

<b>Policy Owner</b>	Academic Director
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Student Services Officer
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<b>Approved by:</b>	Senior Management Group
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<b>Related Policies:</b>	Assessment Guidelines – Disability and Equity Assessment Policy Complaints and Appeals Policy Internationalisation Policy Progress and Graduation Policy Transnational Education (TNE) Policy
<b>Related Documents:</b>	Academic Governance Structure Assessment Matrix Course Compliance Form Form A: Moderation Portfolios Cover Sheet Form B1: Unit Moderation: ECC-linked Diploma Units Form B2: Unit Moderation: ECC-linked Certificate Units Form C: ECC Diploma – Unit Coordinator Feedback Form D: Joint ECC-ECU Coordinator Moderation Process (Diploma/Certificate) – includes flow chart Moderation Schedule Pathway Academic Staff Roles & Responsibilities Unit Coordinator-Lecturer Handbook Unit Outline Template Unit Review form (Student Satisfaction Survey)

## 1. Overview

- 1.1. This policy outlines the procedures for ensuring equivalence in learning outcomes, assessment and grades awarded to students studying at ECC across different classes (onshore and offshore) and over time.

## 2. Organisational Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to students who enrol in Units of study offered by ECC and ECC's Transnational Education (TNE) partners.
- 2.2. This policy describes the Moderation processes required to ensure consistency and undertake quality assurance of the delivery of ECC Units both onshore and offshore.

## 3. Definitions

- 3.1. **Assessment:** is a set of processes that measure the outcomes of students' learning, in terms of content knowledge acquired, understanding developed and analytical skills gained.

- 3.2. **Assessment Criteria:** key characteristics of performance in assessment. Standards are usually defined by marking bands.<sup>1</sup> Marking against such criteria ensures consistency of assessment procedures.
- 3.3. **Board of Examiners (BoE):** A review panel that determines the academic progression status of students.
- 3.4. **Certificate Courses:** refers to the Certificate IV Tertiary Preparation Program (TPP) and all Units associated with that program or its replacement.
- 3.5. **Comparability:** where students studying the same Unit experience the same learning outcomes, workload and assessment standards across different delivery sites
- 3.6. **Course:** a formal program of education and/or training made up of study components known as Units.
- 3.7. **Diploma Courses:** refers to Licenced Courses.
- 3.8. **External Moderation:** refers to accurate and consistent assessment decisions made in accordance with the standards set by Edith Cowan University (in relation to the respective ECU Unit)
- 3.9. **Internal Moderation:** refers to accurate and consistent assessment decisions within a Unit delivered by ECC and its TNE partners.
- 3.10. **LMS:** Learning Management System – ECC uses Moodle as its LMS but offshore TNE providers may use an alternative system.
- 3.11. **Licenced Courses:** Courses (and applicable Units) which ECC has been approved to deliver under licence from ECU and for which students gain advanced standing upon enrolling at ECU.
- 3.12. **Moderation:** A process which consists of a variety of strategies adopted within an institution to ensure that grades awarded within each unit of study are comparable between lecturers teaching the same unit in a given trimester and between lecturers teaching the same unit across different trimesters and/or delivery sites.
- 3.13. **Partnership:** A formal agreement where an institution (partner) has been approved as a TNE delivery site of ECC, where ECC provides the intellectual property, quality assurance processes and (in agreed cases) award qualification documents.
- 3.14. **ECC Learning and Teaching Committee:** Committee responsible for developing, improving and making recommendation relating to the Learning and Teaching Plan to the ECC Academic Council. The Committee monitors and recommends course content, assessment and delivery.
- 3.15. **ECC Unit Coordinator:** is the nominated ECC staff member who will be responsible for all aspects of quality assurance for that Unit onshore and offshore (as contracted).
- 3.16. **Transnational Education (TNE):** includes any teaching or learning activity in which the students are outside of Australia and require staff and/or educational materials to cross national boundaries.<sup>2</sup>
- 3.17. **Reliability:** relates to the consistency of an assessment – that is, the ability to effectively measure a learning outcome in the same way across different groups and over time.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://resource.unisa.edu.au/mod/glossary/view.php?id=1430&mode=letter&hook=A&sortkey=&sortorder=asc>

<sup>2</sup> Knight, J. (2003). Updated internationalization definition. International Higher Education, 33, 2-3

- 3.18. **Unit:** A discrete component of study (also called a module) within a Course.
- 3.19. **Unit Outline:** A statement giving fundamental details about the unit. It usually includes an overview of the unit content materials, assessment tools, assessment weightings, due dates of assessment, textbook details and recommended readings
- 3.20. **Unit Materials:** includes all course related resources linked to the delivery of a Unit including the Unit Outline (based on the Unit Outline template), assessment tools, marking guides, textbook references, Moodle resources and other support materials,
- 3.21. **Unit Moderation ECC-Linked (Diploma/Certificate) Units Form:** refers to a report which is completed for the purpose of checking the comparability of assessments and the consistency of the marks/grades allocated. It refers to the ECC form completed for internal moderation of assessments.
- 3.22. **Unit Moderation Report:** refers to a report which is completed for the purpose of checking the comparability of assessments and consistency of marks/grades allocated. It refers to the ECU form returned to ECC by the ECU Unit Coordinator on an annual basis.
- 3.23. **Validity:** where an assessment item measures the learning outcomes that it is intended to measure in a Unit.

#### **4. Policy Principles**

- 4.1. ECC conducts internal and external moderation as part of its quality assurance to ensure Validity and Reliability of learning outcomes, assessments, marking criteria and final grades.
- 4.2. ECC conducts an annual Internal Moderation and External Moderation exercises designed to verify the Validity and Reliability of assessments in order to ensure compliance with:
- Approved accreditation documents for Certificate IV
  - Approved ECU learning outcomes and standards linked to their associated professional requirements.
- 4.3. Strategies adopted within ECC ensure grades awarded within each Unit are comparable between lecturers teaching that Unit in a given trimester; between lecturers teaching the same Unit across different trimesters; between lecturers teaching that Unit across different ECC-linked TNE providers.
- 4.4. The Moderation process will be informed by feedback from other stakeholders including:
- ECC Learning and Teaching Committee
  - Regulatory authorities
  - Unit Moderation ECC-Linked (Certificate/Diploma) Units form
  - Unit Moderation Report (ECU)
  - Unit review processes (student satisfaction surveys)

#### **5. Policy Content**

##### **5.1. Unit Coordination:**

ECC's *Roles and Responsibilities Matrix* outlines expectations of academic staff. A ECC Unit Coordinator – is appointed for every Unit offered by ECC to take responsibility for ongoing quality assurance and Moderation of Unit assessments through:

- 5.1.1. Ensuring annual review of standards as applicable:
- Certificate Courses – Cross-referenced against approved accreditation document

- Assessment Matrix – completed by respective lecturer
- Course Compliance Form – completed by respective lecturer
- Diploma Courses – Liaison with ECU Unit Coordinator (through annual provision of updated course materials), to ensure ECU standards (and those of the respective professional bodies) are maintained.

5.1.2. Communication with respect to all Unit Materials (including approval of minor amendments) and providing electronic versions of such material  
Certificate Courses:

- On the re-accreditation of the Course, the Quality and Compliance Manager will disseminate approved accreditation documents to each Academic Director for distribution to the relevant lecturers.

Diploma Courses:

- At the start of each calendar year, the Academic Director will arrange for Diploma materials to be distributed to ECC Unit Coordinators for re-distribution to the relevant lecturers (both onshore and offshore)

All Courses:

- TNE lecturers should upload Unit Materials (with amended weekly schedule to coincide with local holidays and lecturer contact details) onto their respective college portal.
- Any other amendments require lecturers to liaise with the ECC Unit Coordinator. The adaptation of materials to localise examples or put information into a local context is encouraged, but the ECC Unit Coordinator must be informed prior to making any changes. In the event of a dispute, the ECC Academic Director will determine the outcome.
- Minor changes (<20% of learning outcomes) must be approved by the ECC Unit Coordinator.
- Major changes (> 20% of learning outcomes) must be submitted through the Academic Director to the ECC Learning and Teaching Committee and (if applicable) to the ECC Academic Council for formal approvals.

5.1.3. Devising and utilising assessment processes and tools that are equitable and accessible to all learners:

Certificate Courses:

- Provision of sample exam paper and assessment tools (with marking guide)
- Moderation of assessment tools and sample of marked assessments on an annual basis.
- Provision of an annual Moderation report together with select sample of assessments to be forwarded to the ECC Course Coordinator.

Diploma Courses:

- Provision of assessment tools and in-semester tests together with marking keys; writing the final examination in collaboration with lecturers.
- Establishing and following approved assessment procedures and processes, ensuring that final grades are adequately moderated before being forwarded to the Board of Examiners (BoE).
- Provision of an annual Moderation report together with select sample of assessments to be forwarded to ECU through the ECC Academic Administrator.

5.1.4. Advising the Academic Director (or nominee) of any issue arising from Moderation exercises and/or Unit review surveys.

5.1.5. Communication with lecturing staff re: recommendations for improvement to the ECC Learning and Teaching Committee (as applicable).

## **5.2. Comparability of Assessment**

5.2.1. Where two or more lecturers are involved with the same Unit, it is essential that assessments between groups have Comparability across all groups being taught that Unit. Comparability of Assessment arises from the use of equivalent assessment tools, detailed marking keys, shared marking, regular communication between lecturing staff and (if possible) face-to-face meetings.

5.2.2. Comparability is assured if:

- Learning outcomes, content and performance criteria are clearly defined
- Lecturers structure their teaching program based on the accredited unit outline
- Lecturers structure assessment/program on the basis of the approved assessment structure described within the accredited unit outline
- Lecturers communicate regularly with respect to tests, assignments, examinations and criteria used in grading these assessment instruments.

## **5.3. Moderation within ECC is achieved through:**

5.3.1. Distribution of a Moderation Schedule listing the timetable for all Units to be moderated within the calendar year.

5.3.2. Appointment of an ECC Unit Coordinator who is responsible for quality assurance of the Unit Materials.

5.3.3. Clearly defined Unit outline with the development of Valid and Reliable Assessment instruments and associated support materials (Assessment Criteria, marking guides). The use of shared marking (where the same person marks set questions across all papers and another person marks a different set of questions) is acceptable practice.

5.3.4. Onshore marking of examination papers for Licenced Units delivered as part of a TNE arrangement.

5.3.5. Regular validation process by staff involved in teaching the same Unit through:

- Annual provision of Unit Materials pack (including sample exam paper and marking guides)
- Collation of a Moderation file for every Unit
- Completion of the ECC Unit Moderation form

5.3.6. Scheduled collation of a Moderation file for every Unit and every delivery site which includes:

- Unit Outline for that delivery site
- Individual Assessment tools and marking keys
- Portfolio of assessments containing marked samples of each assessment item for that unit for a set number of students<sup>3</sup>. Where possible, the marked samples will include examples of all grades.
- Record of the marks for each enrolled student showing marks obtained for each assessment and distribution of overall grades.
- ECC Unit Coordinator Feedback form

5.3.7. Where appropriate, and in association with the ECC Academic Director, the Unit Coordinator may scale student marks in order to make adjustments for cohorts who have been assessed too easily or too rigidly in comparison to other student cohorts studying that Unit.

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<sup>3</sup> Minimum of 6 students (per unit and per lecturer)

- Any such adjustments must be completed before the respective Board of Examiners meeting.

5.3.8. Any such adjustments should be accompanied by a written report to the respective lecturer(s) through the ECC Academic Director. The ECC Unit Coordinator will submit a copy of the ECC Unit Coordinator Feedback form and their own portfolio of marked student work in lieu of moderating their own assessments. This form will summarise the findings and recommendations of the ECC Unit Coordinator across ECC and its TNE partner colleges.

5.3.9. ECU feedback (for Diploma Units) – at the end of each year, ECU will review ECC's Moderation packages and provide advice on any matters arising and suggest improvement opportunities where appropriate. ECC will review all issues raised within the ECU Moderation Report and any matters arising from the University's advice within six weeks of receiving written advice from ECU.

5.3.10. The supervisory role of senior academic staff ensures moderation procedures are in place and that they are implemented in an effective manner.

#### **5.4. Additional Information**

5.4.1. The Assessment structure for all Units will be entered into the Moodle (or other approved LMS) at the start of trimester. Marks will be recorded progressively in the LMS as they become available.

5.4.2. The Board of Examiners will note any irregularities or apparent anomalies in the pass rates of particular Units as compared to previous trimesters and/or other Units within the Course.

5.4.3. The Board of Examiners will ratify the results of each student and determine their course status as Good Standing, Counselling, Conditional or Exclusion.

5.4.4. An annual report summarizing the outcomes of moderation exercises and actions arising from that activity will be presented to the ECC Learning and Teaching Committee and the ECC Academic Council in the meeting immediately following the return of that information.

#### **6. Administrative Procedures**

6.1. This policy and related documentation is accessible through the ECC website at:  
<http://www.edithcowancollege.edu.au/policies>

6.2. Any recommendations for process improvement or policy change arising will be forwarded the Senior Management Group and academic governance committees for recording and consideration.

6.3. Any changes to this policy and related procedures will be communicated to staff via email. New staff will receive policy information during the induction process where it relates to their position.