Assessment Moderation Policy

Policy Code:	AA-280-1		
Policy Name:	Assessment Moderation Policy		
Classification:	Public		
Handler/Owner:	Dean and Chairs		
Approved by:	Board of Trustees		
Date of Approval:	May 7, 2025		
Current Version:	1		
Update History:	Version	Date of approval	File Link
	1	May 7, 2025	
	2		
	3		
Review due date:	September 2028		

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1   Definitions

Assessment: describes the assessment methodology and it includes homework, tests, projects, quizzes, assignments, etc.

Assessment Task: refers to specific activities such as a question in a test; a task in a project, etc. It is designed to measure the achievement of specific learning outcomes.

Assessment Criteria: refers to the criteria against which the achievement of students will be marked.

Marking: refers to a measure of the level of achievement against assessment criteria.

Major Assessment: describes the assessment that carries considerable weight in the grading process and/or measures a substantial number of learning outcomes.

Summative Assessment: refers to marked assessment which contributes to the final grading of the course.

Moderation: refers to quality assurance process which guarantees that assessment is consistent, fair, accurate, and aligned with the assessment criteria.

Pre-Moderation: validates the consistency, appropriateness, fairness, clarity, accuracy of assessment and assessment criteria before the assessment is conducted. Pre-Moderation is carried out by a Moderator, appointed within the academic staff of the University.

Post-Moderation: checks that the assessment is marked accurately and consistently according to the provided assessment criteria after the assessment is conducted. Post-Moderation is carried out by a Moderator, appointed within the academic staff of the University.

Course Rolling Plan: refers to a plan which details the courses and the assessment that will be moderated over a period of time (usually the duration of the academic program).

Schedule of Moderation: refers to a plan which includes the designated courses and assessment that will be moderated and the appointed moderators for a certain semester.

Analysis Report: refers to a report that is prepared by the Moderation Committee which summarizes the moderation process over the semester, and includes suggestions and recommendations based on the Moderators' feedback for the improvement of assessment practice.

2 Purpose

The purpose of the *Moderation of Assessment Policy* is to set the mechanism to ensure that the assessment is consistent, fair, and accurate which results in making reliable evidence-based decisions for the improvement of assessment practices.

3 Scope/Application

3.1   The *Moderation of Assessment Policy* applies to courses offered at Fahad Bin Sultan University.

3.2   The *Moderation of Assessment Policy* includes - <u>major summative assessment</u> in the courses.

4 Policy Statement and Principles

The University develops and maintains an effective system to ensure that assessment is valid, reliable and fair that is informed by the following principles:

4.1   Assessment must:

- be aligned with the course content and the intended learning outcomes.
- cater for various learning styles.
- be formulated in a clear manner.
- have a sufficient number of assessment tasks.
- have a number of tasks suitable for the time allocated;
- be suitable for the students being assessed (not too hard or too easy);
- be marked consistently and accurately against marking criteria;
- be marked consistently by different instructors;

4.2   Moderation of assessment are the mechanisms by which the University guarantees that these principles are being observed.

4.3   To keep the assessment content secure, the exchange of documents should happen only between Course Coordinators, Moderation Committee and Moderators through secure means of communication.

5   Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 COURSE COORDINATOR

5.1.1   The Course Coordinator is responsible for:

a. Preparing the Course Syllabus Form in consultation with other instructors of the course. The Course Syllabus Form must include information on assessment including types of assessments, mapping of assessments with the intended learning outcomes, assessment weight, and dates of assessments.

b. Providing the Moderation Committee with all necessary documents to carry out the Pre-Moderation sufficiently in advance of the assessment date to allow enough time for the Moderator to carry out the moderation.

c. Providing the Moderation Committee with all necessary documents to carry out the Post-Moderation as soon as the assessment is marked.

5.2 MODERATOR

5.2.1   The Moderator is responsible for:

a. Carrying out the Pre-Moderation and returning the completed Pre-Moderation Form to the Moderation Committee sufficiently in advance of the assessment date, in order to give the Moderator Committee time to report any major issues identified during the Pre-Moderation to the Course Coordinator.

b. Carrying out the Post-Moderation and returning the completed Post-Moderation Form to the Moderation Committee within one week from the date of receiving all the relevant documents.

5.3 MODERATION COMMITTEE (OR EQUIVALENT)

5.3.1   The Moderation Committee is responsible for:

a. Preparing the Course Rolling Plan.

b. Preparing a Schedule of Moderation which includes the designated courses and assessment that will be moderated and the appointed moderators.

c. Organizing and supervising the moderation processes for the assessments.

d. Collecting and analyzing the moderations forms.

e. Preparing an Analysis Report with suggestions and recommendations based on the Moderators' feedback for the improvement of assessment practice.

f. Following up the implementation of the action plan for improvement of assessment practices.

5.4 CHAIRPERSON OF THE DEPARTMENT

5.4.1   The Chairperson of the Department is responsible for:

a. Appointing the Moderation Committee (or equivalent).

b. Discussing and approving the Course Rolling Plan and Schedule of Moderation within the Department Council.

c. Discussing the Analysis Report prepared by the Moderation Committee and preparing an action plan for improvement of assessment practices within the Department Council.

d. Following up with the Moderation Committee the implementation of the action plan for improvement of assessment practices.

6   Moderation Procedure

6.1 COURSE ROLLING PLAN

6.1.1   The Moderation Committee prepares the Course Rolling Plan which details the courses and the assessment that will be moderated (pre, post and external) over a period of time (usually the duration of the academic program). The rolling plan is divided into two cycles, so that the courses are subject to the pre and post moderation at least once in each cycle (and twice in the duration of the academic program).

6.1.2   The Course Rolling Plan must be discussed and approved by the Department Council. The approved plan should be communicated to the Deanship of Quality Assurance and Accreditation through the Assistant to the Dean for Quality Assurance at the College.

6.1.3   Criteria for choosing the courses included in the Course Rolling Plan are:

a.   All courses offered in the program (where applicable) should be included in the plan and moderated at least once over the moderation cycle.

b.   The courses and assessment that are pre-moderated in one semester should also be post-moderated in the same semester.

6.1.4   Major summative assessment (as defined) of the selected courses will be pre-moderated and post-moderated.

6.2 SCHEDULE OF MODERATION

6.2.1   At the beginning of each semester, the Moderation Committee reviews and updates the Course Rolling Plan to suit the actual course offering during the semester and prepares a schedule of moderation which specifies the Moderator for each course to be moderated.

6.2.2   The updated Course Rolling Plan and the Schedule of Moderation must be discussed and approved by the Department Council and communicated to the Deanship of Quality Assurance and Accreditation through the Assistant to the Dean for Quality Assurance at the College.

6.2.3   The Moderator:

a.   Must be specialized in the discipline of the course to be moderated.

b.   Must not be the coordinator of the course to be moderated in that semester (however, the moderator can be one of the course instructors if no other faculty member with required expertise is available).

c. In special cases or when there is only one faculty member specialized in the discipline of the course to be moderated, the Moderation Committee should take over the process of Moderation.

d. Moderator appointed for the Pre-Moderation and Post-Moderation can be the same faculty member.

6.3 PRE-MODERATION

6.3.1 The Pre-Moderation should be conducted sufficiently in advance of the assessment date in order to give the Moderation Committee time to report any major issues identified during Pre-Moderation to the Course Coordinator.

6.3.2 The Moderation Committee must request the Course Coordinator to provide all the necessary documents to carry out the Pre-Moderation and pass them to the Moderator.

6.3.3 The Moderator must complete the moderation in accordance with the Pre-Moderation Form and requirements.

6.3.4 In case of major issues which require corrective actions before the assessment, the Moderation Committee must report such issues to the Course Coordinator and verify that appropriate action has been taken prior to the assessment date.

6.3.5 If no major issues are encountered during Pre-Moderation, at the end of each academic semester the Moderation Committee must analyze the semester's Pre-Moderation Forms, prepare the Analysis Report highlighting the most important recommendations per course and send the report to the Chairperson of the Department to be placed on the Department Council's agenda for discussion and resolution.

6.3.6 Records of all moderated courses together with the Pre-Moderation Forms will be retained.

6.4 POST-MODERATION

6.4.1 All the courses and assessment pre-moderated in one semester will be post-moderated in the same semester.

6.4.2 The Post-Moderation should be conducted in a timely manner in order to give the Moderation Committee sufficient time to report and address any major issues identified during Post-Moderation.

6.4.3 The Moderation Committee must request the Course Coordinator to provide all the necessary documents to carry out the Post-Moderation and pass them to the Moderator.

6.4.4   For Post-Moderation, a representative sample of students' papers which include a range of grades in the samples will be checked.

6.4.5   The Moderator must complete the Post-Moderation in accordance with the Post-Moderation Form within one week from the date of receiving all the relevant documents.

6.4.6   The Post-Moderation does not seek to amend the marks of students. Where the Moderator raises serious concerns about the standard and equitability of marking, the Moderation Committee will inform the Chairperson of the Department for appropriate actions.

6.4.7   If no major issues are encountered during Post-Moderation, at the end of each academic semester the Moderation Committee must analyze the semester's moderation forms, prepare the Analysis Report highlighting the most important recommendations per course and send the report to the Chairperson of the Department to be placed on the Department Council's agenda for discussion and resolution.

6.4.8   Records of all moderated courses together with the Post-Moderation Forms will be retained.

6.6 MODERATION FORMS

6.6.1   The Deanship of Quality Assurance and Accreditation at the Fahad Bin Sultan University is responsible for preparing and providing the necessary forms to implement this policy.

7 Further Assistance

Questions related to the *Assessment Moderation Policy* can be directed to the Deanship of Quality Assurance and Accreditation via email: qaa@fbsu.edu.sa