



# Assessment and Moderation Procedure

## Purpose

This document sets out the processes and procedures the assessment and moderation of all students' coursework, ensuring that these processes comply with the relevant regulatory frameworks, including the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021* and the *Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)*. The processes will also comply with VSC's related policies and procedures.

## Scope

These procedures apply to all students enrolled in Higher Education coursework assessments and coursework courses at VSC and to all staff engaged in teaching, assessment and moderation.

## Definitions

**Academic Integrity** – refers to ethical academic conduct that upholds the highest principles of honesty, trustworthiness and fairness and that respects the intellectual property rights of others. It is “a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to six fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage. From these values flow principles of behavior that enable academic communities to translate ideals to action” (*International Centre for Academic Integrity, 2014*) TEQSA.

**Assessment** – the methods and procedures by which a student's academic progress and standard, at any given time, is measured

**Cheating** – involves unauthorized use of information, materials, devices, sources or practices in completing academic activities. For example, copying during an exam that should be completed individually is an unauthorised practice and therefore, considered cheating.

**Contract cheating** – when students employ or use a third party to undertake their assessed work for them.

**Hurdle requirement** – refers to a task or condition that must be met in order for a student to be able to pass the unit, or course and graduate.

**Graduate Attributes** – Those attributes which are desired for the student to meet the level of qualification outlined by the AQF and which include Knowledge, Skills and Application of knowledge and skills

**Learning Outcomes** – The defined outcome that a unit or course or assessment task expects the student to achieve and be able to demonstrate on completion. Learning outcomes are expected to be aligned with the course design and content, and the teaching and learning strategies. Assessment tasks are also aligned with the learning outcomes.

**Marking Rubrics** – A guide available to students which includes the specific assessment criteria and standards that are used to evaluate student knowledge and performance. The rubric or marking guide is presented to the student at the commencement of their unit of study as support material. On completion of assessment the guide is returned to the student with comments and feedback to enable the student to monitor and improve their own work.



**Plagiarism** – Using another person’s ideas, words, designs, words or work without appropriate acknowledgement.

**Special Consideration** – this is a consideration applied to the assessment in the event of unexpected circumstances, such as medical reasons, compassionate grounds, hardship/trauma or other significant cause - which may have affected the student’s health or their ability to meet the academic requirements either adequately or on time. Consideration may also apply in cases of cultural significance or in family bereavement or family incidents which affect the student.

## Procedure

VSC recognises that the design and development of any form of assessment must be matched with the Course Learning Outcomes and the Graduate Attributes as well as meet the standards of the AQF Level of the Course.

VSC recognises three broad types of assessment:

- Formative – assessment that provides feedback to the student during the learning experience
- Summative – assessment that is focused on the outcomes of the learning experience.
- Critical reflection on the outcomes of assessments, both formative and summative: this enables both lecturers and students to understand not only the quality of their learning but also the effectiveness of the teaching process.

Each Unit Outline will be available to students on the VSC website which will include the following information about the assessments:

- The assessment expectations and methods that will apply in that unit
- All assessment tasks including the learning outcomes each assessment relates to

### 1.1 Design and Alignment

To effectively evaluate and moderate students’ learning VSC notes that assessment must:

- Be aligned with the learning outcomes of the course and the unit
- Allow students the means of demonstrating their knowledge and skills of the course learning outcomes
- Have a rubric that clearly identifies the criteria and standards
- Have instructions and guidelines that are clear
- Support the development of critical inquiry in the students and be underpinned with sound pedagogy
- Enable the student to demonstrate the knowledge skills and level of complexity required of AQF Level 7 for a Bachelor Degree
- Encourage student to reflect on their own learning and develop critical inquiry
- Meet professional accreditation requirements

Students will not normally be required to submit assessments in the first two weeks of the semester. However, there will be opportunities early in the study period for students to receive feedback on their progress. From the first week of the semester students should be required to undertake tasks that indicate whether they are progressing satisfactorily but



without affecting their grade. These tasks can include short verbal presentations, debates, computer-based tasks, self-assessed quizzes and ungraded in-class tests.

### **1.2 Assessing and moderating**

As assessment is a core responsibility of all teaching staff and for it to be administered in a fair manner the process must:

- Include in the subject outline the assessment task instructions, the dates when assessments are due, the word counts or task and the marking rubrics.
- Be explained clearly to students at the beginning of the semester in order for student to raise any enquiries for clarification
- Have assessments marked with academic integrity, using the rubric and applying consistent standards. They must also be graded without bias, and reflect accurately the student's achievement
- Include a Moderation Process which needs to be conducted before marks are released to students.

### **1.3 Number, Weighting and Distribution of Assessment tasks**

Students are not to be overloaded with assessments making it impossible to fulfil the requirements. Hence, design of courses must take in consideration the overall load and assessments need to be spread out so they don't all fall within one week.

- Assessments need to be distributed across the weeks of the semester to encourage and facilitate the learning experience.
- Early feedback is encouraged to enable students to improve and continue to learn.
- Assessments need to be within the teaching periods and not be due on weekends or public holidays.

### **1.4 Requirements and Rubrics of Assessments**

- All assessment requirements for any unit must be communicated to the students in the Unit Outline which will enable them to raise any queries within the first week of lectures.
- Examples of assessment tasks will be given to support students, so they clearly understand what is required.
- If the assessment is a Group assessment the criteria must clearly outline how the grades will be reflected and the mark given to the input of each student. Normally group work would not represent more than 30% of the Unit's total assessment weighting. Group assessments must also have a component which measures the individual contribution and learnings from the assessment. Where the weighting of an assessment task that is group work is greater than 30%, assessment of the task must include some form of peer review and potential for differential marking.

### **1.5 Participation and Attendance**

- Participation in class discussions or in class online discussions can be graded. The criteria must be clearly outlined in the rubric sheet and to what extent the participation requires.

### **1.6 Assessment and Academic Misconduct**



Academic Integrity is of high value at VSC. All Academic staff will do their utmost to prevent any academic misconduct or plagiarism on the part of students.

- Strategies are clearly set out in the *Academic Integrity Policy* and the *Academic Integrity Procedure*.
- Students will be taught to use electronic detection of plagiarism (such as Turnitin) and to submit their assignments accordingly and include the result in submission of their assessment including a cover sheet and declaration form.
- Assignments will be submitted electronically.

### 1.7 Marking and Grading

- All marking must be based on the criteria rubric and be completed in a fair and unbiased manner.
- Students need to be assessed according to the Unit Learning Outcomes and the AQF level of standard, rather than in comparison with other students.
- Re-assessment may be requested by the student and it is advised to give this to another member of the academic staff.
- Special consideration may be applied if evidence is provided
- All assessments, marks and feedbacks are to be recorded

### 1.8 Feedback to Students

VSC has the best interest and welfare of all students as a priority. In the case of assessment staff must give prompt and relevant feedback which enables the student to progress with their study. This feedback can be made verbally, in writing, face-to-face or online and must be done in a respectful and timely manner to encourage the student to enhance and improve their learning through constructive suggestions and correction. Examination feedback is normally not given. It will also be in compliance with the *Feedback Policy and Procedure*.

### 1.9 Marking of Supplementary and Deferred Exams/Assessments

Students who sit a supplementary exam or assessment can only get either of the following two grades:

- Pass grade for the Unit if they pass the supplementary exam or assessment regardless of the result
- Fail grade for the Unit if they fail the supplementary exam or assessment

Students who sit a deferred exam or assessment will get a final Unit grade that reflect the mark gained in the deferred exam or assessment.

The Unit Lecturer is responsible for setting and marking supplementary and deferred exams/assessments. Marks and recommendations for change of grade, where appropriate, are submitted to the Course Director and the Course Director will inform the Dean who will review and ratify the marks and recommendations for change of grade.

### 1.10 External Moderation

- Assessment moderation will be undertaken as part of the quality assurance and continual improvement of teaching and learning activities.



- At the end of each teaching period VSC will provide a valid sample of students' work to be moderated by an external moderator appointed by VSC to determine the adequacy of academic standards.
- Moderators will look at samples of the highest, and lowest markings and make their own comments and assessments.
- These are presented to the Learning and Teaching Committee and then to the Academic Board.
- If corrective action is needed the LTC will discuss with the Course Coordinator and amendments will be made for future assessments.
- Records are kept of all moderation and given to the Academic Board who will keep the Board updated.
- If students raise any complaints these will be addressed in accordance with *the Student Complaints and Appeals Policy*.

## Related policy instruments

*Academic Integrity Policy*

*Academic Integrity Procedure*

*Academic Progression and At-Risk Policy*

*Academic Progression and At-Risk Procedure*

*Assessment and Moderation Policy*

*Course Creation & Development Policy*

*Course Creation & Development Procedure*

*Course Review & Quality Assurance Policy*

*Course Review & Quality Assurance Procedure*

*Equity and Diversity Policy*

*External Referencing Policy*

*Feedback Policy and Procedure*

*Student Complaints and Appeals Policy*

*Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure*

*Teaching and Learning Policy*

## Related documents and legislation

*Tertiary Education and Quality Standards Act (TEQSA Act)*

*Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021* *The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)*

*The National Skills Standards Council*



## Administration

### Revision History

Version	Approval date	Approval body	Review date
0.1	07/08/2020	Academic Board	
1.0	02/06/2021	Academic Board	30/06/2022