Policy Document Administrator	Moderation and Inclusion Manager ehutton@aut.edu.au (02) 9262 7890
Policy Document Approver	Academic Quality Committee
Responsible Body/Person	Academic Quality Committee
Next Review date	August 2027
Superseded documents	*Moderation Guidelines; Moderation Procedure; Languages Other Than English Moderator Calibration Procedure*
Related documents	*AUT Handbook* *Academic Quality Response Guidelines* *Assessment and Moderation Committee Terms of Reference* *Assessment Policy* *Ethics Policy Framework* *Faculty Qualification Policy* *Units Policy*
Related HE Standards	1.3.3, 1.4.3
Related National Code Standards	N/A

1. PURPOSE

To ensure that the quality of learning and teaching within the **AUT** is maintained as far as is achievable through the AUT **moderation** process.

2. DEFINITIONS

Definitions for any words in **Bold** in this document can be found in the Policy Glossary. The first instance of each defined term has been outlined in bold.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all coursework units of the AUT.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

The Australian University of Theology (AUT) engages in a moderation process in order to maintain the accreditation of the AUT suite of courses, and to maintain and improve the quality of learning and teaching of all Affiliated Colleges.

5. POLICY APPLICATION

5.1 Units in Scope for Moderation

5.1.1 Timing and due dates for each part of the moderation process are to follow the *Administrative Schedule* (Appendix 2).

5.1.2 The designated units listed below are subject to the moderation of scripts by

the unit field Moderator following delivery of the unit.

5.1.3 In the case of **Capstones**, 12cp Projects and Advanced units (excluding Specialised Studies Units), the marks and grades awarded for all unit cohorts will be adjusted, where applicable, prior to release in accordance with Moderator recommendations, as approved by the **Assessment and Moderation Committee** (A&MC).

5.1.4 Long Projects, Pass/Fail units, and units not designated below (5.1.6) are excluded from the moderation of scripts.

5.1.5 Guided Spiritual/Leadership Formation units (PC077; PC100; PC101; PC102; PC103; PC155; PC156; PC157; and PC158) are excluded from all aspects of moderation.

Schedule

5.1.6 End-of-semester moderation is according to the following schedule:

	2024 S1	2024 S2	2025 S1	2025 S2	2026 S1	2026 S2
Round	A	B	B	A	A	B

Round A	Round B
Designated Foundational units OT001-512/812 OT002-512/812 OT003-512/812 NT001-512/812 NT002-512/812 NT003-512/812 BB001-512/812 BB002-512/812 BB003-512/812 CH001-512/812 CH002-512/812 CH005-512/812 Designated Developing units EM008-5/6/7/812 LA005-612/812 NT010-5/6/7/812 NT011-5/6/7/812 OT008-5/6/7/812 OT009-6/7/812 PC002-5/6/7/812 TH001-6/7/812 Specialised Studies units based on the Developing units above	Developing units not designated in Round A Specialised studies units not designated in Round A Capstone, Project and Advanced units

Capstone, Project and Advanced units	

5.1.7 In addition to designated units, units will be moderated where the unit coordinator or marker of the moderation item is within their first two semesters of teaching in the AUT.

5.1.7 Units that are run outside of the regular semesters should follow the round operating at the time when moderation materials are ready for submission.

5.2 Unit Submissions (UQAFs)

5.2.1 Affiliated Colleges are to submit units (UQAFs) in the Moderation Portal (MP) as early as possible and before December 15 the previous year for S1 and May 15 for S2.

5.2.2 Unit submissions are approved for three years, where there are no significant changes to the delivery and **assessment** of the unit. Significant changes include but are not limited to: a change in **unit coordinator**, lecturer(s), and/or marker; a change in assessment design or type; any other change affecting the coverage of **unit learning outcomes** (ULOs).

5.2.3 Units are not scheduled until they have been approved by the Moderator. Under exceptional circumstances, including a delay in the approval process, the AUT Registrar may approve a unit to be scheduled.

5.2.4 Unit submissions should describe the assessment instruments in sufficient detail to convey: the nature of the task, what is required of students in completing the task, the (ULOs) to be addressed, format, structure, topics, and other relevant details. This includes a Unit Outline/Guide/MUO or other supporting document.

5.2.5 "Multi-streamed" units must be appropriately differentiated to address the requirements of each of the **AQF** levels and the respective unit learning outcomes.

5.2.6 The **moderation instrument** (MI) is usually the major assessment for a unit (i.e. the assessment with the greatest weighting) and represents at least 40% of the total grade. Where no single assessment instrument is worth 40%, two or more should be submitted to make up the 40%.

5.2.7 For any given unit, the moderation instrument may be either a **Secure assessment** or **Open assessment**. However, each affiliated college should ensure that, where possible, in each Semester the Moderation Instrument for at least one unit delivered by the college is a Secure assessment and the Moderation Instrument for at least one unit delivered by the college is an Open assessment. Responsibility for monitoring the practice of affiliated colleges shall sit with the Moderation & Inclusion Manager.[1]

[1] This clause (5.2.7) applies from Semester 1, 2028, onwards.

5.2.8 The word count required for each AQF level must comply with AUT requirements. See *Word Requirements and Weightings* (Appendix 1).

5.2.9 Moderator approval of Project units should be obtained before the student is enrolled. Advice and feedback from the Moderator should be considered in refining the topic or implementing the Project.

5.2.10 Moderators may provide conditional approval of Project units where limited detail is provided but the subject, scope and direction of the project is appropriate to the unit field and level. Moderators may request more information, usually at least three weeks before the census date.

5.2.11 Should the scope of a project, or an assessment instrument in any unit, involve **human participant research** (including observation), evidence of **ethics clearance** must be provided in accordance with the *Ethics Policy* framework.

5.2.12 The MI should show assessment feedback to the student. If exam papers will not include such comments, the exam should not be the moderation instrument and the assessment with the next greatest weighting is to be used.

5.3 Unit Field Moderators

5.3.1 Moderators should normally be external to Affiliated Colleges. If a Moderator delivers an AUT unit or is involved in the marking of a unit subject to moderation, the Moderator must liaise with the AUT Office to have another suitably qualified academic appointed to moderate the unit.

5.3.2 Moderators endeavour to provide feedback on unit submissions within two weeks. If a Moderator is unable to provide feedback within four weeks of receiving a submission, they must liaise with the AUT Office.

5.3.3 If the details of a unit submission cannot be agreed upon, the **Moderation and Inclusion Manager** and/or **Departmental Head** may be consulted by either the College or the Moderator for advice.

5.3.4 The work of the Moderators is a significant element in ensuring the quality of coursework awards across the AUT. Moderators promote and assure the quality of teaching, learning and assessment as far as this is achievable through the moderation process. This includes:

- reviewing and approving unit submissions;
- ensuring academic staff delivering units are approved to teach in the unit field and at the AQF level of the unit. (NB: **Tutors** and **guest lecturers** are not included on the Register, and it is the responsibility of the Affiliated College to ensure that persons filling these roles meet the requirements set out in the *Faculty Qualification Policy*).
- ensuring all ULOs are appropriately addressed by the proposed assessment instruments;
- ensuring proposed assessment instruments are appropriate to the AQF level of the unit, and that reasonable time has been allowed for their completion;

- ensuring proposed assessment instruments comply with the *Assessment Policy*, including early formative assessment for all Foundational units;
- ensuring bibliographies are appropriate for units' content and level;
- monitoring the spread of marks and grades achieved by students in the different assessments for each unit;
- having the right to recommend that a College modify its assessment of a unit;
- reviewing and reporting on MIs (see 5.3.5 to 5.3.14).

5.3.5 Where the average marks of the second highest weighted assessment vary from the MI by 10% or more, the Moderator may request that a College upload the second assessment to the MP.

5.3.6 Moderators will complete a Moderation Report for each unit/cohort in scope for moderation. The report should be flagged by the Moderator where an area needing development is identified. Flagging includes, but is not limited to:

- marks/grades which do not align with the level of achievement of learning outcomes and the grade descriptors;
- marking which suggests a lack of awareness of relevant AUT policy (e.g. academic integrity, late penalties, the granting of extensions, etc.);
- concerns about the quality of feedback provided to students on their performance in the assessment;
- concerns that the assessment did not properly assess the ULOs or was not appropriate to the field or AQF level of the unit;
- concerns about the potential of students/cohorts to attain the ULOs;
- administrative errors, including the calculation or recording of marks;
- examples of best practice, which may be used for professional development, including, but not limited to, assessment design, use of rubrics and approaches to student feedback, and teaching and learning strategies.

5.3.7 Moderation Reports should focus on the professional development of the academic staff member(s) concerned. In some cases, discussion between Moderators and academic staff may take place to facilitate collegiality, communication, and the resolution of disagreements and/or issues. Where relevant and feasible, reports should reflect:

- the appropriateness of the marking in relation to the ULOs, grade descriptors, rubric, and other relevant assessment information;
- the quality of feedback provided to the student;
- the effectiveness and appropriateness of the assessment instrument;
- the quality of the sample student work;

- the quality of the teaching and learning as far as can be ascertained through the moderation process.

5.3.8 A Moderator has the right to make a recommendation to the A&MC that a mark be adjusted for a Capstone, Short Project (12cps), or Advanced unit (excluding Specialised Studies units). When recommending a change of marks, clear reasons for the recommendation must be provided. NB: If a significant error in marking is identified by a Moderator, the issue must be reported to the AUT Office directly as soon as possible (in addition to the Moderation Report).

5.3.9 The marks of particular students within a grade band should not be changed unless all MIs within the grade band have been reviewed.

5.3.10 The Moderator has the right to request that a College upload all MIs from a particular cohort or within a particular grade band.

5.3.11 Recommendations which involve:

i) a reduction of marks resulting in a change from a Pass grade to a Fail grade for the unit, or,

ii) a change of marks equivalent to more than 10% of the unit total, require consultation with the College (before making the recommendation).

5.3.12 Recommendations will be clearly stated at the end of the Moderation Report and must include the number by which the mark is to be adjusted out of the total marks that may be awarded for the assessment instrument.

e.g. 1. Recommendation: All marks in the D grade band be reduced by 4/20.

e.g. 2. Recommendation: For student #12345678, the mark be increased by 8/100. This upgrades the assessment instrument and overall grade for the unit from C to D.

5.3.13 Moderators are to submit moderation reports by the date set in the *Administrative Schedule* (Appendix 2).

5.3.14 At the end of each semester, Moderators submit a *General Unit Field Report.* This is a summary of observations on learning and teaching in their unit field based on their moderation for that semester.

5.4 Affiliated Colleges

5.4.1 The following materials are to be available to Moderators in the MP by the dates in the *Administrative Schedule* (Appendix 2):

- Unit Report/Result Sheet (including averages achieved in each assessment and with the MI identified);
- Sample scripts/uploads of the MIs showing the marker's comments. NB. Links to/uploads of digital material (e.g. recordings, images, etc.) must be included and checked.

- A marking **rubric**, and/or exam questions, and/or other notes on marking criteria, for the MIs (if available);

The range and number of scripts/uploads of the MIs to be submitted:

- At least one **script** per passing grade (P, P+, C, D & HD);
- All failing grades;
- In a cohort of five students or fewer, all scripts are to be sent;
- For a cohort of 6-19 students, no fewer than five scripts are to be sent;
- All scripts in the 45-53% range;
- Where units/cohorts/Scheduled Unit Identification Numbers (SUIDs) have been combined for moderation, sample scripts from each mode must be included (commensurate with the proportion of enrolments in each mode.)

5.4.2 It is the responsibility of the **Academic Dean** to ensure flagged moderation reports have been responded to. The *Academic Quality Response Guidelines* are to be followed.

5.4.3 It is the responsibility of the Academic Dean to review and disseminate moderation reports to academic staff. Particular attention will be given to the flagged issues and appropriate courses of action to address issues arising in moderation and recommendations from Moderators.

5.4.4 The Academic Dean may consult Moderators and academic staff, where appropriate, to determine a course of action. The Academic Dean will monitor the implementation of the course of action and may be required to provide further information to the AQC and/or for the Register of Identified Risks and Concerns (RIRAC).

5.4.5 Affiliated Colleges can appeal to the AQC against a Moderator's decision on unit approval, a Moderator's recommendation on a Capstone, Short Project or Advanced unit (excluding Specialised Studies units), or a resolution of the A&MC with respect to the outcome of the moderation process. The appeal should initially be sent to the Chair of the **AQC**, and if there is no successful resolution, the appeal can be taken up with the Chair of the **Academic Board.**

5.5 Committee Processes

Assessment and Moderation Committee (A&MC)

5.5.1 A&MC will resolve to uphold, amend or set aside the recommendations of Moderators to change marks or grades awarded for those units where the marks and grades may be adjusted prior to release (i.e. Capstone, Short Project and Advanced units, excluding Specialised Studies units).

5.5.2 A&MC resolutions are submitted to AQC. The AUT Office ensures approved recommended changes are made before student results are released.

5.5.3 A&MC is responsible Long Project reviews (see *Long Project Marking*

Procedure).

5.5.4 A&MC is responsible for LOTE Calibration (see 7.1.1-7.1.5 below).

Academic Quality Committee (AQC)

5.5.5 AQC is delegated with the approval of A&MC resolutions and the authorisation to release the results for those moderated units.

5.5.6 AQC receives reports from Department Heads, General Unit Field Reports from Moderators, responses from Academic Deans to issues flagged in moderation reports, and a summary table and report from the Moderation and Inclusion Manager, with data for each Affiliated College.

5.5.7 AQC monitors issues flagged in moderation reports over successive semesters, at the consortium level, and by Affiliated College. AQC considers issues of concern and recommends action, such as college-level or consortium-level support, as appropriate.

5.5.8 Where issues of concern exceed the AUT threshold and/or the responses from Academic Deans are insufficient, the Affiliated College may be placed on the RIRAC and asked to respond.

5.5.9 Where an issue persists and has not been effectively addressed by an Affiliated College, the AQC may request a written submission from the Affiliated College.

5.5.10 AQC considers identified good and best practices and recommends action, such as dissemination in the consortium, as appropriate.

5.5.11 AQC arbitrates where there is a disagreement between a Moderator and the Affiliated College regarding a unit approval, flagged issue or recommendation in a moderation report.

5.5.12 AQC may propose changes to this *Moderation Policy* and refer issues to the Teaching & Learning team, the Coursework Committee, Academic Board and/or recommend other appropriate measures concerned with academic quality, as appropriate.

5.5.13 The Chair of AQC, in consultation with the Chair of Coursework Committee, includes in their report to the AB any persistent concerns identified through moderation.

5.6 Release of Results

5.6.1 The AUT Office the release of results for all coursework units apart from Category C units, which are approved by the AQC.

5.6.2 The Academic Deans of Affiliated Colleges, or their representatives, are required to provide confirmation to the AUT Registrar that results have been accurately entered into Paradigm and that all necessary internal moderation activities have taken place.

5.7 Moderation Activities Internal to Affiliated Colleges

Induction and Mentoring of Staff

5.7.1 Affiliated Colleges must ensure all lecturers, especially newly appointed academic staff, adjuncts, guest lecturers, casual academic staff, and tutors are informed about the AUT moderation system, this Policy, and the *Assessment Policy*.

5.7.2 Particular attention should be given to communicating the place of ULOs and grade descriptors in the design and assessment of learning activities, and standards on the form, content and timing of feedback on assessment.

5.7.3 All approved academic staff appear on the *Register of Approved Academics*, which is available in the Moderation Portal. The Register will note any exceptional approval such as where an academic has approval to teach only the lower AQF level units of a course.

5.7.4 Academic staff, within their first two semesters of teaching with the AUT, should be mentored.

5.7.5 Assessment instruments designed by staff who are in their first (2) semesters of teaching within the AUT, or who are new to teaching in a unit field, should be reviewed and revised as needed by an experienced academic within the Affiliated College.

5.7.6 A degree of second marking should be performed by an experienced academic for markers who are within their first two semesters teaching within the AUT. This applies to tutors or guest lecturers who are responsible for marking an assessment instrument. In addition, the grade distribution of assessments should be monitored and anomalies investigated (see 6.1.7 and 6.1.8 below). These processes are to be completed before the submission of scripts to Moderators and before the release of results to students.

Internal Moderation of the Assessment Instruments

5.7.7 Prior to the release of results to students, Affiliated Colleges will review the grade distributions of cohorts and investigate any apparent anomalies. This may include the following:

- Checking the mark or grade is appropriate to the grade descriptors and, where applicable, the marking rubric;
- Second marking, where the first mark is known to the second marker;
- Blind second marking (where the mark is not known by the second marker),
- A college may use a second marker from within the consortium to ensure appropriate expertise and experience.

Internal Moderation for units with Multiple Markers

5.7.8 It is expected that each unit will have a single marker. However, if a unit has multiple markers, the following measures should be taken to ensure marking consistency:

- Discuss each assessment and expectations for the students;
- The marking rubric should be discussed and any standard processes for the awarding or deduction of marks established;
- Second and/or blind marking as above (6.1.8) and reconciling any differences.

5.8 LOTE Calibration

5.8.1 In the event there is significant deviation of marks or anomalies detected by a Moderator between different delivery languages, the moderation reports and relevant accompanying data will be reviewed by A&MC.

5.8.2 If calibration is required, A&MC may request more information and/or a meeting of the relevant Moderators to identify where adjustment and/or further action may be required.

5.8.3 A&MC will report the process and outcomes to AQC.

5.8.4 The AUT Office will maintain records and coordinate the calibration process.

5.8.5 Moderators may be asked to undertake this process a maximum of once per year. Moderators will be paid for any extra work resulting from this process.

5.9 Benchmarking

5.9.1 It is the responsibility of the Moderation and Inclusion Manager to ensure relevant national and international benchmarking is carried out at least once every three years.

6. REFERENCES

TEQSA Guidance Note: Academic Quality Assurance

TEQSA Guidance Note: External Referencing (including Benchmarking)

7. VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approved by	Approval Date	Effective Date	Changes made
1	N/A	N/A	N/A	Moderation Procedural Stages extracted to form the Moderation Procedure. Policy was revised in accordance

				with a proposed moderation system to be implemented from 2017.
2	Academic Board	27 January 2017	27 Jamuary 2017	7** level units moderated to influence grades awarded to students.
3	AQC	6 October 2017	6 October 2017	Removed from policy – "5.2.6 The units RM091 and RM095 are exempt from moderation." RM091/095 added to schedule of units. Units to be scheduled after UQAF approval (5.4.3).
4	AQC	12 October 2018	12 October 2018	AQC reviews and approves A&MC resolutions and approved release of results at 7** level. Clarification of existing rules.
5	AQC	11 October 2019	11 October 2019	Schedule at 5.2.6 aligned with 2020 course and unit structures
6	AQC	9 October 2020	9 October 2020	Reference to the Academic Quality Response Guidelines. Moderators to flag best practice in addition to issues of concern.
7	AQC	8 October 2021	8 October 2021	States that Category D units are excluded from aspects of moderation.
8	AQC	14 October 2022	14 October 2022	To reflect the existence of the Moderation Portal.
9	AQC	February 2024	February 2024	Consolidate Policy and Procedure into one document. Changes to reflect adjusted scope and rounds.
10	Vice-Chancellor	February 2025	February 2025	**Update to new document template; minor editorial**

				updates to implement University status.
11	AQC	October 2026	January 2028	Addition to reflect changes to process in light of AI & assessment issues.

Any hard copy of this electronic document may not be current as the University regularly reviews its policies. The latest version can be found online at http://www.aut.edu.au/documents or by following this hyperlink directly to the document.

APPENDIX 1 – WORD REQUIREMENTS AND WEIGHTINGS

The following word requirements are reproduced from the *AUT Handbook* and represent the word requirements for each AQF level.

Word Requirements

Each exam hour is reckoned as the equivalent of 1,500 words.

Examples

Words required	Exam time	Words	%	Essay words	%
4000	80	2000	50	2000	50
	90	2250	55	1750	45
	120	3000	75	1000	25
5000	100	2500	50	2500	50
	120	3000	60	2000	40
6000	120	3000	50	3000	50
	130	3250	55	2750	45
	150	3750	60	2250	40

Assessment workload within a unit is variable depending on the volume of each unit of study. The below indicators of assessment output are to be scaled up or down for units with larger or smaller credit point value.

Level 5

Units at level 5 require 4000-4500 words of assessment for the completion of a 12cp unit.

Level 6

Units at level 6 require 5000-5500 words of assessment for the completion of a 12cp unit.

Level 7

Units at level 7 require 5500-6500 words of assessment for the completion of a 12cp unit.

Level 8

Units at level 8 require 5500-6500 words of assessment for the completion of a 12cp unit.

Level 9

Units at level 9 require 7000-7500 words of assessment for the completion of a 12cp unit.

Project requirements:

Code	AQF level	Credit points	Required words
**200-712	7	12	6,000

**200-812	8	12	7,000
**200-824	8	24	12,000
**200-836	8	36	16,000
**200-912	9	12	7,000
**200-924	9	24	12,000
**200-936	9	36	16,000

Word Requirements and Delivery in Languages Other Than English

- For assessments submitted in writing in Chinese script, a ratio of 1:1.5 (i.e. 1 word in English to 1.5 words in Chinese) is applied to the word requirement. This rate assumes the word count is performed in Microsoft Word, which includes punctuation in the word count. If the word count is to be performed in a way that excludes punctuation, a ratio of 1:1.3 is to be used. Unit outlines must clarify the basis of the word count, for example, for the equivalent of a 2,000-word essay in English:
    - Words required: 3,000 (based on a count in Microsoft Word; or 2,600 excluding punctuation).
- In the case of exams and types of assessment that do not require the submission of a written text, the 1:1.3 ratio is to be used in determining the equivalent word requirement. To determine the duration of an exam, the ratio is applied to the equivalent word length in English and then a calculation of the exam length in minutes is arrived at using 1 hour = 1,500 words. The exam duration is then rounded to the nearest 10 minutes. For example, for an exam equivalent to 2,000 words in English (80 minutes in duration):
    - 2,000 x 1.3 = 2,600 words in Chinese

      2,600 ÷ 1,500 = 104, rounded to 100 minutes

      Students are allowed 100 minutes for the exam.

- Unit submissions for units delivered in Chinese should show the word requirements for assessments after the appropriate ratio has been applied, i.e. the required words in Chinese. For example:
    - Words: 3000 (in Chinese).
- The Chinese words required for a unit must be based on an equivalent English word count that meets the AUT's requirements. For example, for an AQF 7 12cp unit (5,500-6,500 words):
    - <u>Assessment # 1: Class presentation (10mins)</u>

      1,000 (Eng) = 1,300 (Ch)

      <u>Assessment #2: Essay</u>

2,500 (Eng) = 3,750 (Ch) (This is based on a count in Microsoft Word, otherwise 3,250 excluding punctuation).

Assessment #3: Exam

3,000 (Eng) = 3,900 (Ch) ÷ 1,500 = 2.6 hours (156 minutes)

Round to 2 hour 40 minutes (160 minutes)

TOTAL word requirement (Eng) = 6,500

TOTAL word requirement (Ch) = 8,450 (1,300 + 3,250 + 3,900)

APPENDIX 2 – ADMINISTRATIVE SCHEDULE

If dates fall on a weekend, the next business day applies.

1 General

1 March	Enrolments for Semester 1 units due in Paradigm
31 March	Semester 1 Census Date (by this date)
30 June	Semester 1 marks due in Paradigm following internal moderation
	Notice of students granted extensions due to the AUT Office
July AQC	Semester 1 marks released to students
1 August	Enrolments for Semester 2 units due into Paradigm
31 August	Semester 2 Census Date (by this date)
30 November	Semester 2 marks due to Paradigm following internal moderation
	Notice of students granted extensions due to the AUT Office
December AQC	Semester 2 marks released to students

2 Moderation

February AQC	AQC reviews Semester 2 moderation reports
15 May	Submission to Moderation Portal for Semester 2 units
30 June	Submission to Moderation Portal of Semester 1 scripts
July Friday before AQC	Submission of Moderators' reports to the AUT Office
July Friday before AQC	A&MC reviews designated moderation reports
July AQC	AQC approves release of designated unit results
October AQC	AQC reviews Semester 1 moderation reports
30 November	Submission to Moderation Portal of Semester 2 scripts
December Friday before AQC	Submission of Moderators' reports to the AUT Office

December Friday before AQC	A&MC reviews designated moderation reports
15 December	Submission to Moderation Portal for Semester 1 units
December AQC	AQC approves release of designated unit results