderation is an integral part of the Department's assessment procedures and that moderation reports (internal and external) are considered and acted upon.

Related Ara Procedures and Forms	**Related Ara Policies**
• APP508a Pre-Assessment Moderation Record • APP508b Moderation Cycle • APP508c Post-Assessment Moderation Record	• APP301 Learner Responsibilities and Rights • APP505 Assessment • APP603 Programme and Product Development and Approval
Related Legislation or Other Documentation	**Good Practice Guidelines**
	• Best Practice Principles for Moderation of Standards Based Assessment (NZQA, 2005) • Moodle (LMS)

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[1] From herein referred to as Ara

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References	
Notes 2014: Formal Delegation from Council to Academic Board updated. Minor edits have been made throughout the policy to update, simplify, and align procedures. Consistency arrangements added. 2016: New branding 2018: Restructure of Te Kāhui Manukura. 2019: Noted that the policy is about what moderation is. Guidelines are available on Moodle relating to how and what needs to be done. Edits to ensure policy matches current practice based on best practice. General edits. 10-2019: Change from Boards of Studies to Department Groups. 2020: Organisation name changed to Ara Institute of Canterbury Ltd. 2020: NZIST changes – Academic Board becomes Ara Academic Committee; Ara Council becomes Ara Board. APP301 – Rights and Responsibilities changed to Responsibilities and Rights. Changing 'student' to 'learner'.	

2 Principles

2.1 The purpose of moderation is to ensure high quality assessment practices and inform future practice.

2.2 Moderation ensures validity, sufficiency, transparency, authenticity, and reliability of assessment.

2.3 Moderation ensures that assessment decisions are fair and reflect the marking guides and learning outcomes.

2.4 Moderation is a negotiated process of agreement between assessor and moderator.

2.5 Moderation outcomes are reported in a constructive and informative way.

3 Associated procedures for Ara Academic Policy on: Moderation

Contents:

3.1 Responsibilities for Moderation
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3.4 Conflicts of Interest

3.1 Responsibilities for Moderation

a Programme Managers/Leaders/Coordinators are responsible for carrying out tasks related to moderation (or coordinating other staff to do so) in a way that is consistent with the Ara Academic Committee and for ensuring staff know and understand moderation requirements.

Academic staff are responsible for taking the steps necessary to understand the principles and practices of moderation contained in this policy and for gaining the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out moderation in a professional manner. Information specific to this process is available in the LMS under Teaching and Learning @ Ara (https://moodle.ara.ac.nz/course/index.php?categoryid=515).

b When a course/s is assessed by a Department other than the one responsible for the overall programme the Department designing the learning is responsible for moderation and reporting back to the Department responsible for the programme.

c Departments are to hold, conduct and record all moderation activities and actions. Moderation outcomes and impact are to be included in ongoing self-assessment processes within the department. This includes:

i That all internal and external moderation requirements are met. (E.g. Moderation Action Plans for assessment standards/ national qualifications and pre/post assessment moderation set out in programme documents).

ii That moderation results are reported (e.g. Self-Assessment via the Programme Evaluation Report, Department Programme/Evaluation Groups, Ara Academic Committee), depending on the scope and outcome.

iii That appropriate moderation records are kept.

d In the event that moderation outcomes are disputed, the Head of Department (or delegate) will manage the dispute.

3.2 Ara Moderation requirements

a Details related to how moderation is carried out are included in the programme document submitted to the Ara Academic Committee for approval. Both pre and post assessment are needed with an appropriate mix of internal and external input.

b The following provides an outline of expected moderation activities.

i **Internal pre-moderation**:

- Self-moderation of assessment tools the first time they are used and when significant changes are made.
- Pre-moderation (by a colleague) the first time the assessment is used, when significantly change, when carried out by a new colleague and/or prior to external moderation.

- Departments are responsible for providing staff with checklists/ guidelines in order to ensure moderation is effective.
- Best practice suggests that in delivery where there are multiple markers for an assessment, benchmark marking will take place to ensure consistent practice across the marking team.

ii **Internal post-moderation**:

- For any assessment worth 75% or more of the final result, or digital/oral presentations, a selection of assessments must be checked or co-marked to ensure moderation is occurring.
- When a mark on a full grade boundary, particularly for borderline pass/fail results, influence a course outcome or progression, a review of the marking decision must take place to ensure fairness.
- Internal post-moderation is required for a new staff member; a new staff member in this context is defined as new to the course, not just new to Ara.
- Moderation (by a colleague) the first time the assessment is used, when significantly changed and/or prior to external moderation.

iii **External moderation** (pre or post):

Moderating a selection of assessments, according to:

- An annual plan determined by an external body including NZQA, ITO etc *and/or*
- An approved moderation schedule determined by the department.

iv Departments are responsible for providing moderators with all relevant information.

This could include:

- Sample of assessed work.
- Course descriptors and/or course outlines.
- Marking guides.

Likewise, the agreed moderation arrangements are followed for any other national or collaboratively developed qualifications.

3.3 Consistency Reviews

In addition to moderation, each Department offering a programme leading to the award of a New Zealand qualification will be required to engage in national consistency reviews. This will involve participating in periodic national consistency reviews which focuses on the consistency of graduate outcomes and in relation to the graduate profile statement across providers.

3.4 Conflicts of Interest

Staff are expected to identify and report to the Head of Department any conflict of interest related to their involvement in any learner's summative assessment (e.g. a relative, close friend).

The Head of Department is responsible for ensuring appropriate safeguards are put in place to resolve such situations, e.g.

i Learner work assessed by an alternative staff member (from Ara or another institution) with the requisite knowledge/skill *or*

ii Learner work co-assessed by the staff member and another person with the requisite knowledge/skill (from Ara, another institution, or the relevant industry/profession) *or*

iii Assessed work is 'blind' moderated by another person (as in ii, above), along with the assessed work of two other learners achieving approximately the same mark on the same assessed work.

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