Charles Sturt University

LOCAL INSTRUCTION: BJBS Moderation Process

Applicability

Every offering of every undergraduate and coursework postgraduate subject. To be read in conjunction with the University's Subject Delivery Guide and the University Assessment Policy, Clause 87.

Assessments to be moderated and sample size
A *minimum moderation sample of 5 scripts* per marker for *at least one assessment task* requiring marker judgment. The assessment task(s) to be moderated will be determined by the Head of School (HoS), or nominee but the **entire task must be moderated and in total cover at least 30% of the total value of the assessment regime**. *Note that sample size and the number of assessment tasks to be moderated may be significantly higher due to accreditation and/or partner and/or other requirements - HoS (or nominee) will notify.*

Role of Subject Convenors

Subject Convenors are academic teaching staff who have overall responsibility for a subject in a session and may also simultaneously fulfil the role of Subject Coordinator for one cohort.

Role	Tasks	Qualifications
Subject outline	• prepare the master copy of the Subject Outline (SO) in compliance with the SO QA Checklist (embedded in the Subject Outline Tool) by the due date	• sound knowledge of the SO QA Checklist
Moderation and grades	• guide the subject team in the marking process by adhering to the 'BJBS During Delivery Moderation Process' (Diagram 1) • ensure Grade Centre is correctly set-up	• sound knowledge of the 'BJBS Moderation Process' (Diagram 1) • sound knowledge of Grade Centre
Subject reflection and planning	• complete the 'Subject Reflection and Planning' section of the QUASAR system.	• Sound knowledge of the QUASAR system

Role of Subject Moderators

Moderators are academic teaching staff who have enough experience teaching and/or convening subjects within the School/Centre and have enough knowledge about relevant assessment procedures and policies. Moderators perform three distinct roles that may be fulfilled by up to three different academics if required. Responsibility for appointing moderators to each role rests with the HoS, or nominee.

Role	Tasks	Qualifications
Subject outline	• quality assurance of subject outline consistent with the SO QA Checklist	• cannot be current subject convenor, must be an academic • sound knowledge of the SO QA Checklist
Moderation and grades	• check consistency of marking against the marking guide (including criteria and related standards) within and across cohorts • ensure moderation work performed is recorded in the 'Moderation and Grades' section of the QUASAR system.	• sound knowledge of the subject • cannot be the marker of the sample being moderated • sound knowledge of grade finalisation processes
Subject reflection and planning	• ensure correctness of and analysing patterns in final grades. • ensure appropriateness of the convenors' end of session reflection and proposed action items.	• cannot be the current subject convenor

MODERATION GUIDANCE NOTE

An expansion of the existing BJBS Moderation Process (particularly step 2), this guidance note seeks to complement current requirements for moderation as outlined in QUASAR and the Study Centre Academic Operations Manual. Providing guidance on selecting and evidencing samples, as well as applying and evidencing moderation adjustments, it is particularly relevant when required moderation sample sizes are significantly higher than the minimum 5 scripts per cohort marker and/or one assessment item per subject offering.

Guidance on sampling method

Although the selected sampling method should give all scripts in the marker cohort an equal opportunity of being selected the only method that guarantees this is random sampling, when a random number generator is used to make selections, but this is time consuming and complicated. Other methods include personal judgment, block, haphazard, stratified and systematic sampling.

The sampling method approach to be used is a modified form of block and stratified sampling. **Moderators select scripts for moderation in proportion to each of the substantive grades awarded** (stratified sampling). For example, if 40% of the cohort have been awarded a PS grade then 40% of the sample is selected from those awarded a PS grade. Within each passing grade sample, moderators select the scripts closest to the grade below (block sampling). Within the FL and AE grade samples, moderators select the scripts with the highest marks.

Guidance on marking and moderating scripts in suspected SAM cases
To ensure procedural fairness for students suspected of student academic misconduct (SAM) their script must be marked in full prior to its referral for investigation. In all cases where the allegation is not upheld, or the student receives a caution or a penalty that constitutes less than 50% of the total available marks for the assessment (e.g. zero marks for 1 of 5 questions), the script must be included in the moderation sample and subject to the moderation processes outlined below.

Guidance on evidencing the sample selected

To evidence the sample selected, the moderator picks the sample (as outlined above) and then indicates, using the notes fields in Grade Centre, which scripts are to be selected for moderation for each marker cohort.

Guidance on applying moderation adjustments

If moderation of the selected sample identifies inconsistencies against the marking criteria of:
- <5% of the total mark: no adjustments to any scripts are required
- >5% of the total mark across much of the sample selected: remark of all scripts in the marker cohort
- >5% of available marks in specific section(s): remark of section(s) in all scripts in the marker cohort
- >5% of the total mark in a minority of scripts selected: adjust the marks only in identified scripts

For all scripts (or parts of scripts) that are remarked, repeat the moderation process until the moderator is satisfied that marking is consistent with the marking criteria. The moderator should not expand moderation sample size unless they believe additional samples will provide new information about the consistency of marking against the marking criteria. **The moderator cannot apply a blanket percentage adjustment to all scripts.**

Guidance on evidencing moderation and moderation adjustments

There are two equally important aspects to evidencing moderation and moderation adjustments:
1. *Evidence that the moderator has moderated the selected sample:* for each script selected, the moderator records enough information (e.g. student name(s), student number(s), assessment of marking quality, marks awarded by marker and moderator) to facilitate a reperformance of the moderation by an alternate. This information must either be fully recorded in QUASAR or a hyperlink/file path provided in QUASAR that links to the detail, in a format decided by each HoS for their school.
2. *Evidence that any moderation adjustment mark is reflected on scripts:* any adjustments to marks as a result of the moderation process (which includes remarks) must be adjusted on each affected script. Adjusted marks must be internally consistent, and in the case of exams, the coversheet must reconcile with the moderated mark recorded for the task in Grade Centre.

Diagram 1: BJBS Moderation Process

STEP 1: DISCUSSION BEFORE MARKING
For all assessment tasks weighted 20% +
Subject Convenor provides to all markers a marking guide (including the marking criteria and with solutions where appropriate), as well as 1-2 scripts to be discussed in a meeting and consensus reached about expectations, **before marking is undertaken by the marker**

STEP 2: MODERATION OF MARKED SCRIPTS
For assessment tasks covering least 30% of the total value of the assessment regime as determined by the HoS (or nominee) that involves marker judgement (i.e. not automatically marked).
Moderator(s) cross-check(s) the consistency of marking against the marking guide (including criteria and related standards) within and across cohorts, **before assessment tasks are returned to students.**

Sample size: minimum of 5 scripts per marker (but may be significantly higher due to accreditation and/or partner requirements - HoS or nominee will notify) + all suspected SAM cases where the mark does not fall within the fail range.

STEP 3: DISCUSSION AFTER MARKING
For all assessment tasks weighted 20% +
Subject Convenor compiles common feedback to be provided to students after discussion with all markers.
Subject Coordinators distribute feedback to their students.
Subject Convener completes 'Moderation and Grades' section of the QUASAR system.
Moderator ensures moderation work performed is documented in the 'Moderation and Grades' section of the QUASAR system.

PROBLEMS?

IF THERE ARE INCONSISTENCIES IN MARKING (Within and/or between cohorts):
If moderation of the selected sample identifies inconsistencies against the marking criteria of:
- <5% of the total mark: no adjustments to any scripts are required
- >5% of the total mark across much of the sample selected: remark of all scripts in the marker cohort
- >5% of available marks in specific section(s): remark of section(s) in all scripts in the marker cohort
- >5% of the total mark in a minority of scripts selected: adjust the marks only in identified scripts

STEP 4: DISCUSSION AT END OF SESSION
As soon as subject performance data is available and after all marking and moderation has been completed, subject team discuss any issues with subject performance, the assessment tasks, marking criteria and marking and moderation process.
Subject Convener documents key issues identified and action items to be taken in the 'Subject Reflection and Planning' section of the QUASAR system
Moderator ensure appropriateness of the convenors' end of session reflection and proposed action items.

ADDITIONAL NOTES:
- Discussion in Steps 1, 3 and 4 will obviously be limited where the convenor and sole marker are the same person. However, a moderator is still needed to review marking in Step 2 and contribute to discussions in Steps 4.
- Discussion in Steps 1, 3 and 4 can be conducted via online meetings, emails, etc.
- Moderators will be appointed by the HoS or nominee. Additional workload will be allocated for Step 2.

AMENDMENTS

Date	Approved by	Nature of Amendment
24 Nov 2020	FOBJBS Faculty Board	This is the first version of the BJBS Moderation Process to be published in the policy library.
12 Apr 2021	FOBJBS Executive Dean	Addition of guidance on marking and moderating scripts in suspected SAM cases
21 April 2021	Editorial change	Changes to diagram 1 omitted from previous amendment